A critical edition,
with introduction and commentary,
of the libretto texts
of Montagu Slater
and Benjamin Britten’s
\textit{Peter Grimes}

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submitted for the degree of D.Phil.,
Trinity Term 2013.
{freely available edited copy}
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Contents

Contents ................................................................................................................. 3
Abstract .................................................................................................................... 5
Acknowledgements ................................................................................................. 6
Preface: Perspectives on Britten ............................................................................. 8
Perspectives on Crabbe ......................................................................................... 14
Perspectives on Slater ............................................................................................ 67
Rationale, Principles & Practice of this Edition ...................................................... 73
Introduction to Prolegomena ............................................................................... 81
Introduction to 0 (Prologue) .................................................................................. 83
Introduction to 1.1 ................................................................................................. 89
Introduction to 1.2 ................................................................................................. 100
Introduction to 2.1 ................................................................................................. 112
Introduction to 2.2 ................................................................................................. 118
Introduction to 3.1 ................................................................................................. 123
Introduction to 3.2 ................................................................................................. 126
{Facsimile of libretto text U title page} ................................................................. 131
Prolegomena ......................................................................................................... 132

Prologue Notes ..................................................................................................... 277
1.1 Notes .............................................................................................................. 284
1.2 Notes .............................................................................................................. 294
2.1 Notes .............................................................................................................. 305
Appendix A: Scenarios: Introduction ................................................................. 355
Appendix A: Scenarios: Texts ............................................................................. 364
Appendix B: Drafts (Prologue) ............................................................................ 374
{Draft: Act 1 Scene 1} ......................................................................................... 380
Peter Grimes

{Draft: Act 1 Scene 2} ........................................................................................................394
{Draft: Act 2 Scene 1} ........................................................................................................403
{Draft Fragments: Act 2 Scene 2} .....................................................................................416
{Draft & Slater publication: Act 3 Scene 2} .......................................................................418
Appendix C: Slater’s letter to Britten ................................................................................424
Appendix D: Dearmer’s report ............................................................................................428
Appendix E: Figures ............................................................................................................429
  Figure 1: Prologue original set (© ENO, photographer unknown) ................................429
  Figure 2: 1.2 original set (© ENO, photographer unknown, stamped ‘Behr’ and
            ‘return to A.Curthoys’) .........................................................................................430
  Figure 3: 2.1 original set (© ENO, photographer unknown, annotated “? for
            Teachers World” {sic}) ........................................................................................431
  Figure 4: 2.2 original set (© ENO, photographer unknown, stamped ‘Behr’) ....432
  Figure 5: Scenario A leaf recto (lines 1-12) (© The Trustees of the Britten-Pears
            Foundation) ........................................................................................................433
{Appendix F: Appendices Notes (Scenarios)} ..................................................................434
Prologue Draft: Notes .........................................................................................................436
1.1 Draft: Notes ................................................................................................................438
1.2 Draft: Notes ................................................................................................................447
2.1 Draft: Notes ................................................................................................................451
2.2 Draft Fragments: Notes ..............................................................................................455
3.2 Draft & Slater publication: Notes ..............................................................................456
Appendix G: Bibliography ................................................................................................461
Abstract

A critical edition, with introduction and commentary, of the libretto texts of Montagu Slater and Benjamin Britten’s Peter Grimes by Michael Greenhalgh, Keble College, Oxford, for the degree of D.Phil., Trinity Term 2013.

A definitive text of the libretto of Benjamin Britten’s opera Peter Grimes is here presented. The process by which it was created is revealed in detail. All the extant versions are collated and significant differences between them displayed. For the first time the scenarios written by Britten and his partner Peter Pears and the first surviving draft versions of scenes by the librettist Montagu Slater are published in full. Additions to the draft and final libretto texts and revisions throughout this process by Slater, Britten, producer Eric Crozier and, in the final scene, poet Ronald Duncan, are clarified and a critique provided. Marked differences in stage directions between the libretto texts and music scores are shown and versions selected or created which offer the best indicative detail for performance practice. The edited text is similarly enriched by the inclusion of performance indicators from various sources added by Britten, Pears and the work’s first conductor, Reginald Goodall.

The edition is introduced by three ‘Perspectives’ sections which consider (1) Britten’s relationship with Slater and working practice with librettists; (2) the relationship of the work to its original source, George Crabbe’s poem The Borough, the difference in the portrait and treatment of the character Peter Grimes and the reasons for the difference; and (3) the particular contribution and features of Slater’s writing. Thereafter follow an account of the rationale, principles and practice of the edition and introductions to every scene in which the use of source material, the evolution of the text, the plot development and performance issues of the scene, the presentation of characters and the set are delineated, the latter with reference to photographs of the original set hitherto unpublished.
Acknowledgements

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A note on word length

Owing to its bibliographical complexity, i.e. the range of documents it necessarily considers and revisions therein, this thesis is approximately 110,000 words in length excluding the edition text, scenarios (Appendix A), edited draft texts (Appendix B), Slater’s letter to Britten which includes draft text (Appendix C), and bibliography. I have been granted permission to exceed the standard 100,000 word limit by the English Faculty’s Director of Graduate Studies and a copy of the approval letter has been attached to the GSO. 3 form.
Preface: Perspectives on Britten

Since its first performance on 7 June 1945 the opera Peter Grimes has been irrevocably linked with its composer, Benjamin Britten (1913-1976) but this document reveals the process through which the libretto was created: five scenarios written by Britten and his partner, Peter Pears (1910–1986), a libretto drafted by Montagu Slater (1902–1956), modified by Slater, Britten, the opera’s producer Eric Crozier (1914–1994) and in Act 3 Scene 2 the poet Ronald Duncan (1914-1982). Thereby its 19th century source, the poem The Borough by George Crabbe (1754-1832), was transformed into a 20th century opera.

How did this process start? Britten discovered Crabbe through an article by E.M. Forster (1879–1970). As librettist for Peter Grimes he first approached his friend Christopher Isherwood (1904–1986) at a party with a follow-up letter, no longer extant, and copy of Crabbe’s poem. Isherwood interestingly declines ‘collaborating with you and Peter on the PETER GRIMES libretto’ which indicates the intention to continue the previous involvement of Britten and Pears in the scenarios.

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2 Appendix A.
6 No ODNB entry, but see Letters, vol. 1: 523-4.
8 See ODNB, vol. 20: 401-6. For the text Britten read, see Perspectives on Crabbe §1.
10 See Parker 2004: 496.
On returning from America to England in April 1942 Britten asked Montagu Slater to write the libretto. He was another friend. Their first association was probably the GPO Film Unit’s *Coal Face* in 1935. Certainly in 1935 Britten provided incidental music for Slater’s play *Easter 1916*, in 1936 for his play *Stay Down Miner*, in 1938 for two puppet plays, *Seven Ages of Man* and *Old Spain*. There was music for pageants Slater wrote for the Co-operative Movement, such as *Towards Tomorrow* in 1938. In 1936 Britten set Slater’s poem *Mother Comfort* and dedicated his *Temporal Variations* to Slater. In 1939 he dedicated his *Ballad of Heroes* to Slater and his wife Enid.

Slater and Britten both had a middle class upbringing, Slater’s father being a subpostmaster and master clothier, Britten’s a dental surgeon. Slater’s father was a strict Wesleyan Methodist and lay preacher; Britten’s mother was low church evangelical. Both moved away from such doctrinaire influences, Slater more vehemently in joining the Communist party. Both were pacifists, though Slater made himself available for military service. Both received suitably professional education though, as Kildea pithily remarks, ‘RCM was no Oxford’ even if Slater only achieved a second class Oxford degree in Politics, Philosophy and Economics. Both had empathy for the lot of the common man, but Slater experienced it, living, after graduating, in the open dormitory of a dock settlement.

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12 Crozier 1945: 7.
13 *Britten on Film*, 2007, suggests Slater provided the spoken choruses, Britten the incidental music and sound effects, though Slater’s close involvement is questioned by Reed in Cooke 1999:65.
14 See Perspectives on Slater §3.1.
15 See Kildea 2013: 29.
16 See Mitchell in Brett 1983: 34.
18 See Rattenbury 1976: 120.
Where Britten and Slater did diverge, it turned out in the writing of Grimes, was not in overall philosophy but approach to presentation. Slater is the more literary, focussing on dramatization and characterization, Britten the more practical, focussing on accessibility and clarity of communication. In the booklet on Grimes to which both contributed Britten emphasizes the reality of the setting and struggle of fisherfolk to make a livelihood. With reference to the latter in his draft version Britten writes ‘It is largely this feeling that I hoped to convey in writing ‘Peter Grimes’. He also declares a particular interest in the work’s structure, especially the creation of lively recitative. Slater’s contribution details the unfolding of the drama and character analysis while his particular interest is the metrical form his verse takes. When the vocal score is about to be published Britten writes to Slater that it is ‘word for word the same as the Sadlers Wells performance which I thought we’d agreed upon as being intelligible and singable’, thus clarifying two key criteria for acceptance or revision of text.

As evidence of his working relationship with Britten, Slater’s letter to him of 3 December {1944} is illuminating and positive. It reveals Slater’s willingness to argue, love of mulling over things, prolixity but also flexibility. He offers alternative wording (9), longer lines (23-4, 32-3), takes into account Britten’s wish for repetition (31-32), reflects humbly on purple passages (75-6). He makes the case for retention of Ellen’s quatrain (2.1.530–33) but is also accommodating about revision

19 Crozier 1945: 7.
20 Ibid.: 8.
21 Crozier 1945: 8. In the draft, the text from ‘Good recitative’ was added (ghosted) by Crozier.
23 Ibid.: 19-20.
24 Letter dated 28 August 1945, in Letters, vol. 2: 1279 with the correction ‘Sadler’s’ not in the original letter in the BPF Britten-Slater correspondence files.
25 See Appendix C, its first publication in full.
He shows equal capacity for self criticism (99) and self defence (99-100).

The libretto’s first critical appraisal appeared in the form of a report\(^\text{27}\) of 10 May 1945 by Geoffrey Dearmer (1893-1996),\(^\text{28}\) Assistant Examiner of plays in the Lord Chamberlain’s Office. Having read Source H,\(^\text{29}\) Dearmer assessed the suitability of the opera to be licensed for public performance. He clearly knew Crabbe’s poem but found himself at sea over Slater’s libretto: ‘wafty’ and ‘nebulous’ were impressions Britten and Crozier would have experienced. About Britten’s music Dearmer proved wonderfully prophetic.

Britten himself had critical reservations. ‘It’s full of howlers’ was his later verdict on *Grimes* to Nicholas Maw, who first thought that this reference was to the libretto.\(^\text{30}\) Clear examples of howlers in the libretto are the Prologue lines 102-106 (see notes 48, 49), though here Britten’s revisions created the howlers. What went wrong?

I suggest it was firstly a personality clash. In his novel *Once a jolly swagman* Slater features Cornelius, a writer, perhaps a poet and, I submit, self portrait:

> What was curious about him was the way he watched and questioned, attending all the time so quietly you could almost see his brain work. It was like having a brain walking about in the hut. I guess the others were scared by it.

(Slater 1944: 153)

\(^{27}\) Appendix D.
\(^{28}\) See *ODNB*, vol. 15: 651-2.
\(^{29}\) See Appendix G, §1.
\(^{30}\) In ‘Benjamin Britten: Tributes and Memories’, *Tempo*, 120, March 1977: 3.
Might Britten have been similarly intimidated by someone of more expertise in literature? Consider his words\(^{31}\) to Crozier:

> It’s most unfortunate for me that we’ve started communicating by letter – nice for you, so handy with a pen, but difficult for inarticulate & autor[?]educed me.

I do not think this is Britten being wry but revealing a deep-seated unease and perhaps envy which would partly account for his habit of rejecting, that is not working again with, librettists, in turn Auden, Slater, Duncan and Crozier.

Britten did not want a man of letters, like Slater, protective of his own creativity, hence independently publishing a libretto\(^{32}\) he approved of because ‘this is my work.’\(^{33}\) Britten wanted a wordsmith to offer him a text as starting point for his acceptance or revision, as appropriate. So secondly the clash with Slater is one of creativity.

The master copy of the draft libretto\(^{34}\) of his operetta *Paul Bunyan* created between November 1939 and April 1941\(^{35}\) shows Britten’s altering a libretto when composing the music was established. From his earliest association with its librettist W.H.Auden (1907–1973)\(^{36}\), Britten was overawed by Auden’s intellect. In his diary entry of 17 September 1935\(^{37}\) he writes of working with him and William Coldstream (1908–1987)\(^{38}\) at the GPO Film Unit, ‘I always feel very young & stupid

\(^{31}\) Letter undated, [late June 1949], in *Letters*, vol. 3: 520, emendation cited from the original in the Eric Crozier collection, in the BPF Britten-Crozier correspondence files.

\(^{32}\) Source N, see Appendix G, §1.

\(^{33}\) Statement recalled by Crozier, see Brett 1983: 39.

\(^{34}\) ‘Libretto B’ (BPF 2-9900068).

\(^{35}\) See Banks & Cooke 1999: 54-7.

\(^{36}\) See *ODNB*, vol. 2: 921-8.

\(^{37}\) in *Journeying boy: the diaries of the young Benjamin Britten*, 2009: 278.

\(^{38}\) See *ODNB*, vol. 12: 498-500.
when with these brains – I mostly sit silent when they hold forth about subjects in
general.’ But once in the process of composition, things were different. The
alterations to the draft are chiefly by Britten. Taking the Prologue as an example,
Britten set the opening for one chorus rather than two alternating semi-choruses,
changed some allocations from individuals to groups, shortened one line, relocated
another, deleted 3 lines, 2 half-lines and one quatrains, extended one line, revised 14
lines, reversed the order of phrasing in one line, repeated 2 lines and virtually
repeated another. In sum Britten changed 31 out of 117 lines (26%). In the Prologue
of Grimes Britten’s changes from the final draft (source C) to the final text are more
extensive. There are 2 lines lengthened (1 by Crozier), 2 lines shortened, 17 lines
revised (1 by Crozier), 3 lines rewritten (2 by Crozier), 3 lines deleted, 38 lines
added (13 by Crozier) and 71 lines repeated, in sum 136 out of 211 lines changed
(64%). Britten’s learning process was moulding a librettist to suit his working
practice. Through Paul Bunyan and Grimes Britten learnt to engage compliant
librettists.
Perspectives on Crabbe

My purpose here is to consider Slater’s *Grimes* as a critical reappraisal of Crabbe’s original. I also wish to explore the corollary of this: that critical appraisal of Crabbe may have pertinent application to that of Slater’s work.

§1. How Britten began

§1.1 The physical & psychological environment

These lines were how Britten discovered George Crabbe:

When Tides were neap, and, in the sultry day,  
Through the tall bounding Mud-banks made their way, …  
There anchoring, Peter chose from man to hide,  
There hang his Head, and view the lazy Tide  
In its hot, slimy Channel slowly glide;  
Where the small Eels that left the deeper way  
For the warm Shore, within the Shallows play;  
Where gaping Muscles, left upon the Mud,  
Slope their slow passage to the fallen Flood;

(Borough, XXII, 181–2, 184–91)

In Crozier 1945: 7 Britten tells us he read them in 1941 in an article by E.M. Forster in *The Listener* (reprinted in Brett 1983: 3–7), a transcript of a radio talk on Crabbe. The first impression they make is of languor and lingering cadences, a realistic picture of a dull scene which contains an undercurrent of torpid activity. Forster (Brett 1983: 5) recognizes the paradox in characterizing the writing as quiet, even dreary, yet vivid. It has a tension between movement and stasis, an intrinsically musical one which would attract Britten. Born and brought up in Lowestoft, he would also recognize and appreciate the Suffolk landscape depicted. But this is not just a description of nature: it is seen from Peter’s viewpoint. Its gentleness is
deceptive. The following lines, also quoted by Forster, relate it more explicitly to a character study of Peter:

Here dull and hopeless he’ll lie down and trace
How sidelong Crabs had scrawl’d their crooked race;
Or listen sadly to the tuneless cry
Of fishing Gull or clanging Golden-eye;
What time the Sea-birds to the Marsh would come,
And the loud Bittern, from the Bull-rush home,
Gave from the Salt-ditch side the bellowing Boom:
He nurst the feelings these dull Scenes produce,
And lov’d to stop beside the opening Sluice;

(Borough, XXII, 192–200) ¹

Here is a dramatic evocation of sounds. The activity of crabs and birds is contrasted with the passive witness of Peter, who seems to be in a trance. New (1976: 97) comments on the vividness of the psychological landscape, the way natural activities are rendered unpleasant and the terms ‘nurst’ and ‘lov’d’, which should celebrate relationships, are warped by introversion. So Crabbe would accept Forster’s ‘dreary’ as a compliment.

Can anything of this be detected in the opera Grimes? Through direct quotation in 1.1² Slater assimilates the picture of inured routine of Crabbe’s verse. There are other passages where Slater, in more laconic versification, conveys much the same mood. When Balstrode asks Peter what he is rooted by, he replies:

(Grimes 1979: 11, lines 35-8)

¹In The Listener text read by Britten, line 192 reads ‘he’d’.
²See Introduction to 1.1 §1.1.1
Peter ends his account of his first apprentice’s death:

(Grimes 1979: 12, lines 30-33)

As in the case of New’s comment above, the naturally comforting activity of returning home is here rendered an unpleasant duty of facing the consequences of a suspicious death. It is also demonstrable here that Slater has mirrored a positive feature of Crabbe noted by Forster, that he is ‘easy to read’ (Brett 1983: 4). This accessibility, this focus on basic issues, is a good model for a libretto.

Forster’s quotations highlight Crabbe’s strengths: the ability to convey a natural environment in detail but plainly, and to relate that to human experience and perception. Edgecombe (1983: 138–144) points out how Crabbe’s approach differs markedly from the norm of a poet distilling elevating reflections from a particular landscape presented in an ordered progression. Crabbe, rather, gives us a random progression which is that of Peter’s mind (Edgecombe 1983: 144–5). Sigworth (1965 110-11) writes that Crabbe’s concentration on the inner world of Peter prevents him from being a ‘nature poet’ but it is this very concentration which is key to his appeal today. The psychological impact of the natural environment is arguably the main interest of Crabbe’s work today and in creating the opera Grimes it is also important to Britten and Slater as it is of particular pertinence to the presentation of a drama.
§1.2 Character study & the scope for satire

The other quotations in Forster’s article introduce the Vicar:

‘I am escap’d’, he said, when none pursued;
When none attack’d him, ‘I am unsubdued;’
‘Oh! pleasing pangs of Love,’ he sang again,
Cold to the joy, and stranger to the pain.
Ev’n in his age would he address the Young,
‘I too have felt these fires, and they are strong’;
But from the time he left his favourite Maid,
To antient Females his devoirs were paid;
And still they miss him after Morning-Prayer;

(Borough, III, 55–63)

These lines come in the context that this Vicar, always fearful of causing any
offence, never revealed his interest in the lady in question. She accepted a
demonstrative suitor. The lines are cast in the polite veneer which is exactly the
Vicar’s manner but come with Crabbe’s analysis which divines that he is scrupulous
because he is passionless. At the same time Crabbe gives a rounded picture: the
Vicar is appreciated by those of the same temperament. This capacity for a double-
edged approach is an attractive element in Crabbe’s work.

Forster’s next quotation charts the Vicar’s only unruffled reaction, in relation
to innovation, but then notes the ultimate lack of impact made by equanimity:

Habit with him was all the test of Truth,
‘It must be right: I’ve done it from my youth.’
Questions he answer’d in as brief a way,
‘It must be wrong – it was of yesterday.’

Though mild benevolence our priest possess’d,
’Twas but by wishes or by words express’d:
Circles in water, as they wider flow,
The less conspicuous in their progress grow;
And when at last they touch upon the shore,
Distinction ceases, and they’re view’d no more.
Cranne’s moral is clear: deeds are the only proof of the sincerity of words and there should be an open minded approach to innovation. But he presents his critique in a smooth and elegant manner which acknowledges those qualities in the Vicar.

Forster’s final quotation shows Cranre creating an epitaph for the Vicar in the varied reactions of his parishioners:

Now rests our Vicar. They who knew him best,
Proclaim his Life t’have been entirely rest;
Free from all evils which disturb his Mind,
Whom Studies vex and Controversies blind.

The Rich approv’d — of them in awe he stood;
The Poor admir’d — they all believ’d him good:
The Old and Serious of his Habits spoke;
The Frank and Youthful lov’d his pleasant Joke;
Mothers approv’d a safe contented Guest,
And Daughters one who back’d each small request:
In him his Flock found nothing to condemn;
Him Sectaries lik’d, — he never troubled them;
No trifles fail’d his yielding Mind to please,
And all his Passions sunk in early Ease;
Nor one so old has left this World of Sin,
More like the Being that he enter’d in.

The omniscience of this verse, its broad survey of community reaction, is attractive. The sting in the tail, the Vicar as Forster neatly puts it remaining innocent because he has had no experience, is equally well groomed and barbed. Again with his double-edged approach, Cranre still commemorates the Vicar’s affability. Forster’s reading of Cranre emphasizes his more stern side. He states that Cranre’s speciality is ‘the analysis and censure of weakness’ (Brett 1983: 6). Analysis

3 In The Listener text read by Britten line 149 reads ‘effect which never’.
certainly, but censure is too strong a term for Crabbe’s approach: rather does he imply there are better ways of acting.

How far does this portrait and approach influence Slater in the opera *Grimes*? In 2.1 the Rector is criticized for not providing moral guidance (*Grimes* 1979: 26, lines 30-38) but this criticism comes from Boles who has already shown antagonism to Auntie in 1.1 (*Grimes* 1979: 6, line 11) and Balstrode in 1.2 (*Grimes* 1979: 16, SD following line 25) and, later in 1.2, Peter (*Grimes* 1979: 18, SD following line 29).

Slater’s Rector is to some degree a man of action. Late in 2.1 he instigates the posse to visit Peter at home (*Grimes* 1979: 28, line 9). Once there, in 2.2, he is punctilious about health and safety (*Grimes* 1979: 33, line 7) and directs a tidy end to the visit (*Grimes* 1979: 33, line 20). Yet he is also generous in his appreciation of Peter’s tidiness (*Grimes* 1979: 33, lines 10-12). Slater’s characterization of the Rector, therefore, responds more to the double-edged nature of Crabbe’s portrait than to Forster’s emphasis on weakness and censure.

Slater’s satire is softer, kindlier. He might have read an earlier piece by Forster on Crabbe, his introduction to *The life of George Crabbe by his son*, in which he states that a positive feature of Crabbe is that he ‘cared about little things’ (Forster 1932a: xi). These may be symbolic of larger issues. Slater takes his cue from Crabbe’s reference to the Vicar’s prowess at gardening and drawing a moral thereby:

To a small Garden with delight he came,
And gave successive Flowers a Summer’s fame;
These he presented with a grace his own
To his fair Friends, and made their beauties known,
Not without moral compliment; how they,
‘Like Flowers were sweet, and must like Flowers decay.’

*(Borough, III, 85–90)*

Slater displays the Rector’s charm on putting in a civil appearance but leaving the party early *(Grimes 1979: 37, lines 6–9).*

Forster *(1932: xv)* states that Crabbe is not a satirist comparable in force to Pope, but does he attempt to be? Slater succeeds in adopting Crabbe’s gentler, more smiling satire. Later in the same scene in the opera, 3.1, Slater invents his own ‘little thing’, the apprentice’s jersey which Ellen finds on the beach, the poignant significance of which she then dwells on in her ‘embroidery aria’ *(Grimes 1979: 38, lines 5–18).* And Forster is unfair in dismissing Crabbe’s capability as a satirist. His handling, for instance, of the bawd ‘Auntie’ and her ‘nieces’

4 displays both wry amusement and disapprobation. Crabbe’s satire gave Slater an opening to introduce comedy into his libretto. Poetry, especially that written by a priest, ought to instruct, perhaps provoke, but an opera should also entertain and comedy relieve its overall tragic progression. There is no comedy as such in Crabbe but in 1.2 Slater has the nieces coming downstairs in their nightclothes and Balstrode mimicking their fright *(Grimes 1979: 15, lines 18–19).* In 1.1 there is Mrs. Sedley desperate to get her laudanum pills *(Grimes 1979: 10, line 14).* This is an ironic reversal of Crabbe’s inveighing against pill-pushers in *Borough, VII*, 75–90.

4 See *Introduction to 1.2 §1.1.1*
§2. How Britten continued

§2.1 Getting to know Crabbe’s Grimes

In 1941 Peter Pears found and bought Crabbe 1851, as a result of which he and Britten started mapping out the opera in scenarios (Appendix A). It is likely that they began by reading Letter XXII, ‘The Poor of Borough: Peter Grimes’ where Peter is one case study within a series of the poor (XIX-XXII) prefaced by Letter XVIII, ‘The Poor and their Dwellings’, a stanza from which (263–73) is the source for the set of Peter’s hut.\(^5\) Peter is defined by his poverty. It is a characteristic and a bond he shares with Ellen, though his response to it is very different. Ellen accepts her lot and manages her resources accordingly. Peter has unfulfilled desires and seeks resources to finance these. Crabbe’s Peter steals and poaches to drink and gamble. The Peter of Slater’s libretto works all hours to try to get together enough money to set up shop, become respectable in the community and marry Ellen.

Britten read Letter XXII, provoked by Forster’s summary: ‘a savage fisherman who murdered his apprentices and was haunted by their ghosts’ (Brett 1983: 4). What questions might have been going through his mind? I suggest three:

1. Why was Peter savage?
2. Why did Peter murder his apprentices?
3. How did Peter murder them?

Having read Letter XXII, and this is a tribute to Crabbe’s writing, he might well have had two further questions:

4. Did Peter murder them?
5. What is the key issue?

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\(^5\) See Introduction to 2.2 §4
I shall consider these questions in turn for Crabbe and in §2.2 chart Slater’s response in his libretto. The final question will be considered separately in §3.

1. Why was Peter savage?
The lack of maternal influence (his mother died when he was young) and an innately rebellious nature which baulked first at his father’s piety and sense of propriety and, after his father’s early death, at all instruments of authority.

2. Why did Peter murder his apprentices?
Possibly because they might disclose he ‘tortures’ them. But the likelihood for this is weak owing to the community’s indifference:

But none enquir’d how Peter us’d the Rope,
Or what the Bruise, that made the Stripling stoop;
None could the Ridges on his Back behold,
None sought him shiv’ring in the Winter’s Cold;

*(Borough, XXII, 69–72)*

Indeed it could be argued that Peter exploits this standard, *laissez-faire* attitude. This leaves only the possibility that Peter fears a complaint of sexual abuse. Such is most strongly implied with regard to Peter’s third apprentice:

Strange that a Frame so weak could bear so long
The grossest Insult and the foulest Wrong;

*(Borough, XXII, 130–31)*

But it may also be the full meaning of ‘His Bed uneasy’ (i.e. productive of physical discomfort, *OED*, adj.1.a.) as applied to the first apprentice. Arguably Crabbe is here using common words for which a special meaning may be deduced in context.

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*6 Borough*, XXII, 93.

*7 Borough*, XXII, 92.
3. How did Peter murder his apprentices?

The first apprentice was starved, physically, psychologically and perhaps sexually abused over a long period:

Thus liv’d the Lad in Hunger, Peril, Pain,
His Tears despis’d, his Supplications vain:
Compelled by fear to lie, by need to steal,
His Bed uneasy and unblest his Meal,
For three sad Years the Boy his Tortures bore,
And then his Pains and Trials were no more.

(Borough, XXII, 89–94)

The second apprentice was found dead in Peter’s boat’s well with a blow consistent with having fallen from the mast. The third apprentice, already ill, on an unaccustomed long and stormy sea trip, died when the drinking water ran out.

4. Did Peter murder them?

Taking the legal definition of murder, ‘criminal homicide with malice aforethought’ (OED n.1.a), however suspicious the circumstances of the apprentices’ deaths, there is insufficient evidence to charge Peter with murder. However, in the case of the first and third apprentices it would appear possible to charge Peter with manslaughter defined as ‘when one person causes the death of another unintentionally by culpable negligence’ (OED n.2.), ‘negligence’ being understood in its legal sense as ‘failure to carry out a legally imposed duty of care’ (OED n.1.b.). By accepting a fee when the apprentice was bound to him, Peter’s duty of care is legally imposed. In the case of the second apprentice, unless it could be proved that Peter encouraged him to climb the mast and never warned him against the danger of doing so, the apprentice climbing it without permission might not be regarded as lack of reasonable care.
§2.2 Transforming Crabbe’s Grimes

The metamorphosis of Crabbe’s Grimes by Slater is sufficient to require tweaking of my questions so that viable answers can be made.

1. Is Slater’s Peter savage?

He is hot tempered and violent, but only when provoked. Not until 2.1, when a bruise is discovered on the second apprentice’s neck, does ill treatment become a concern and Peter’s explanation, ‘Out of the hurly burly!’ (Grimes 1979: 24, line 11) is plausible enough, given that the bruise coincides with a tear in the boy’s coat (Grimes 1979: 21, line 32). In the next scene, anxious to get a catch, Peter threatens the boy but immediately becomes more conciliatory (Grimes 1979: 30, lines 8-9).

At the draft libretto stage Britten added one quotation from Letter XXI, ‘Grimes is at his exercise’ (in the final text first occurring at Grimes 1979: 25, line 4). Rhythmically it first fixes long on Grimes, spotlighting him, six and a half crotchet beats on its first appearance, then three quavers finished off by the march-like briskness of the dotted quaver/semiquaver/crotchet rhythm on ‘exercise’. Melodically it repeats Peter’s cry after striking Ellen, ‘And God have mercy upon me’ and returns as the ground bass of the Passacaglia as Peter is frogmarching his apprentice to his hut to go fishing.

The idea, then, is given considerable and continuing emphasis, but what does it mean? In Crabbe it is stated ‘calmly’. In the opera its power and tension lies in

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8 Grimes 1963 [source P]: 284.
9 ibid.: 282.
10 ibid.: 349-66.
11 Borough, XXII, 78.
its ambiguity. Wilcox (1997:24) argues it means sexual abuse. But Ned and his companions sing of those coming out of church ‘Each one’s at his exercise’ (2.1.225) which suggests it simply means Grimes is doing what he feels is right.

2. Why might Slater’s Peter murder his apprentices?
There is no obvious reason. The only evidence of physical abuse is the bruise on John’s neck which Peter plausibly explains as ‘Out of the hurly-burly!’ (Grimes 1979: 24, line 11) The possibility of sexual abuse is never raised.

3. Why did Peter’s apprentices die in Slater?
Only one apprentice has died at the beginning of the opera. The circumstances are virtually as Crabbe’s third apprentice, the least suspicious death of the three, except that here the boy only became ill as a result of the storm at sea. Balstrode voices a reasonable assessment (Grimes 1979: 12, lines 18-19). John dies in the opera through falling down the cliff when urged on by Peter as he throws down ropes and nets (Grimes 1979: 32, lines 29-30).

4. Did Slater’s Peter murder them?
In the first case, the apprentice who is the subject of the Prologue’s coroner’s court, there is insufficient evidence to charge Peter with murder. It would be possible to charge Peter with manslaughter if it could be proved, as the draft text indicates, that Peter had been negligent in not filling the water keg (0.d92–d93). But in the final text Peter simply states the water supply ran out and Swallow records the death as accidental (0.105). With Slater’s skewing of the financial arrangements regarding
Peter Grimes

apprenticeship, Peter does not have a legally imposed duty of care, though it could be argued he has a moral one. In the second case, Peter’s telling John to close his eyes as he goes down, in effect an unfamiliar cliff whose structure had recently changed owing to landslide, could be construed as murder. But in context Peter has already warned him to take care (Grimes 1979: 32, lines 22-3). Peter might argue telling him to close his eyes is to calm the boy’s fear at the initial exit from his hut. He might also admit manslaughter under the defence ‘when one person causes the death of another ... intentionally but under provocation, while suffering from diminished responsibility’ (OED n.2.). His argument here would be that the approaching procession’s threats of violence (Grimes 1979: 32, line 26) caused him to fear for his safety and panic.

12 See Introduction to 1.1 §1.1.3
§2.3 Characters & seascapes inspired by 
*The Borough*

Where passages from *The Borough* are a significant source for a scene, *e.g.* Auntie and her ‘nieces’ in 1.2, this is discussed in the introduction to it. The Vicar, as has been demonstrated in §1.2 is broadly but not exactly the model for the Rector in the opera. There are three other characters besides Peter whose names are taken from *The Borough*:

§2.3.1 Ellen

Ellen Orford, like Peter, is one of ‘The Poor of Borough’ with a Letter devoted to her (XX). The other ‘Poor’, like Peter, turn bad. The Parish Clerk (XIX) is caught stealing from the collection and loses his job. Abel Keene (XI) takes up late a life of pleasure and is left with guilt as well as destitution. Ellen is an exception not only among the Poor but in *The Borough* as a whole. She suffers more misfortune than anyone. She is early disgraced by giving birth to a daughter through an unfaithful lover. The daughter is born dumb and an idiot. A man does marry her and she has 5 sons. Like her daughter they all die, some more shamefully than others. A schoolmistress, she loses her job when she goes blind. She bears all this with Christian faith, fortitude and humility:

‘And as my Mind looks cheerful to my End, 
I love Mankind and call my God my Friend.’

(Borough, XX, 336–7)
Ellen’s story is moving as an expression in the first person of the agony of rejection, of hopes dashed, of the dejection that comes to a mother when her children die, particularly given the circumstances of some of the deaths. Crabbe’s focus is on this experience rather than Ellen’s patient response. Though a priest, as a poet he knew that sanctity is boring. In the opera Slater respects but softens her story (Grimes 1979: 9, SD after line 11).

Here Slater draws the moral more directly than Crabbe. Slater’s Ellen is to be a force of active benevolence. Crabbe’s Ellen has the easier task of simply being in relief to the neutral, albeit judging, community. Slater’s Ellen is more combative in her 1.1 aria (Grimes 1979: 9, lines 35-6; 10, lines 1-10), more emotively maternal in her 3.1 embroidery aria (Grimes 1979: 38, lines 5-18). But, like Crabbe’s Ellen, she also has the courage to face and accept the consequences of the situation: in 2.1 that she and Peter have failed (Grimes 1979: 24, line 35) and in 3.1 that Peter is now beyond help (Grimes 1979: 38, line 20) when respectively Peter and Balstrode believe something can be salvaged.

With the two other characters whose names are taken from The Borough, Ned and Swallow, the link is looser, yet an influence can be gleaned.

§2.3.2 Ned

Ned is Crabbe’s example of a quack intended to provoke derision, for Crabbe’s stand against quacks is unequivocal:

But now our Quacks are Gamesters, and they play With Craft and Skill to ruin and betray; With monstrous Promise they delude the Mind, And thrive on all that tortures Human-kind. (Borough, VII, 71–4)
Ned is barely literate and lives totally by trickery. He sweetens an acidic potion to make it palatable, then everything is down to the power of suggestion. He sets up as a Doctor and, dressed appropriately, is deemed knowledgeable and trusted even by those who know and scorn his poor origin because they want to believe the potion will make them better. Slater’s Ned is only an apothecary and therefore less presumptuous. His only identified ‘victim’ is Mrs. Sedley, who is unpopular in the community (0.45.3). He is highly literate: the nearest thing to a Shakespearian fool in the opera. He comes out with quips, such as at when the storm is looming (Grimes 1979: 11, lines 16-19). He brings a fresh, irreverent perspective and we like him for it even as we observe he runs with the hare and rides with the hounds: one who can obtain an apprentice for Peter yet join the posse to confront him. His surname, Keene, Slater has confusingly taken from another character in Borough, Abel Keene in XXI. He is not at all like Ned but a teacher who transfers late in life to a merchant’s office and then takes up the idle pleasures he might have been excused for in youth, to his undoing.

§2.3.3 Swallow

Swallow is an attorney, a cunning swindler, summed up by Crabbe as ‘An hard bad Man, who prey’d upon the Weak.’\(^\text{13}\) He is sinister. His confidence trickery is at an altogether greater level than Ned the quack’s. It encompasses entire estates. Slater’s Swallow, on the other hand, is a buffoon with just enough wit to retain his position as mayor and coroner (Grimes 1979: 2, SD before line 1). But his true colours are nothing more than attempting to seduce Niece 1 at the beginning of 3.1 (Grimes

\(^\text{13}\) Borough, VI, 377.
1979: 34, lines 1-35). While we laugh with Ned, we laugh at Swallow, but as with Ned we like him and allow him his place in the community. He fulfils a necessary function, as the words Slater gives him (Grimes 1979: 26, lines 5-6), although arguably he too readily complies with the fudge that, instead of having an adult apprentice, Peter can have a boy as long as Ellen helps look after him. The character Crabbe would have in such a post, if not the swindler Swallow, is, in lines worthy of Pope, grimmer. He appears as recalled by a schoolmistress like Ellen but of higher rank, the headmistress of a prep school:

A Burgess comes, and she remembers well
How hard her task to make his Worship spell;
Cold, selfish, dull, inanimate, unkind,
‘Twas but by Anger he display’d a Mind:
Now civil, smiling, complaisant, and gay,
The World has worn th’unsocial Crust away;
That sullen Spirit now a softness wears,
And, save by fits, e’en Dulness disappears:
But still the Matron can the Man behold,
Dull, selfish, hard, inanimate and cold.

(Borough, XXIV, 49–58)

§2.3.4 Boles

Descriptions of two further characters in Borough provided a model for Slater to develop them and provide his own names for them. First, the ranter:

Much he discourses, and of various points,
All unconnected, void of limbs and joints;
He rails, persuades, explains, and moves the Will,
By fierce bold Words, and strong mechanic Skill.

(Borough, IV, 272–5)

This is the model for Bob Boles, demonstrably so in that Slater quotes 274–5 (Introduction & Synopsis, 62–3). But 272–3 are also significant because they point
to the haphazard nature of the vehemence. Boles’s rants in recitative are recurrent and wide-ranging but brief. They provide a passing diversion but do not command the attention, unlike Ellen’s lengthy aria in 1.1 (Grimes 1979: 9, lines 35-6; 10, lines 1-10).

Crabbe ridicules zealots because of their capacity to harm:

’Tis he who wakes the nameless strong desire,
The melting rapture, and the glowing fire;
’Tis he who pierces deep the tortur’d breast,
And stirs the terrors, never more to rest.

(Borough, IV, 24–7)

Slater’s Borough community already has the desire to suppress Peter. Its purpose is not religious fervour but vengeance. Nevertheless Boles at times is instigator (Grimes 1979: 26, lines 30-38).

§2.3.5 Mrs. Sedley

Second, there’s the scandalmonger found in the tea parties of those ancient females who so enjoyed the Vicar’s company:

Ye Lilies male! Think (as your Tea you sip,
While the Town Small-talk flows from lip to lip;
Intrigues half-gather’d, Conversation-scrapes,
Kitchen-cabals, and Nursery-mishaps,)

(Borough, III, 69–72)

Slater quotes 70-72 as the prototype for Mrs. Sedley (Introduction & Synopsis, 28–30) but the original context clarifies that Crabbe derides this activity and all its participants as frivolous. Yet there is nothing frivolous about the gossip in the opera. Britten’s added opening statement of the Chorus in the Prologue to Grimes refers to the personal damage caused by gossip (Grimes 1979: 3, lines 23-4; 4, lines 33-4).

Mrs. Sedley is not the only character who engages in it. Boles states that Ellen assisted Peter in child abuse (Grimes 1979: 27, line 5). However, Mrs. Sedley exactly
illustrates the Crabbe quotation at *Grimes* 1979: 28, lines 14-15. The clue which she hoards and of which she boasts is flimsy enough: she eavesdrops part of the conversation between Ellen and John earlier in 2.1 about the bruise on his neck. In 3.1 Ned dismisses Mrs. Sedley’s display of Crabbe’s ‘Intrigues half-gather’d’ when with nothing more than suspicion (*Grimes* 1979: 36, line 2), she is quick to deduce murder (*Grimes* 1979: 36, line 14). Nevertheless, overhearing in 3.1 the conversation between Ellen and Balstrode that Peter’s boat is back enables her to raise the alarm to Swallow and thus instigate the manhunt. The irrational and rational are thereby juxtaposed and the boundaries between them blurred. Like Boles, Mrs. Sedley is a comic character, but this is black comedy. Both are figures of ridicule in the community who at the same time stoke its malaise.

This collection of characters ultimately sourced in Crabbe leaves only Balstrode and Hobson as characters entirely imagined by Slater.
§2.3.6 Seascapes

Again the link is not specific, but it is plausible to believe that Britten reading these passages in Crabbe’s General Description might have found inspiration for creating equivalent orchestral portraits. Britten’s interludes indicate a sensitivity to Crabbe’s seascapes. Interlude 1, Dawn, has the sudden surprise of a crescendo to a climax and as quickly a diminuendo\(^\text{14}\) which match:

\begin{quote}
Yet sometimes comes a ruffling Cloud to make
The quiet surface of the Ocean shake;
As an awaken’d Giant with a frown,
Might shew his wrath, and then to sleep sink down.
\end{quote}

\textit{(Borough, I, 190–93)}

Interlude 5, Moonlight, is essentially a quieter scene than Crabbe’s, yet it is flecked by loud passages as if of the sudden illumination\(^\text{15}\) Crabbe celebrates:

\begin{quote}
From parted Clouds the Moon her radiance throws
On the wild Waves and all the Danger shows;
But shews them beaming in her shining vest,
Terrific splendour! Gloom in glory drest!
This for a moment, and then Clouds again,
Hide every beam, and fear and darkness reign.
\end{quote}

\textit{(Borough, I, 261–6)}

Interlude 2, Storm, shows Britten depicting in music the animation of Crabbe’s verse, its continuity of action and effect, its awesome force and dimensions. Britten contrasts this with a calm centre indicating Peter’s ecstasy within the storm\(^\text{16}\) but Crabbe has his own contrast (211–13) of a broader perspective:

\begin{quote}
All where the eye delights, yet dreads to roam,
The breaking Billows cast the flying Foam
Upon the Billows rising — all the Deep
Is restless change; the Waves so swell’d and steep,
\end{quote}

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{14} Grimes 1963 {source P}: 32-3.
\textsuperscript{15} ibid.: e.g. 400-01, 403.
\textsuperscript{16} ibid.: 157-62.
Breaking and sinking, and the sunken swells,
Nor one, one moment, in its station dwells:
But nearer Land you may the Billows trace,
As if contending in their watery chace;
May watch the mightiest till the Shoal they reach,
Then break and hurry to their utmost stretch;
Curl’d as they come, they strike with furious force,
And then re-flowing, take their grating course,
Raking the rounded Flints, which ages past
Roll’d by their rage, and shall to ages last.

(Borough, I, 200–213)
§3. In search of the key issue

§3.1 Crabbe & the key issue

Murder starts as a spectre, a possibility, a suspicion without proof, in the case of Peter’s first apprentice. Doubts increase with the second, but again the evidence is consistent with Peter’s story. When the third apprentice dies, accusation is openly made:

The pitying Women rais’d a Clamour round,
And weeping said, ‘Thou hast thy ’Prentice drown’d.

(Borough, XXII, 153–4)

This outcry is the catalyst to the story’s dénouement, but neither the truth nor falsehood of it can be proven. It is, however, significant for it is what the community wishes to believe. Why? Because it recognizes its own guilt in not acting earlier to prevent a chain of deaths. The resultant third inquest brings the Mayor’s action, to ban Peter from hiring another boy apprentice and for the community to refuse to offer him any assistance. Murder is the climactic point of focus but I suggest that it is only one of three elements that sustain the poem and give it continuing interest, the others being conscience and isolation. I have just touched on the late surfacing of the community’s conscience, that is guilt. Peter’s conscience appears much earlier.

Conscience is a haunting shadow over the activity of the poem. Peter is first struck by it after his father’s death, even while drunk:

Yes! Then he wept, and to his Mind there came
Much of his Conduct, and he felt the Shame, —
How he had oft the good Old Man revil’d,
And never paid the Duty of a Child:

(Borough, XXII, 12–15)
This conscience, here termed ‘shame’, does not prevent Peter from exploiting, abusing and ending up with two dead apprentices, but with the second apprentice, who falls from the boat’s mast through the deck hatchway, conscience makes a sudden second appearance in the poem:

‘What said the Jury?’ — they were long in doubt,
But sturdy Peter faced the matter out:
So they dismiss’d him, saying at the time,
‘Keep fast your Hatchway when you’ve Boys who climb.’
This hit the Conscience, and he colour’d more
Than for the closest questions put before

(Borough, XXII, 112–17)

Is this a recurrence of the concept of duty or the sting of the community castigating Peter for a lack of professionalism? There is a paradox here. Peter does not care about his behaviour or the community yet wants to operate within that community and be recognized as able to do so. This paradox is developed much further in Slater’s version. Crabbe’s passage is also odd. ‘Keep fast your Hatchway when you’ve Boys who climb’ is a jaunty retort for a jury with an almost jocular tone to match the bizarre circumstances of the death:

And what his Fate? — One night it chanc’d he fell
From the Boat’s Mast and perish’d in her Well,
Where Fish were living kept, and where the Boy
(So reason’d Men) could not himself destroy: —

(Borough, XXII, 104–7)

Does this mean that the jury, remembering the suspicious circumstances of the death of the first apprentice, wonder if the second has been goaded into suicide? Is the ‘Hatchway’ reprimand appropriate? A fall from the mast onto the deck will be at least as injurious as one onto fish. It is there because Crabbe needs at this point a
fresh admonition to prick Peter’s conscience. The oddity of Crabbe’s judicial proceedings and the resultant image made its mark with Slater who takes up the image for his first apprentice’s death and then has the coroner making jocular play with language (Grimes 1979: 3, lines 1-4).

Crabbe’s third reference to Peter’s conscience shows that its second appearance did affect his subsequent action:

And though stern Peter, with a cruel Hand,
And knotted Rope, enforce’d the rude Command,
Yet he consider’d what he’d lately felt,
And his vile Blows with selfish Pity dealt (Borough, XXII, 134–7)

How stingingly ironic is ‘selfish Pity’ and it confirms Crabbe’s moral purpose.

Crabbe’s fourth reference to Peter’s conscience is a graphic example of it in operation during his terminal illness:

The Priest attending, found he spoke at times
As one alluding to his Fears and Crimes:
‘It was the fall,’ he mutter’d, ‘I can show
The manner how — I never struck a blow.’ —
And then aloud — ‘Unhand me, free my Chain;
On Oath, he fell — it struck him to the Brain: - - -
Why ask my Father? — that old Man will swear
Against my Life; besides, he wasn’t there: - - -
What, all agreed? — Am I to die to-day? —
My Lord, in mercy, give me time to pray.’ (Borough, XXII, 268–77)

What gives these lines power is their tension between rational affirmation of innocence and irrational but suspicious guilt. Crabbe sums up Peter’s state and remaining monologue:

’Twas part Confession and the rest Defence,
A Madman’s Tale, with gleams of waking Sense. (Borough, XXII, 288–9)
Murder is the dramatic pointer to the real issue for Crabbe, which is guilt. It is conscience and isolation which are the prime concerns of Crabbe’s concentration on the aftermath for Peter, once banned from having another boy apprentice, which takes up 210 of the poem’s 375 lines. Peter tells of his vision of his father and 2 boys who daily haunt him on the river and incite him to drown himself. Although there were 3 dead apprentices there are only 2 boys because in the vision the father holds one in each hand. At this point comes Crabbe’s fifth reference to Peter’s conscience. This entails revealing additional information previously concealed. The father speaks first:

“Didst thou not draw thy Knife?” said he:— ’Twas true,
But I had Pity and my Arm withdrew:
He cried for Mercy, which I kindly gave,
But he has no Compassion in his Grave.  

(Borough, XXII, 334–7)

In this case Peter refers again to his ‘Pity’, echoing the ‘selfish Pity’ he had used in his blows on his apprentice.

In the sixth and final reference Peter’s conscience is termed ‘guilt’, echoing the first reference which is to its synonym ‘shame’. Again the action is provided by the father and the two boys, the former having just thrown fire and blood in Peter’s face, Peter’s fantasy now having become sentient hallucination:

‘Still there they stood, and forc’d me to behold
A place of Horrors — they cannot be told —
Where the Flood open’d, there I heard the Shriek
Of tortur’d Guilt — no earthly Tongue can speak:
“All Days alike! For ever!” did they say,
“And unremitted Torments every Day.” —
It is not the Mayor but his own conscience that passes sentence on Peter who dies as he sees the ghosts coming yet again.

For Crabbe the issue is fundamentally a moral one. Whether Peter murdered some, all, or none of his apprentices, he wronged them, just as he wronged his father. For these and lesser wrongs, such as theft and drunkenness, the Borough society is for the most part inefficient in exacting a penalty but Peter’s own conscience or inherent guilt is the effective if severe judge.

I have stated that isolation is also a significant element. Conveying isolation, that is the psychological in relation to the physical environment, would have appealed to Crabbe the poet just as charting a clear moral would have been needful for Crabbe the priest. A key representation of isolation is the opening two quotations in §1.1 of these perspectives on Crabbe and the entire section is necessarily concerned with it. But another point may be made, that having been rejected by the community Peter in turn chooses to live apart from it. Crabbe is sensitive to the paradox of the outcome of this: any further contact with society is distressing, but Peter still feels this normality should be possible for him:

And though he felt forsaken, griev’d at heart,
To think he liv’d from all Mankind apart;
Yet, if a Man approach’d, in terrors he would start.

Having been banned in a limited sense, Crabbe’s Peter assigns to himself the psychological make-up of the banished. He is in any event outcast from society. But
for Crabbe this is no more than a colour, an evocative background that occasionally brings further into relief the main issue of guilt. By contrast, with Slater, being outcast is the main issue in terms of driving Peter’s hopeless endeavours and being haunted, arguably by guilt and therefore conscience, an element that requires attention in relation to that issue.

§3.2 Slater & the key issue

There is only one dead apprentice at the beginning of *Grimes* but the community’s response to the coroner’s verdict of accidental death is severe (*Grimes* 1979: 4, lines 35-6).

The first response of the Borough community links Peter to guilt: they are implying that ‘guilty of murder’ should have been the verdict. Peter courageously addresses this at *Grimes* 1979: 4, lines 28-31. His request to stand trial is ignored by Swallow. In the duet with Ellen closing the Prologue two other issues emerge. Peter terms the severity of response the community’s ‘hate’. This is not a matter of reasonable suspicion but animosity. The community would have reason for this regarding Crabbe’s Peter: his disrespectful treatment of his father, drinking, gambling, poaching and stealing from farms. But Slater’s Peter is never accused of any of these activities except for a query whether he is drunk after his 1.2 ‘Great Bear’ aria (*Grimes* 1979: 17, lines 32-33; 18, lines 1-13), So what is the reason? 2.1 suggests Britten’s quotation of Crabbe, ‘Grimes is at his exercise’, expectation that Peter is maltreating his apprentice, one that the community, itself feeling guilty, is only now beginning to address. Another possibility is that Peter is simply disliked because he
Peter Grimes

Perspectives on Crabbe

is an outsider, because he has and voices different thoughts to their different norm, shown in his ‘Great Bear’ aria which I shall consider shortly.

The second issue to emerge here is equally significant. Peter is haunted: (Grimes 1979: 5, lines 16-21). These lines seem to refer to Slater’s original and Crabbe’s broader context of the death of more than one apprentice and therefore ghosts. ‘The dead are witness’ suggests a collective body and recalls the three who confront Peter at the end of Crabbe’s Letter XXII. The lines appear rambling and exaggerated in Slater’s revised context of only one dead apprentice, with ‘drowning’ a metaphor for death in the vicinity of water. Neither Slater’s nor Crabbe’s apprentices die by drowning. The evocative line added by Britten in 2.2 about hearing voices that can’t be drowned has the same difficulty of explanation. The point, however, is that Peter is haunted by a spirit known to him, or spirits it could be argued magnified by his imagination, and that suggests guilt, which takes us back to that term first used by the community in the Prologue. On the one hand Peter asserts his innocence, on the other, though Slater only implies this rather than explicates it as Crabbe does, he has a guilty conscience. Why? Perhaps for taking the boy on an extended trip. Or simply because of the tragedy of the death as referenced at the end of 1.1 (Grimes 1979: 13, lines 34-5), There are still more significant lines in 1.1 where Peter contrasts to Balstrode his perspective with that of the Borough folk (Grimes 1979: 12, lines 40-44). His use of the word ‘fiery’ suggests nightmare or hallucination. It also recalls hallucinations of fire near the end of Crabbe’s Letter XXII. We the audience are likely to empathize with Peter’s visions, as in his

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23 Borough, XXII, 308-75.
24 Borough, XXII, 348-61.
‘Great Bear’ aria that I refer to next, but will also agree with Balstrode that his dream to make his fortune and then marry Ellen rather than the other way around is unrealistic. So the issue for Slater’s Peter is never living in the present, always either haunted by the past or dreaming of the future. Crabbe’s Peter shares with him the first but not the second characteristic. This also explains why Peter finds it difficult to relate to people and, despite the testimonials in 2.1 from Ellen to his hard work (Grimes 1979: 23, lines 35-6) and from Balstrode to his efficiency (Grimes 1979: 25, lines 25-6), does not prosper.

Taking these factors together Slater’s Peter may be viewed as a victim: still more directly so in relation to the community. At his entrance in 1.2 the malevolence of the community towards him is confirmed, as they state he is a predatory devil (Grimes 1979: 17, lines 26-8). Peter is associated with unnamed devilish activity in relation to his apprentice. Peter, on the other hand, enters with his ‘Great Bear’ aria (Grimes 1979: 17, lines 32-3; 18, 1-13). This provides the chief evidence how Peter differs from everyone else in the opera in his capacity for visionary poetic statement. It also marks out the gulf between Peter and the rest. As Anthony Rolfe Johnson (1994) put it in the context of playing Grimes ‘Where you and I are different, folk, is I look up there.’ Another interpreter, Jon Vickers (1984: 835), sees Britten’s Grimes as ‘an aesthete’ as distinct from Crabbe’s ‘monster’. Unlike the reasoning of Ellen and Balstrode, this is a text of observation and acceptance, yet also one of Peter’s fiery visions of 1.1. His thoughts are of human grief but he puts this into a cosmic context. He has optimism that change can happen if fate is friendly but by the very use of the term ‘fate’ this comes with the resignation that it might not be. Having
considered the future, he then returns to the past, he can’t change it and start afresh. Here is sorrow and regret, but is it also remorse? Terror, horror and sorrow are the elements which haunt him. Peter refers to these in his version of the round in 1.2. And also ‘Davy Jones’, which suggests the apprentice being snatched by the evil spirits of the deep, devilish activity but not of Peter’s making. In 2.1 the community counters this by associating the guilt once more with Peter (Grimes 1979: 26, line 23) and connecting him with evil following Boles’s accusation (Grimes 1979: 26, line 38).

The first direct use of the term ‘Murder’ comes with the community’s hue and cry in 2.1 (Grimes 1979: 28, line 6). It may be simply an interjection. But Boles has worked everyone into a frenzy with his unproven allegation of child abuse by Ellen and Peter (Grimes 1979: 27, line 5), so that the Rector, after questioning Ellen, also condemns them (Grimes 1979: 26, lines 15-16). The cry ‘Murder’ instigates the men’s procession to Peter’s hut which in turn brings about John’s death.

In 2.2 Peter returns to poetic expression and explicitly his dream world as an antidote to his grim reality (Grimes 1979: 31, lines 3-5). The stars are again an inspiration, this time for a vision of perfect domesticity (Grimes 1979: 31, lines 12-14). As in 1.1 this dreaming of the future is soon contrasted by haunting from the past with the number of ghosts, as at the end of the Prologue, increased (Grimes 1979: 31, lines 15-17). But then reality returns in present hallucination of the single apprentice who died (Grimes 1979: 31, lines 21-25). This confirms an element of care on Peter’s part: the boy had the last of the water.

At this point Peter hears the procession of townsmen coming up the hill and all the issues he faces, dreaming, haunting and being a victim of the community,
converge. So it may be argued he acts with diminished responsibility when he bolts, urging John on quickly as he steps out down the cliff (Grimes 1979: 32, lines 29-30). Even so, Peter might have been directly behind John and saved him from stumbling except that he was distracted by the Rector’s knocking on his door. The stage direction is clear: John falls to his death outside the cliff door which can still be onstage while Peter is between his hut’s doors. He is therefore not a direct party to John’s fall. Brett (in Banks 2000: 64) argues the townsfolk are ‘directly implicated’ by distracting Peter from shepherding the boy.

The first cry of ‘Murder’ in 3.1 is that of Mrs. Sedley (Grimes 1979: 36, line 23), and it is ridiculed by Ned (lines 33-4). Mrs. Sedley then broods, clarifying why Peter is the community’s target and the attraction of her focus (Grimes 1979: 37, lines 21-25). Her reference to guilty ghosts in line 23 is a compression for ghosts that are unquiet because others have wronged them. The assumption is made that because, as we have learnt, Peter has a sensitive imagination and vivid memory of the past to which he often returns, he must be guilty. And immediately her eavesdropping Balstrode’s confirmation to Ellen that Peter’s boat is back renders her the catalyst, on reporting this to Swallow, for community action. They, and disturbingly this includes all characters except Auntie, the Rector, Balstrode and Ellen, have now convicted Peter without trial, he is the murderer who will be made to pay for his crime (Grimes 1979: 40, line 25). Why? The preceding Chorus of Borough townsfolk
has stated the truth of the matter: because they feel he despises them, they will destroy him (Grimes 1979: 40, lines 21-22).

By the beginning of the final scene there is little to destroy for Peter, as a result of the combination of the second death and the community’s hounding, is already tired and crazy (Grimes 1979: 41, SD after line 1). His halting, short span statements are as of a man already drowning. His haunting is accurate but in continuing to look forward the prospect is no longer rosy but an additional haunting: the first, second and an anticipated third apprentice (Grimes 1979: 41, lines 8-14). That he might start afresh (Grimes 1979: 41, lines 22), repeating his words in 1.2 is now no longer a question, as there (Grimes 1979: 18, line 13) but ironic affirmation that Balstrode was right in 1.1 (Grimes 1979: 13, lines 17-18), that the former tragedy will recur. Peter finally accepts Balstrode’s view, that his dreaming without appropriate action is futile. His solution in 3.2 (Grimes 1979: 41, line 13) pre-empts that of Balstrode later in the scene (Grimes 1979: 42, lines 32-3), at last rendering literal what has been previously a metaphor of death by water. Having abandoned his dreaming, his closing lines are a concatenation of haunting: they recall his need for yet rejection of Ellen in 2.1 (Grimes 1979: 24, lines 16-18) and having in 1.1 seen a future with Ellen capable of expunging earlier tragedy (Grimes 1979: 13, lines 36-9). In 3.2 with his haunting of being hunted (Grimes 1979: 42, lines 14-17) Crabbe’s spirits are invoked for the last time:

> But gazing on the Spirits, there was I;  
> They bade me leap to death, but I was loth to die: ...  
> The three unbodied Forms — and “Come,” still “come,” they cried.  
>  
> (Borough, XXII, 319–20, 327)

These are now equated with the Borough’s embodied agents of destruction, so the
issues of haunting and being an outsider in the community coalesce tragically.

§3.3 Conclusion: a contrast of key issues

Neither for Crabbe nor Slater is murder the key issue. Rather does it create a dramatic context within which they may explore the ramifications of the charge of murder. The key issue for Crabbe is the moral one. His story is a parable: that it is possible for an individual to do wrong and evade his full due of punishment by society and yet receive retribution through his own guilt and being banished from society. Because Crabbe is writing a poem he can focus fully on that individual and need not represent society other than as a somewhat abstract force qualifying his action and viewpoint. No one except Peter is named in Letter XXII.

The key issue for Slater is more complex. He is writing for a drama so society cannot be abstract. It must be represented by individuals and we must learn of their personalities and characteristics for them to become individuals. Yet he is also much concerned with the community as a whole and how it has the power to act differently as a whole than individually. This activity transforms the story and its issues. The chorus of the Borough townsfolk becomes a distinct character, in fact the character with the largest part in the drama. It is also the most frightening character as its mood swings shift. Here is the roll call through the opera of its presence: muttering in suspicion (0); establishing inured routine, warning against complicity, mass hysteria (1.1); best behaviour, blatant animosity, conviviality, derision (1.2); worship, questioning and stoking disquiet, holding the moral high ground, bent on actual bodily harm (2.1); jovially bidding goodnight, bent on destruction (3.1);
hunting, re-establishing inured routine (3.2). Effectively the chorus becomes the moral, or rather amoral, force of the work as it becomes a lynch mob, while including the town’s justice of the peace and constable. Since a good case can be made that Peter is innocent of the charges made against him, the key issue Slater raises in his high profiling of the chorus is victimization.

However, turning to Peter, the character with the second largest part, his story here is also a parable: that if an individual fully sets himself apart from his community, that community will eventually destroy him. Furthermore, he willingly becomes an agent in that destruction through contributory factors. He has an overdeveloped poetic sensibility, so that being haunted by one tragic event magnifies its significance. This makes him continually live in the past but, together with an unrealistically optimistic attitude as antidote, also dream of a happier future. Consequently he cannot efficiently deal in the present with the community, even its individuals, Ellen and Balstrode, who would support him.
§4. Techniques of presentation

§4.1 Crabbe’s technique

Though in *The Borough* he addresses the reader in the first person, Crabbe states that it is not the author who is speaking but ‘an imaginary personage brought forward’.

He favours an objective narrative but this is something of a veneer as he departs from it to bring psychological insight (see §1.1), satire (§1.2) or to deprecate social ills such as the ‘pauper premium’ (*Introduction to 1.1* §1.1.3). Forster (1932b: 244) writes of Crabbe’s ‘thousands and thousands of rhymed couplets of a narrative tendency’. This is characteristic but not entirely fair. Winborn (2004) praises Crabbe for the economy of expression thus possible but the resultant stylized language is unlikely to allow for the realistic representation of speech in an opera. This can be in turn related to a broader criticism by Forster. He allows that Crabbe can depict character but considers this is limited because he uses ‘formalized diction’ rather than the realism of ‘varieties of speech’ according to class and education (Forster 1932a: xvi). But the discipline of the form that Crabbe the poet chooses, iambic pentameter rhyming couplets, makes formalized diction inevitable.

The use of dialect, as Emily Bronte did in 1847 for Joseph in *Wuthering Heights* provides this sort of realism:

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25 *Borough*, Preface, 70.
'T' maister nobbut just buried, and Sabbath nut o'ered, und
t'sahnd uh t'gospel still i 'yer lugs, and yah darr be laiking!'
(Brontë 1967: 26)

The reader will struggle to understand this. Brontë 1967 supplies glosses for
'nobbut' (only), 'nut o'ered' (not over), 'lugs' (ears) and 'yah darr be laiking' (you
dare be playing) and an appendix on the dialect speech of 13 pages. By contrast, at
times Crabbe’s formalized diction can result in an effective, pithy directness of
utterance, such as that of Grimes during his terminal illness:

The Priest attending, found he spoke at times
As one alluding to his Fears and Crimes:
‘It was the fall,’ he mutter’d, ‘I can show
The manner how — I never struck a blow.’ —
And then aloud — ‘Unhand me, free my Chain;
On Oath, he fell — it struck him to the Brain: - - -
Why ask my Father? — that old Man will swear
Against my Life; besides, he wasn’t there: - - -
What, all agreed? — Am I to die to-day? —
My Lord, in mercy, give me time to pray.’
(Borough, XXII, 268–77)

Because of the preponderance of narrative in Crabbe, direct speech makes its
mark owing to its novelty. At the same time there is a polite neutrality, a rounded
reasoning about these lines in comparison with Peter’s delirium as finally fashioned
in 3.2 by Duncan and Britten (Grimes 1979: 41, lines 8-14). The similarity between
the two quotations is striking. Crabbe’s Peter’s words are not in themselves
incriminating but they move to an acceptance of death which denotes a guilty
conscience. Duncan and Britten are more ambivalent than Crabbe who loads the dice
against Peter with his reference to ‘Fears and Crimes’.
§4.2 Slater’s technique

As he is writing a drama Slater must rely on direct speech though sometimes this will incorporate narrative. Variation of type of speech is paralleled by that of technique in music. In Britten’s music ordinary conversation is conveyed by ordinary recitative (recitativo secco), a more reflective statement by recitativo arioso, a more extended reflection by an aria. In Slater’s verse a mix of styles and metres is used, with some inclusion of rhyme and half rhyme. For Peter’s aria in 2.2 envisaging a kindlier home (Grimes 1979: 31, lines 3-14) he uses iambic pentameter triplets with some full and some half rhymes. For him a rarely sustained and elaborate use of this metre, it gives this aria a particular expansiveness.

The Prologue, on the other hand, all court business, is written in prose except for its choruses which were added by Britten and are in iambic tetrameters. In his introduction Slater highlights his use of this ‘four-beat line with half rhymes for the quick conversational style of the recitatives’. But elsewhere (in Crozier 1945: 19) he points out this is ‘not too regular’ and thus more conversational. This is his most common line, both for recitativo secco and recitativo arioso and the danger of stylization is further avoided by a mix of lines as in the dialogue arrangements between Ned and Mrs. Sedley in 1.1 for her to collect her laudanum (Grimes 1979: 10, lines 17-28). Lines 17-20 alternate two-beat and four-beat lines. One two-beat and two four-beat lines are then followed by a five-beat line (line 24) which is in turn followed by two single-beat lines. This does generally achieve Slater’s aim of
realistic conversation, though ironically wishing to hold to the four-beat line brings about an undue formality in line 19: its ‘Mr.’ would not be there in ordinary speech. In the same scene Slater soon switches to alternating 2-beat and one-and-a-half-beat lines (Grimes 1979: 10, lines 31-34). And then what is a base of two-beat lines is precipitated into two-and-a-half-beat ones, appropriately illustrating the panic as the community dreads the approaching storm (Grimes 1979: 11, lines 3-8). In Ellen’s aria in 1.1, (Grimes 1979: 9, lines 35-6; 10, lines 1-10) Slater again alternates four-beat and two-beat lines; but Peter’s ‘Great Bear’ aria in 1.2 (Grimes 1979: 17, lines 32-3; 18, lines 1-13), though still clearly structured, is more irregular, as befits its singling him out as different from all the others.

This variety from Slater is essential to Britten’s ethos:

One of my chief aims is to try and restore to the musical setting of the English language a brilliance, freedom, and vitality that have been curiously rare since the death of Purcell. In the past hundred years, English writing for the voice has been dominated by strict subservience to logical speech-rhythms, despite the fact that accentuation according to sense often contradicts the accentuation demanded by emotional content. Good recitative should transform the natural intonations and rhythms of everyday speech into memorable musical phrases (as with Purcell), but in more stylized music, the composer should not deliberately avoid unnatural stresses if the prosody of the poem and the emotional situation demand them, nor be afraid of a high-handed treatment of words, which may need prolongation far beyond their common speech-length, or a speed of delivery that would be impossible in conversation.

(Britten in Crozier 1945: 8).

One example of Britten’s more stylized music is that, within the same timespan in 2.1 several characters are singing at the same time (Grimes 1979: 27, lines 19-38; 28, lines 1-4). While Ellen is singing ‘O hard’, a line not even in the printed libretto but belonging just before Grimes 1979: 27, line 38, Balstrode is singing part of line 33 and line 34. While Ellen is singing ‘O hard hearts’, the Rector is singing line 14. While
Ellen is singing ‘O hard hearts pity’, Mrs. Sedley sings lines 22-3. While Ellen is singing ‘hard hearts pity’, Hobson sings line 35. While Ellen is singing ‘hard hearts pity’, Ned sings line 26. While Ellen is singing ‘hearts pity’, Swallow sings line 36. This all takes place within 2 bars of music but is represented by several lines of interrelating text (2.1.395–403 in my edition). Effectively the faster articulation of all the other characters, all below Ellen in pitch, offers examples of the functioning of hard hearts, except for Hobson who is supportive of Ellen’s message and Balstrode who is critical of the others. The pertinence of Ellen’s message is therefore emphasized even if its delivery is highly formal.

In any case, as this edition demonstrates, with his frequent repetition of lines and portions of lines Britten’s music setting, while having Slater’s prosody as its foundation, often breaks away into a more free construction. Slater (in Crozier 1945: 19) is well aware of this, but Britten sometimes extends this practice to emphasize key words and ideas. Shakespeare did this at times to denote break up, but at the same time concentration, of thought and therefore language, the most famous example being Lear’s ‘Never, never, never, never, never!’.

Britten does this at Peter’s repetition of ‘Who’ four times (Grimes 1979: 18, line 13) in his musical setting of the ‘Great Bear’ aria, but also more pervasively to concentrate on certain aspects of characterization and plot, as at the Nieces and Chorus’s affirmation that Peter is a devil, the term occurring seven times in the musical setting (Grimes 1979: 17, lines 26-27). Here the plethora of repetition renders more significant the single following explanatory line 28, linking the devilish activity with the apprentice.

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26 King Lear, 5.3.325.
Forster’s criticism (1932a: xvi) that Crabbe’s language is not appropriate to the working class may equally be applied at times to Slater. For example, Peter’s reference to Mrs. Sedley as an interferer (Grimes 1979: 3, line 22). Britten and Slater also exploit the reverse of this in Peter’s ‘Great Bear’aria (Grimes 1979: 17, lines 32-3; 18, lines 1-13). Where Peter’s surprising revelation of a poetic sensibility is unintelligible to the fisherfolk who witness it. Formalized diction is found in Slater for the same reason as in Crabbe: the use of a particular type of couplet. Sometimes Slater imitates Crabbe’s rhymed iambic pentameters, as in 1.1 (Grimes 1979: 8, lines 3-6). Even granted that they are singing a community song, this is assuming a rarefied poetic sensibility among the fisherfolk, so abstruse any external audience is likely to struggle to discern meaning. Similar wide-spanning generality can be found when Slater uses his own favoured ‘quick conversational style’ (Introduction & Synopsis, line 131 in my edition) of variably rhymed iambic tetrameters. The lines by the Nieces and Auntie at the end of 2.1, though quite densely packed, are more readily understood (Grimes 1979: 29, lines 1-6). For Slater this is a good trick: here is a significant and memorable moment because such language is not the norm of these characters.
§5. Peter as phenomenon

§5.1 Crabbe’s Peter explained

Crabbe uses his Preface to *The Borough* to attempt to account for his themes and characters’ representation and their actions. In Letter XXII his concern is to try to explain Peter and what happens to him. To do so is to acknowledge the vividness of a character of whom, once created, he is frightened and wary. Yet he is not ‘created’, as is clarified in this note in the 1834 edition of his *Poetical Works*:

The original of Peter Grimes was an old fisherman of Aldborough, while Mr. Crabbe was practising there as a surgeon. He had a succession of apprentices from London, and a certain sum with each. As the boys all disappeared under circumstances of strong suspicion, the man was warned that if another followed in like manner, he should certainly be charged with murder.

In FitzGerald’s copy of the 1834 edition Crabbe’s son noted that the fisherman was called Tom Brown and that his ‘terrors etc.’ were imaginary. (Crabbe 1988: vol 1, 749). We cannot know to what extent the details of Peter’s life, abuse of his apprentices and eventual ‘terrors’ were taken from real life, Crabbe’s observation, community gossip, Tom Brown’s own witness to Crabbe, and to what extent these are the products of Crabbe’s imagination and taking of opium. But we do know from this that the apprentice system was open to exploitation and that ‘terrors’ did not necessarily result in death.
I now quote in full Crabbe’s wary statement on Peter in his Preface:

The character of *Grimes*, his obduracy and apparent want of feeling, his gloomy kind of misanthropy, the progress of his madness, and the horrors of his imagination, I must leave to the judgment and observation of my readers. The mind here exhibited, is one untouched by pity, unstung by remorse, and uncorrected by shame: yet is this hardihood of temper and spirit broken by want, disease, solitude and disappointment, and he becomes the victim of a distempered and horror-stricken fancy. It is evident, therefore, that no feeble vision, no half-visible ghost, not the momentary glance of an un-bodied being, nor the half-audible voice of an invisible one, would be created by the continual workings of distress on a mind so depraved and flinty. The ruffian of *Mr. Scott* has a mind of this nature: he has no shame or remorse: but the corrosion of hopeless want, the wasting of unabating disease, and the gloom of unvaried solitude, will have their effect on every nature; and the harder that nature is, and the longer time required to work upon it, so much the more strong and indelible is the impression. This is all the reason I am able to give, why a man of feeling so dull should yet become insane, and why the visions of his distempered brain should be of so horrible a nature.

*Marmion* (Crabbe’s annotation) *(Borough, Preface, 466–86).*

At the outset (466–9) Crabbe stands aside and asks the reader to judge Peter from the evidence given. This ambivalence is interesting, for on the basis of the evidence (see §2.1) Peter cannot categorically be termed a murderer. Obduracy may also be viewed as tenacity. Peter’s lack of feeling is only apparent, as shown by Crabbe’s charting (see §3.1) of the working of Peter’s conscience. In retrospect he ‘felt the Shame’ *(Borough, XXII, 13)* of his undutiful treatment of his father, his ‘Conscience’ (116) is hit by his neglect of his second apprentice and who accordingly shows ‘pity’, albeit ‘selfish pity’ (137) in mitigating his punishment of his third apprentice. Later we learn that although he had drawn a knife on his father, he also through ‘Pity’ (335) responded to a plea for mercy. So he is a more complex character than at first suggested. And finally he is a ‘victim’ (473) and as such evokes our compassion. Yet this is not only, as the context of Crabbe’s text
suggests, because of the development in isolation of a hyperactive imagination, but also because a latent guilt is part of that development. In writing of ‘the progress of his madness’ (467–8) Crabbe hints that this can be charted. It is the link between action, guilt, environment and conscience that invites the reader to identify with Grimes and allows Crabbe to create a tragic figure, as Powell (2004:188) puts it, to engage ‘at an unusually deep and complex level’.

The issue Crabbe addresses in this Preface is the paradox of how a man of no feeling can have imagination, and his answer is a combination of ‘hopeless want ... unabating disease ... unvaried solitude’ (479–80). Hopeless want is owing to being an outsider:

And though he felt forsaken, griev’d at heart,
To think he liv’d from all Mankind apart;
Yet, if a Man approach’d, in terrors he would start.

(Borough, XXII, 229–31)

Unabating disease is of the mental variety. Unvaried solitude returns to the concept of the outsider: it may be tempered by a variety of location but remains solitude.

Crabbe suggests prototypes of Peter in literature in his epigraphs to Letter XXII. First, Scott’s Marmion:

Was a sordid soul,
Such as does murder for a meed;
Who but for fear knows no controil,
Because his conscience, sear’d and foul,
Feels not the import of the deed;
One whose brute feeling ne’er aspires
Beyond his own more brute desires.

(Scott, Marmion, II, xxii, 1–7).
In terms of history of activity this could be a description of Peter. But Peter, as recently shown, possesses elements of shame, conscience and pity, so the comparison of a brute without mitigating factors is too limiting.

The second figure Crabbe compares is Shakespeare’s King Richard III:

Methought the souls of all that I had murdered
Came to my tent, and every one did threat

(Shakespeare, Richard III, 5.3.208–9).

Here Crabbe explicitly links Peter’s imagination with murder, though the parallel is not exact because, although Grimes’s three apprentices die in suspicious circumstances, only two come to haunt him with his father. But what causes that imagination? The Shakespeare quotation is Richard’s nightmare before battle. In lines 197–9 of the same speech he acknowledges that he is condemned by his conscience.

Crabbe’s final comparative epigraph quotes Shakespeare’s Macbeth:

The time has been,
That, when the brains were out, the man would die,
And there an end: but now they rise again
With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,
And push us from our stools:

(Shakespeare, Macbeth, 3.4.90–94).

Again Crabbe stresses the excesses of Peter’s imagination and links it with murder. This Shakespeare quotation is Macbeth’s distraught reaction on seeing the ghost of Banquo at his place at table. Peter’s spirit visitors also rise with the intention of disturbing his equilibrium, by bidding him leap to death.

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27 Borough, XXII, 96, 105, 152.
28 ibid., 308–9.
29 Borough, XXII, 307.
30 ibid., 320.
Arguably the epigraphs to Letter XXII confuse as much as they enlighten. Peter is a ruffian like Marmion but, unlike him, not devoid of conscience. Peter is not a proven murderer with malice aforethought like Richard III and Macbeth but neither does he have what New (1976: 93) terms Macbeth’s ‘profound moral imagination’. But Crabbe does make him a comparably tragic figure whose agonies of haunting we experience as he recounts his visions.

At a basic level Peter is of interest as an embodiment of evil. He had been rebellious towards his father from an early age and eventually struck him down. In manhood his liking for drink and cards could only be satisfied through supplementing his earnings as a fisherman by stealing from orchard and farmyard. He is also a sadist:

He wanted some obedient Boy to stand  
And bear the blow of his outrageous hand;  
And hop’d to find in some propitious hour  
A feeling Creature subject to his Power.

(*Borough*, XXII, 55–8).

Here the moral order is turned on its head: obedience receives the normal due of disobedience and propitiation, a term often associated with sacrifice to a deity, is appropriated for demonic purposes. Yet the evil is comparatively briefly treated and little detailed. It is ambiguous whether there is sexual as well as physical abuse. There is something of mystery about it and at the same time Crabbe queries social responsibility:

But none enquir’d how Peter us’d the Rope,  
Or what the Bruise, that made the Stripling stoop;  
None could the Ridges on his Back behold,  
None sought him shiv’ring in the Winter’s Cold;  

Then, as now, when communication breaks down, individuals are marginalized by society and the vulnerable are unprotected. In the first instance it is Peter’s apprentices who are the victims, but ultimately it is Peter too. Is the poem, then, a social commentary? This is to consider Crabbe as a subtle satirist. Crabbe’s power, as Hatch (1976: 112–13) neatly argues, comes from focusing on the human consequences of a critique of society, accepting the apprentice system and, even when finally offering sympathy for Peter’s downfall, not understanding its own complicity.

§5.2 Slater’s Peter explained

The besetting paradox for Crabbe – how can Peter with no feeling have imagination – is resolved in two ways. Firstly, he says in the Preface Peter’s final outcast circumstances fuelled his imagination; secondly, he shows within his poem that Peter developed feeling. Slater turns this challenge on its head. Presenting Peter as a man of imagination, he shows that he must also be a man of feeling. At the end of the Prologue’s court proceedings he courageously requests a trial to clear his name (Grimes 1979: 4, lines 31-34), but his imagination magnifies the impact of his former apprentice’s death (Grimes 1979: 5, lines 18-21). In 1.1 in his discourse with Balstrode (Grimes 1979: from 11, line 26) he shows himself sensitive to his environment, his isolation when his apprentice died, that he dreams of a better future with Ellen: she is the exorcist for being haunted by the apprentice’s death. Throughout the opera Peter is the character we are brought closest to and this makes us more personally interested in his progress.
In 1.2 he enters with the ‘Great Bear’ aria (*Grimes* 1979: 17, lines 32-3; 18, lines 1-13) that fully reveals his poetic imagination and distance from the community, but he disrupts its round with his own version that again recalls that dead apprentice. In 2.1 he strikes Ellen because she rationalizes their hopes are fanciful, but in 2.2 he is dreaming again, this time of domestic bliss. This dream is in turn shattered by the recollection of the last hours with his former apprentice. In the final scene he deliriously recalls scraps of his former experiences of death, of being hunted, of craving for, and of losing, friendship. Here is a character with whom we can empathize more than the rest because we know more about him. This is more than simply the compassion we feel for Crabbe’s Peter’s miserable end because the possibility that haunts us, which never does with Crabbe’s Peter, is that Slater’s Peter may be totally innocent.

Is Slater’s drama a social commentary? This element is stronger here than in Crabbe’s poem because society is more strongly featured, not only with a group of individual characters but also with a chorus that represents the townsfolk as a whole. They victimize Peter and this hits home to bring his guilt full circle.
§7. Conclusion

Both Crabbe’s and Slater’s treatments of Peter are fundamentally concerned with guilt but the circumstances, the realities within which that guilt is contemplated, are very different. The title page of Slater’s libretto describes *Grimes* as being ‘derived from the poem of George Crabbe’. This is something of an understatement. As the perspectives of this section and the introductions to the scenes show Crabbe is a source for much of the content of the opera. But the reference is correctly made to the entire poem *The Borough*, not just Letter XXII, because both poem and opera have some concern for community, how, or indeed if, a sense of community can be achieved when the critical focus is directed in turn at its constituent parts. Is the real community only a mob?

§7.1 *Grimes* as a critical reappraisal of Crabbe

Why should Slater transform Crabbe’s Peter? He wished to create a character with whom an audience could empathize. He does this by a shift of focus from the innate antagonism Crabbe’s Peter has towards the community to an innate antagonism Slater’s community has towards Peter, who then becomes its victim. The question haunting the opera is ‘What if Grimes is innocent?’ The community is represented both by individuals and *en masse* in the form of the chorus. An extraordinary, dramatic development in Slater’s *Grimes* is the mobilization of the crowd. This was initiated by Britten when to Slater’s first draft of the Prologue (see crit. app. 0d48{a}-48{b} *etc.*) he added the words of the chorus.
The nature of Peter’s tragedy may be defined in various ways. Although he has a developed imaginative sensibility, in his conduct in society he is an innocent. He is driven totally by his wish for respect but fails to realize that to gain respect you must give it. He fails to communicate not only with the community but also, except for brief, tender moments, with those nearest to him, his apprentice and Ellen. We can empathize with such a character. Britten also found a disturbing element with which he and an immediately post war audience could readily identify: the power and influence of a community on an individual deemed an outsider. Britten equated this in an interview with his and Pears’s position as conscientious objectors (Schafer 1963: 116–7). There is also an element of heroism about Grimes’s refusal to conform that Cunningham (1992) defines as ‘moral absolutism’. From Peter’s viewpoint he does nothing without just cause. Rolfe Johnson (1994) rationalizes Peter’s disciplining his apprentice and striking Ellen as necessary for safety at sea and reaction to betrayal.

Brett (2006: 58–60) points out that Crabbe’s Peter exploits a morally enfeebled society which allows the convenience and abuses of an apprentice scheme for disposing of children from workhouses. Slater’s Peter, on the other hand, is both a victim of that society and one who reflects its values. This is the process of internalization, the acceptance of society’s values and judgement by the victim. When in 2.1 he challenges God to have mercy upon him (Grimes 1979: 24, line 37), to the theme the community soon use extensively for ‘Grimes is at his exercise’ from Grimes 1979: 25, line 4, he acknowledges this and begins the process of submission to their judgement. Brett also makes it clear that in revising the libretto Britten removed any factors about Peter’s upbringing that might explain his suspected
conduct, such as a domineering father (as portrayed in Crabbe) or being beaten himself (2.2d14–d20). The outcome was the opera became an allegory of oppression (both external and internalized) and Peter a symbol of all members of society who were oppressed just for being different, for being as Pears wrote in 1944 to Britten “an introspective, an artist, a neurotic, his real problem is expression, self-expression” (*Letters*, vol. 2:1189).

Brett (2006: 44) goes further, suggesting as a result “everyone in the audience could recognize a little of themselves in him” and in another article (2006: 209) that Britten had achieved “a brilliant appeal … to the alienation of every member of the audience”. He continues that the allegorical figure of Peter “could most easily be interpreted as ‘the homosexual’” but that the resultant problem was society’s vicious treatment of difference. In doing so Brett as a homosexual is implanting a little of himself into Peter for recognition. In the same letter from Pears to Britten recently quoted, it is clear that both recognized Peter Grimes as a homosexual. Pears writes “the queerness is unimportant & doesn’t really exist in the music (or at any rate obtrude) so it mustn’t do so in the words.”. This may be viewed as a judiciously defensive statement at a time when overt homosexuality was likely to result in a prison sentence, but the implication of Pears’s comment for the libretto is significant. Brett (2006: 59-60) points out those parts of Slater’s libretto which showed emotional ties between Grimes and the apprentice were cut by Britten. The outcome is to deny to Peter a humanity which could well include homosexuality. But might not Britten’s decision have been as much an instinct for what makes for good drama, the broader application of Peter’s tragedy, as a cautious response to its
potential homosexual dimension? Britten’s decision has force not least in that it moves against specializing the work as a gay allegory, which Brett moves towards and Taruskin (2005: 246-7) follows.

If Crabbe’s poem instills a moral it is related to the individual: that while it is possible to do wrong and escape justice from society, a guilty conscience will ultimately provide retribution. The power of Crabbe the poet is to fashion imaginatively Peter’s moral and mental decline. The power of Slater’s Grimes has the same basis and he too sees Peter as victim but within a broader and more disturbing focus on society in relation to the individual: that when individuals are marginalized by society and communication breaks down, irrational views are accepted. Or, as Hatch (1976: 106) puts it, ‘might is right’. If Slater’s Grimes instills a moral it is related to society: human capacity to hate is as great as that to love and we allow mob rule at our peril. Crabbe distinguishes between the community’s judgement and its compassion (Borough, XXII, 255-60). Slater’s community is all judgement and no compassion.
§7.2 Crabbe as a critical reappraisal of *Grimes*

What of distinct value or difference does Crabbe’s original contribute?

The chief appeal of the poem lies in the graphic description of Peter’s visions:

> He, with his Hand, the old Man, scoop’d the Flood,  
> And there came Flame about him mix’d with Blood;  
> He bade me stoop and look upon the place,  
> Then flung the hot-red Liquor in my Face;

*Borough, XXII, 356–9*.

Lines like these bring to mind the revelation by Forster (1932a: xvi) that Crabbe was addicted to opium. The opera has nothing so nightmarish, so sensational. Peter’s ‘Great Bear’ aria vision we glimpse is more intellectual, more abstract. We respect it as poetry but it distances us a little from Peter and therefore we can understand his community’s response. Crabbe keeps us close to Peter owing to the link between action, guilt, environment and conscience that invites the reader to identify with him and allows Crabbe to create a tragic figure, as Powell (2004:188) puts it, to engage ‘at an unusually deep and complex level’. When Forster returned to Crabbe in a lecture (1948 in Brett 1983:13) he quotes more lines to emphasize the tragedy of flatness in an environment we can feel is both repulsive and attractive:
Thus by himself compell’d to live each day,
To wait for certain hours the Tide’s delay;
At the same times the same dull views to see,
The bounding Marsh-bank and the blighted Tree;
The Water only, when the Tides were high,
When low, the Mud half-cover’d and half-dry;
The Sun-burnt Tar that blisters on the Planks,
And Bank-side Stakes in their uneven ranks;
Heaps of entangled Weeds that slowly float,
As the Tide rolls by the impeded Boat

(Borough, XXII, 171–80).

Forster only quotes 174–80 but by including 171–3 it is clearer that Peter is condemned to being trapped and compulsively follow a routine. For Peter’s last thoughts in the opera Slater removes the natural environment with thick fog, leaving only the community hunting him crying his name as a backdrop. Slater’s Peter offers us different aspects of tragedy, in particular the disturbing one of the power of a community against an individual, but in doing so some focus is taken away from the concentration on the individual, what it feels like to be Peter, that Crabbe maintains.
Perspectives on Slater

§1. Characteristics

Powell 2013 (230) rather belittles Slater as ‘at best a second-rate literary talent’ who, he suggests, was chosen because he was heterosexual and would therefore not find delineating the relationship between Peter and John problematic. This second remark is somewhat wide of the mark, for as 2.2d12a–d12j show (see Appendix B) Slater could produce homoerotic verse. The first is arguably accurate but not really relevant. I agree with Kildea 2013: 280 that Slater was good for Britten because ‘arguing every toss was what Britten needed’. Even colleague Rattenbury (1976: 112) admits Slater could sometimes be ‘opaque’. Ultimately it was a case of using Slater’s strengths and modifying his weaknesses which is what Britten and Crozier did.

Slater’s significant contribution to Grimes was its characters, Auntie, Ned, Mrs. Sedley, Boles, the Rector, who stood in lively fashion alongside the principals Peter, Ellen and Balstrode without detracting from their greater importance. He did this largely through a down-to-earth raciness and comedy, the comedy which came from his experience as novelist and dramatist. For instance, ‘Ma’s ‘merriment’ in Slater’s novel Once a jolly swagman (Slater 1944: 7) could be Auntie

always ‘on the boil’, as we say, meaning about to start bubbling at any minute ... such a tigress of energy, with gentle eyes.

An Auntie who is also paradoxical, who can in 1.2 reprimand Balstrode (Grimes 1979: 15, lines 20-24) but also enquire about Peter’s safety (Grimes 1979: 15, line 11) and who never sides with the community against Peter. Potentially all about the
problems of the principals and a vindictive community, *Grimes* needed some leavening of comedy such as the Nieces’ fright at the storm in 1.2 (*Grimes* 1979: 15, lines 10-15) and in 3.1 Swallow’s philandering (*Grimes* 1979: 34, lines 1-18; 35, lines 1-23) and Slater provided it.

§2. Slater & Crabbe

Slater is closest to Crabbe in his sense of the elegiac. In Crabbe it is there in the routine of the opening and close of the opera. In Slater it is developed in a poem like *Elegy* dated 1931, published by Rattenbury 1976 in 10 stanzas (123-5). In Slater’s papers at the University of Nottingham Manuscripts & Special Collections (TwT/1/1/19/1-26) it exists in nine versions from as little as 3 (incomplete) to 25 stanzas. Here is the sense of enduring alongside an active natural environment

> Our little lives, our chapels and our hymns,
> mining and fishing – apostolic round –
> a tidal river governed with its whims
> neap tides renew but spring tides leap the bounds.

Another characteristic of Slater can also be illustrated here: his willingness to revise his work. Line 24 began as the more passive and literary ‘neap glooms and equinoctial joys abound’ and Slater came to the most active ‘leap’ via ‘break’ and ‘broke’.
§3. *Grimes: previews & afterviews*

§3.1 Women’s Chorus (from *Towards Tomorrow*)

Extracts (my selection) (from Tw/T/1/1/103/1-2), the whole published in Rattenbury 1976: 126-7

We are women. Is to weep
The last privilege we keep?
We are women and we bore
All the fighters in your war.

We are women. Shall we keep
Women’s custom still, and weep?  11

We whose sons and lovers were
Charred and maimed, disfigured there;
We whose lives of empty waiting
Losing hope are soured with hatred –  16

Shall we forgive with cheeks aglow
Hearing a mournful bugle blow?
Shall a leader terrorise
Us to see through coward’s eyes?  20

Our bare hands against this terror,
Our clear truth against this error,
Against his bowing down to death
The burning of our flame of life  48

Now proclaim the day to gather
All the friends of life together
Siege the monster in his lair
Suffocate the god of war.  52

We are women and proclaim
This is the accepted time.
Nations, people, men and women
Children in the glow of morning.  56

Make a ring round the aggressor
Dispossess the dispossession
Build the warm alliances
Of humanity for peace  60

The text was part of a Pageant of Co-operation performed at Wembley Stadium on 2 July 1938 with music by Britten which, like the remainder of Slater’s text, does not
survive. But as Slater did keep this text it would have been of assistance to him in formulating the quartet at the end of 2.1 featuring Ellen, Auntie and the two Nieces. (*Grimes* 1979: 29, lines 13-18). The tone is similar and there is also some resemblance in phrasing. The opera text is fittingly more personal but there is the same questioning of the role of women and consideration of their strategy to endure the wait while men act foolishly. In the opera the outcome is elegiacally passive, in the pageant one of resistance (17–20) and then positive, non violent action. Throughout Slater uses the vocabulary of war against itself and in the closing stanzas with an evangelistic zeal and momentum. Such is also found in *Grimes* but there, towards the end of 2.1, characterizing the twisted fervour of the community (*Grimes* 1979: 28, lines 28-35). There is an enjoyment, a relish and a resonance in this verse which makes it memorable.
§3.2 Mad Song (deleted from *Grimes*)

This (Tw/T/1/58/1-2) is as published in Rickword 1958: 84

Home? Would you give a comet room
Beneath your eaves and call it home?
This God who made the world and said
Let there be light and darkness made
And breathed a self-degrading love
Into the dust and called it life
This is your God of love — but I
Climb to his heaven to defy.
Here is an eye that sees the plan
For the enfeeblement of man
And a will strong enough to roll
Creation back for a new man’s soul.
O I can breathe the naked dawn
And drink the sea to pull God down
Deny his laws, like fire consume
The shame that breathes in all things human.

O would you give a comet room
Between your breasts and call it home?

This is clearly a deranged variation on the ‘Great Bear’ aria (*Grimes* 1979: 17, lines 32-3; 18, lines 1-13) intended as part of Peter’s soliloquy opening 3.2. In its favour, Slater’s SD (*Grimes* 1979: 41, SD after line 1) characterizes Peter as demented and this is a genuine mad song rather than the final text which is simply straggling recollections from the past. Against it, it moves away from a poetic contemplation of the mysteries of the natural environment to an attack on God and Christianity and closes with a sexual reference, by implication to Ellen, in a tone not found from Peter elsewhere.
§3.3 Choruses for recycling?

Rattenbury 1976: 130 publishes, with the heading ‘CHORUS (from a Pageant?)’
Slater’s lines beginning ‘O in this spring-tide you would say the sun’ (Grimes, 1.1. d211a-h). In Slater’s papers it appears in two carbon typescript copies (TwT1/1/33/1-2). The second reads as Slater’s revised text of the second stanza, d211e-h, the variants to the text below being for d209 ‘Wind-laden, for its murmuring power will blow’ and for d210 ‘Tonight into a storm that calendars’. The first has Slater’s original text

Turn from the tide, the tide that overflows, d208
wind-laden, first with gentle swell that blows
Presently to a storm which calendars d211
Will boast and marvel at in coming years.

except for d209, which here appears in yet another version, ‘Wind-laden, with a long, slow roll, that blows’. This is Slater celebrating his art in parody in lines which seamlessly follow an adaptation of Crabbe (d200–d207) but are Slater’s own. So, once Britten had deleted them, he felt they might some day be useful elsewhere.

Also among Slater’s papers (TwT1/1/69) is the ‘Great Bear’ aria from 1.2 (Grimes 1979: 17, lines 32-3; 18, lines 1-13) found in its final version, including the repetitions of ‘Who’. This suggests it is possible that the revisions, though only found in Britten’s hand in D and Crozier’s in E, were made by Slater. Alternatively, having written the original, Slater may have felt warranted to re-use the revisions should he wish, having agreed to them and published them in N.
Rationale, Principles & Practice of this Edition

This is a critical edition, with introduction and commentary, of the libretto of Montagu Slater and Benjamin Britten’s *Peter Grimes*. There is a need for a critical edition because one has not previously been published although there is a wealth of source material and many variant readings. More significantly, study of the material reveals Britten’s own working procedures and input to the text and its development as well as composing the music. While Slater was commissioned to produce the libretto, many of its lines and stage directions were added or modified by Britten and there were also modifications by the opera’s producer, Eric Crozier and, in the final scene, by the poet Ronald Duncan. The purpose of this edition is to offer a definitive text which provides the fullest textual information for performance, records, explains and corrects errors and clarifies Slater’s, Britten’s and Crozier’s contributions.

As is frequent editorial practice, for example the Arden Shakespeare (where there are not substantially differing texts) or the Clarendon edition of the Brontës, the definitive text presented is an amalgam of the best readings from the sources available. ‘Best readings’ is inevitably the subjective judgement of an editor who has carefully surveyed the variants in the context of the whole work and selects those considered most expressive of the creator’s intentions. That there are two creators here, Slater and Britten, engaged in a process of refinement over an extended period, makes the analysis more complex but also fascinating.
A comprehensive analysis of the text of *Peter Grimes* entails scrutiny of a variety of documents. For ease of reference these are listed and described in the bibliography (Appendix G §1). These may be broadly classified as pre-first performance, first performance and post first performance documents. The pre-first performance documents are the various typescript, manuscript or dyeline drafts with manuscript alterations (texts A-IK). The first performance documents are the first published editions of libretto text and full and vocal scores (texts JLMP). The post performance documents are the subsequent editions of the libretto, full and vocal scores (texts NQRTUV) plus the sound recording conducted by Britten in 1958 (O) and the video recording conducted by Britten in 1969 (S), as these present and fix at their respective dates the text he approved.

I present a definitive text from the sources available. The many sources include the purely literary and literary and music sources and there was a long gestation period which was itself partly the outcome of the different approach of Slater and Britten. The sources chart the evolution of the work. For Slater this concluded when he published his own edition in 1946 (N). Britten, however, was happy to make alterations to aid performance in 1958 (O), some of which were incorporated into the ‘new corrected edition’ of the libretto in 1979 (U) as were corrections made in the study score whose latest revision dates from 1973 (T). This evolution reduces the differences between the published libretti and published music scores but they still remained markedly different with regard to stage directions and repetition of text.
From his composition draft (F) Britten seems to have relied, perhaps with assistance, on his own sense of practical stagecraft to detail the action by creating his own stage directions. Slater’s directions differ in that they tend to be also concerned with outlining the attitude and mood of the characters involved. Britten’s directions are therefore important in clarifying stage movement, Slater’s in suggesting characterization. As editor I combine these directions (e.g. 3.1 note 2) to present the valuable information of both to create the richest version for consideration in the presentation of a performance.

With regard to repetition of text, Slater is sensitive to, even irritated by, this as he notes in his Preface to his own edition (Slater 1946: 7):

As printed here Peter Grimes differs from the libretto as sung, inasmuch as I have omitted some of the repetitions and inversions required by the music — I believe it is a difference between the musical and the literary form that one welcomes, and the other avoids repetition.

Slater highlights the distinction between the poet and the opera composer. The poet, and Slater sees himself as poet rather than librettist, sees the text as dense and concentrated. The opera composer sees the text as material to be redefined within the dramatic context of a musical setting and part of that redefinition is seizing on portions of the text and repeating them, sometimes repeating small portions several times. This is also a notable, it might be said prodigal, feature of Britten’s setting of text. Examples may readily be found in other Britten operas. For instance, in Act 1 of Albert Herring, ‘On the First of May’ is sung by Lady Billows, dovetailed and then joined by Florence, culminating in a quintet singing ‘on the First of, on the First of, on the First of, on the First of, on the First of May’ with Superintendent Budd beneath
repeating ‘Er-humph’ four times (vocal score, 1948: 73-79). At the end of Act 1 of *The turn of the screw* Miles sings ‘You see I am bad, I am bad, aren’t I, I am bad, I am bad, aren’t I?’ (vocal score, 1955: 102). As editor I began with the principle that such repetitions should be explicated, even in the presentation of text alone, because that is how the composer chose the text to be received, with selective repetition and therefore reinforcement. As I worked on the music sources it became clear that a more complex process of composition ought also to be explicated: the layering or tiering of text. One character or section of the chorus will enter with the same text or a different one before another has finished delivering their text. There are also periods when more than one text is sung at the same time. I have tried to clarify all this. At least what is clear is the large amount of text repeated and the different ways in which it is presented: individually or joining another text or texts as part of a community free-for-all. It is also arguable that some of Britten’s layering is too ambitious to allow clear presentation of the text. The intended effect is rather to portray a restless, fractious community and to rely on sheer repetition to get the text across. A somewhat negative version of such a critique was expressed by E.J. Dent in 1950 (see *Letters*, vol. 2: 1264-5).

With regard to characterization, the music scores offer further helpful guidelines in performance indicators, specific markings Britten has added at certain points. These are mostly in Italian so I have translated them into English and added them, in effect as an enhancing stage direction. Occasionally I have done the same with indications of dynamic, how loudly or softly the lines are presented, particularly when this shows the variety with which a repetition of text is made.
For copy text I use Text U as it is the final corrected version which makes some attempt to co-ordinate the practice of the libretto text and music score. However, on many occasions other readings are preferred, as noted in the critical apparatus (crit. app.) and/or notes on the text. Purely literary texts are identified by "", music scores, which are of course also sources for the words sung, by ♫. Punctuation tends to be loosely applied, reflecting that of the draft texts, but again U is used as copy text except where other readings are preferred, as noted. The growth of the use of exclamation marks is apparent from very little use in Slater’s drafts to additions by Crozier in E, regular use in Britten’s manuscripts (FG) to extensive use in the later ♫. In this case I have followed Britten’s manuscripts. All departures from the copy text are clarified in the crit. app. below the text of every page so that it is always apparent where this edition differs from it. The sole exception to this is repetition of text in the music setting which is shown in the text by ♫ which denotes that this line is of text repeated. If only part of the line is repeated, this is indicated by a broken underline, e.g. ‘♫ Each one’s at his’ (2.1.217). In the crit. app. the sources are named where distinctive, or grouped where the distinction is between "" and ♫. In layout I have broadly followed U save that I have consistently centred stage directions which is the practice of the earlier printed libretti.

As U is the copy text, readings and SDs {stage directions} in U but not in other sources, e.g. the SD ‘(shouts)’ in the Prologue (0.1) are not specially identified though variants in the wording of the SDs between "" and ♫ and SDs in ♫ alone are identified. Where there are extended passages of text revised (e.g. 2.1.1–8) the original versions are spaced out in the crit. app. for ease of comparison with the final
ones. Smaller revisions are featured in the crit. app. and/or notes, the latter being preferred if they are not entirely straightforward and comment is desirable.

In the crit. app. words added to a text are placed within square brackets [ ], words deleted from a text within angled brackets < >, editorial comments within curled brackets { }. A plus sign + indicates additional texts with the same reading. An asterisk * identifies an editorial addition. A tilde ~ indicates the same word as that previously cited. A caret ^ indicates absence of punctuation. ‘IW’ signifies an illegible word, usually one which has been deleted in a draft or scenario. {m} denotes a majority reading among a number of ❋ and/or ♪ to avoid listing insignificant variants; with the same purpose {sv} denotes small variants, usually in SDs. Some standardization, following majority practice, is undertaken to avoid listing other common variants: Ned is preferred to Keene, Mrs. Sedley to Mrs Nabob and Auntie’s pub always appears as “The Boar”. The abbreviation SP signifies a Speech Prefix, i.e. character identification.

Superscript numerals ¹ etc. draw the reader’s attention to a note whose subject is identified below the crit. app. The notes themselves are in a separate sequence. Words in the text which might be unfamiliar are glossed. ° indicates a gloss which appears immediately below the text. Unless otherwise stated I have taken the gloss from the online version of the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Sigla indicate alterations to the text which are clarified in the crit. app. and sometimes further by a note. ✓ identifies an addition to the text at this point, if only part of a line this is indicated by a broken underline, × a deletion from the text, © that this text has been revised, ●
that this text has been rewritten. ◀ indicates that the text has been reallocated to another character, ◀ that the text has been relocated.

Some sigla relate specifically to performance and the structure of the music. ♩ flags a performance indicator in ♪ which has been editorially translated into English (there are also some performance indicators in English). ▲ identifies music indicators present in early ♟ and ♥ performance indicators present in early ♪ but not in printed editions. These are Britten’s initial structuring of the scenes and indications of the way certain passages should be delivered, sometimes by Britten and sometimes by Reginald Goodall, the conductor of the early performances.

Often texts are begun by different parts of the chorus while another part is still singing, or a character interrupts another. Such tiered presentation is usually indicated by a rising plain arrow † at the point of entry, or a barred arrow ‡ if that entry dovetails the other voice(s). When, because of the layout of the text, it is not possible to do this a rising bold arrow † is placed at the right of the point of entry underlined in a specific style so that the text joined, underlined in the same way, may readily be identified. A falling bold arrow ‡ is placed to the right of the text joined. When texts are sung simultaneously and it is convenient to indicate where more than one text is joined this is indicated by the use of more than one arrow.

In my notes designation of pitch is based on the Helmholtz system as tabulated and used in The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 2nd edn., 2001, xix, 806:
\(c'\) denotes middle C, \(c''\) the C an octave above that \((i.e.\ \text{medium range soprano C})\), \(c'''\) the C an octave above that \((i.e.\ \text{soprano top C})\); \(c\) denotes the C below middle C \((i.e.\ \text{medium range bass C})\), \(C\) denotes the C below that \((i.e.\ \text{bass bottom C})\).

I make a distinction in editing between full texts and draft texts. For the full texts I follow the copy text, enhancing it where possible and desirable from other sources clarified in the crit. app. and/or notes. I define draft texts as those which only present, or survive as, part of the opera and are therefore working, rather than complete documents. These are for convenience defined above (Appendix G §1) as texts A and B. In the case of these drafts the text I present is the earliest full version (text A for the Prologue, text B otherwise) with modifications indicated in the crit. app. in order that the earliest version may readily be compared with the final text. In terms of layout (spacing of beginning of lines, punctuation or the lack of it) the text is presented as closely as possible to the original, except that for ease of differentiation stage directions are centred. ÷ ÷ ÷ indicates where lines are missing from a draft text which survives incomplete.

Other, quite separate ‘drafts’ are the scenarios A to E and cast list. As these are texts which were only revised in the course of their preparation, I present the final version but clarify the revision and sometimes restore the original where this makes the text itself clearer.

The abbreviation ‘BPF’ denotes material at the Britten-Pears Foundation.
Introduction to Prolegomena
(Slater’s Introduction & Synopsis, Characters, Instrumentation & Duration)

There are two sources. Firstly, the passages from George Crabbe’s *The Borough* which are quoted in the introduction are cited in the critical apparatus. Secondly, references to Montagu Slater’s text of *Peter Grimes* which occur in both introduction and synopsis are discussed in the notes.

For Slater’s Introduction & Synopsis (p. 132-5 of this document) there is no draft text extant and may never have been one. The text first appears in source J and thereafter, unchanged, in sources Q and U. I have added as an Appendix (p. 136) the different text Slater used as his Preface to his edition of *Peter Grimes*, source N.

For the Characters (p. 137) the earliest extant version is the ‘Cast’ on a separate sheet (*GB-Alb 2-9401386*), probably from the time of the Scenarios (1942?) and includes differences in designated voice type from the final text and characters found in the draft texts sources A and B which are deleted from the list: I identify this in the crit. app. as AA. The final version first appears in C but I have enriched this with Britten’s annotations with reference to character of voice in D and E.

Instrumentation and Duration (p. 138) only appear in the later ♫. Instrumentation first appears in M termed Orchestration (as also in R). Duration first appears in P: source S was used as the basis of the approximate timings.

The Introduction & Synopsis text is presented as it appears, including the quotations in small font size, except that, for the convenience of adding line numbers, I have not reproduced it in justified form. I have added a title. Authorship
is only given in source U. Lines 1–69 are the Introduction to the opera and refer largely to its derivation in Crabbe. Lines 70–128 present the synopsis, lines 129–39 offer a closing note on the form of the text and the historical setting of the opera.

The text is somewhat curious as it features an uneasy blurring of Crabbe’s original and Slater’s version. While discussing Crabbe’s *Borough* in the Introduction Slater uses names from his *Grimes* without indicating this, nor does he clarify his different treatment of characters. Both discrepancies I outline in my notes.

The text in my added ‘Second Introduction’ is that portion dealing with *Peter Grimes*, the major part of Slater’s *Preface to Peter Grimes and other poems*. This only briefly treats Crabbe (lines a1–a4). Slater then turns, one senses with a little irritation, to the change wrought to his text by Britten incorporating repetition (a5–a10). He considers this more positively in Crozier 1945:19, stating ‘here and there the composer will drop half a line or repeat one and temporarily break up the half-rhyme scheme, producing an even more conversational effect.’ Even in the present text he is upbeat about the potential for collaboration between poet and composer (a10–a14). Finally Slater produces his fullest statement on verse form and rhyme styles (a15–a23). Some of this is tendentious. For instance, in Peter’s aria in 2.2 (*Grimes* 1979: 31, lines 3-14), he uses a five-stress line in a relaxed, dreamy rather than rotund, fashion (a17–a19 notwithstanding). Why does for conversational rhythm a 4-stressed line demand rhyming couplets? (a20). Consider Slater’s practice in 1.1 at (*Grimes* 1979: 9, lines 30-31).
Introduction to 0 (Prologue)

§1. Sources & responses

§1.1 Crabbe’s *The Borough*

This is Crabbe’s text:

One day such Draughts the cruel Fisher made,
He could not vend them in his Borough-Trade,
But sail’d for London-Mart: the Boy was ill,
But ever humbled to his Master’s will;
And on the River, where they smoothly sail’d,
He strove with terror and awhile prevail’d;
But new to Danger on the angry Sea,
He clung affrighted to his Master’s knee:

The Boat grew leaky and the Wind was strong,
Rough was the Passage and the Time was long;
His Liquor fail’d, and Peter’s Wrath arose, …:
No more is known -- the rest we must suppose,
Or learn of Peter: -- ‘Peter,’ says he, ‘spied
The Stripling’s danger and for Harbour tried;
Meantime the Fish and then th’Apprentice died.’

The pitying Women rais’d a Clamour round,
And weeping said, ‘Thou hast thy ’Prentice drown’d.’

Now the stern Man was summon’d to the Hall,
To tell his Tale before the Burghers all:
He gave th’Account; profess’d, the Lad he lov’d,
And kept his brazen Features all unmov’d.
The Mayor himself with tone severe replied,
‘Henceforth with thee shall never Boy abide;
Hire thee a Freeman, whom thou durst not beat,
But who, in thy despite, will sleep and eat:
Free thou art now! --again shouldst thou appear,
Thou’lt find thy Sentence, like thy Soul, severe.’


Given that the Prologue was to be, as stated in Scenario D (see §1.2), the Magistrate Scene, this passage provides all the information required by Slater and more besides. It is not self-sufficient: it refers back to Crabbe’s earlier accounts of Peter Grimes’s cruelty directly (138, 161–2). Then indirectly it points a finger of suspicion (148-9) followed by the accusation of the townswomen (153–4). Crabbe’s
use of ‘Liquor’ (148) is double-edged: it originally meant any liquid and therefore in this context water (OED n.1), but even in Crabbe’s time it usually meant a drink produced by fermentation or distillation (OED n.3a), which is the likeliest cause of Peter’s angry reaction. So again Crabbe is referring back, this time to his accounts of Peter’s drunkenness.

§1.2 The Scenarios (Appendix A)

The Prologue of Scenario C is highly structured:

No. 1. Ellen & Old Grimes waiting
No. 2. Enter Peter, drunk, is rude to Grimes, rebuked by Ellen, Old Grimes asks for silence
No. 3. Grimes’ last speech & death
No. 4. Duet (Peter maudlin, Ellen strong & loving)

This text by Pears follows Crabbe in the unregenerate nature of Peter. Gradually through revision Britten and Slater allowed Peter to be viewed ambiguously but Pears’s No. 4 survives. The words of the duet (Grimes 1979: 5, from line 1 to the end of the scene) were inserted by Britten in source D and emended slightly by Crozier in source E, establishing the final text. Ellen’s words are optimistic and, in that sense, strong and loving. Peter’s words cannot be termed maudlin and this would not be appropriate for he is not drunk, but they are anguishéd, despairing yet defiant. They are consistent with his analysis of the situation and heroic offer to stand trial noted below.

In Scenario D Britten’s text pulls no punches about Peter’s guilt: he has ‘done away with’ John (3) but is ‘let off with a warning’ (4). Pears’s text has Peter ‘exultant’ (39) about his acquittal. Slater follows neither of these in his draft or final text. We are left open minded regarding Peter’s guilt and this inquest acquittal is insufficient for him: he would prefer to stand trial to put an end to rumours about his
guilt (Grimes 1979: 4, lines 31-34), fermenting in the community even as he states this (Grimes 1979: 4, lines 35-8).

§2. Text evolution

§2.1 Draft

Unusually, two drafts of the Prologue survive. The first, source A, I reproduce in Appendix B as the draft. The second, source B, is close to sources C onwards and can therefore be considered with the final text. The draft is markedly different from the final text. It features a number of characters whose evidence in the inquest helps to introduce them but takes the spotlight away from its proper place, Peter Grimes himself. There are four characters who did not survive in the final text: May Sanders, Dick Sanders, James Hart and Swallow Junior, the latter being Swallow the Coroner’s son and appearing on Peter’s behalf. This provides scope for cross examination (d45–d47, d65–d72) and helpful questioning for Peter (d99–d101) not in the final text. There is also some discussion of Peter’s harsh treatment of his apprentice. A range of views is represented (d27–d77) but the topic is removed from source B onwards. This is consistent with Slater and Britten’s remodelling of Peter as ambiguously villain and victim. It gives him a clean slate at the start, albeit undermined by some loose ends in the final text (see 0 notes 48, 49).

§2.2 Text

The inquest now begins with Peter’s evidence and throughout the spotlight is appropriately on him, the other characters briefly introduced in that context and not allowed to become a distraction. Unlike the draft as written by Slater, the room has become crowded with the wider community when Britten added lines for the chorus.
Their muttering creates a discontented backdrop to the proceedings (Grimes 1979: 3, lines 23-4, 28-9; 4, lines 15-16) and to Peter’s answer to the Coroner’s verdict and offer to stand trial (Grimes 1979: 4, lines 35-8), another new feature. Also new is the ‘love duet’ between Ellen and Peter which closes the Prologue (Grimes 1979: 5, lines 1-30), added by Britten in source D and modified by Crozier in source E.

§3. Scene structure & presentation

§3.1 Musical and dramatic structure

The plot development and performance issues of the scene are (my headings):

1. The inquest evidence and the Coroner’s verdict (Grimes 1979: 2, line 1 to 4, line 14)
2. The community’s and Peter’s discontent, Peter’s offer to stand trial (Grimes 1979: 4, lines 15-39)
3. Ellen’s offer of help, Peter’s reluctance to involve her but grateful acceptance (Grimes 1979: 5, lines 1-30).

Coroner Swallow is simply concerned with proper process. This involves some intimidation on his part to uphold his authority and see if he can get a confession of guilt from Peter. When he cannot he has insufficient evidence to pronounce any other verdict than accidental death (Grimes 1979: 4, line 13). The community is seething with belief in Peter’s guilt. Peter questions the practicality (Grimes 1979: 4, lines 18-19) of Swallow’s advice (Grimes 1979: 4, lines 10-12). Swallow offers further, more practical advice (Grimes 1979: 4, line 20) which Peter considers in the longer term after his chief wish to clear his name (Grimes 1979: 4, lines 21, 23) which he then valiantly defends against the community’s protests (Grimes 1979: 4, lines 27-38).

In source C Britten describes the closing section as “a short love duet – tentative at first and then warming”. It provides a moving, refracted model of a love
duet between an opera’s hero and heroine, possibly recalling ‘O soave fanciulla’, that between Mimi and Rodolfo at the end of Act 1 of Puccini’s *La bohème* which Britten saw the Sadler’s Wells Opera company perform in the 1942-3 season. As the opera begins it sets an optimistic agenda of potential redemption. It gives the audience, as well as Ellen and Grimes, expectations which are sadly unfulfilled as *Grimes* 1979: 5, lines 25-30 is the only time they actually sing together in accord in duet.

**§3.2 Presentation of characters**

In the 3 sections I have identified the characters appearing and number of lines they have (indicating shared lines) are, in descending order:

1. Swallow (48), Chorus (34), Peter (15), Hobson (6), Ellen (1), Mrs. Sedley (1)
2. Chorus (43), Peter (19), Hobson (5), Swallow (4)
3. Peter (20, shared), Ellen (16, shared)

In total: Chorus (77), Peter (54, shared), Swallow (52), Ellen (17, shared), Hobson (11), Mrs. Sedley (1)

Though their text is repetitive and its delivery generally soft and though they are not formally part of the proceedings, this deceptively bystander Greek tragedy style Chorus has more statement in them than Peter, who already battles against them. This is mollified somewhat by Ellen’s declaration of support at the end, unfazed by Peter’s considerate objections.

**§4. The set**

The major requirements are a dais with a table at which Swallow the Coroner sits and a witness box from which Peter gives his evidence. Potential witnesses are close by. A large crowd clusters around and the feeling conveyed should be that of Peter
being hemmed in by the community (see photograph of original production, Banks 2000: plate 22A). Eric Crozier comments:

It is advisable to keep the general lighting of the scene as dim as possible, to suggest a low-ceilinged room, with the townsfolk clustering around the walls in half-darkness … In most theatres the Prologue scene will be set inside the big main set.

(Notes on the Production of Benjamin Britten’s ‘Peter Grimes’, Banks 2000: 9).

A photograph of Kenneth Green’s set-model is in Banks 2000: plate 21A. The photograph of the original set (Appendix E, Figure 1) is virtually identical except that the light shines on Swallow and his desk and there is a stool and chair to its right, presumably for the clerk and Hobson. The dock is another key feature, to the left of the large window downstage centre left. In the photograph Peter Pears is seen about to go out through the door on the right, with Joan Cross on the far left, in their far apart positions at the beginning of the duet.


Introduction to 1.1

§1. Sources & responses

§1.1 Crabbe’s The Borough

§1.1.1 The Borough referenced

In the final text there are three direct references to Crabbe’s text and a further direct reference in the draft. The opening Chorus of Fishermen and Women (Grimes 1979: 6, lines 1-4) is an adaptation of:

Where hang at open doors, the Net and Cork,
While squalid Sea-Dames mend the meshy work;
Till comes the hour, when fishing through the tide,
The weary Husband throws his Freight aside;

(Borough, I, 19–22)

The adaptation is partly to make the text more immediately understandable when heard sung rather than read. It also provides a more active gloss, appropriate to a chorus engaged in these activities on stage and brings an element of hope after the drudgery. Thus Crabbe’s passive ‘Where hang’ becomes Slater’s active ‘Oh hang’ (1), the toil of ‘mend the meshy work’ becomes the neutral professionalism of ‘at their mending work’ (2), the sense of inured endurance of ‘Till comes the hour’ becomes the optimism of ‘Welcome the hour’ (3). It would seem that Slater recognizes what Forster (1941 in Brett 1983: 3) termed the ‘melancholy’ of Crabbe’s verse and attempts to mitigate this somewhat at the beginning of the opera.

The Chorus of Fishermen (Grimes 1979: 6, lines 5-8) is an adaptation of:

He, cold and wet, and driving with the Tide,
Beats his weak arms against his tarry side,
Then drains the remnant of diluted gin,
To aid the warmth that languishes within;

(Borough, I, 55–58)
Crbbe’s original refers to a single dredger and gives a more active picture of labour than the final text, as the man is harnessing, ‘driving with’ rather than ‘driven by’, the tide. That hard activity makes his arms ‘weak’ rather than merely ‘tired’. The dredger carries his own drink which he has, perhaps for economy, safety, or both, diluted. He does frequent the pub but not until the evening. Auntie, on the other hand, opens her doors in the morning (Grimes 1979: 6, line 10) which she could do before opening hours were restricted by The Intoxicating Liquor (Licensing) Bill of 1872 and, in Slater’s original (1.1. note 6), the potency of her gin is questioned. Crabbe’s following lines (neither quoted nor adapted) offer more detail on the dredger’s beating and the reason for it:

Renewing oft his poor attempts to beat  
His tingling fingers into gathering heat.  

(Borough, I, 59–60)

Crabbe presents an intimate, internal picture of what it is like to be a dredger on the Suffolk coast. Slater offers a more distant salutation from fishermen considering their lot in general.

The Women’s Chorus (Grimes 1979: 7, lines 1-4) is an almost verbatim quotation of:

Dabbling on shore half-naked Sea-boys crowd,  
Swim round a Ship, or swing upon the Shrowd:  
Or in a Boat purloin’d, with Paddles play,  
And grow familiar with the Watery Way:  

(Borough, I, 87–90)

Crabbe’s text, ‘the Shrowd’ (I, 88), is retained in the earliest extant source (B) but thereafter changed to ‘a shroud’, probably to clarify that individual boys are
swinging on individual ropes, as ‘shroud’ can refer to a set of ropes (OED n.2.1b) or an individual one (OED n.2.1c).

§1.1.2 References to The Borough deleted

In the draft (d20–d23) Slater originally included an adaptation of Crabbe’s description of ships in dock, the immediate context being one of activities in the Borough’s quay:

Near these a Crew amphibious in the Docks,
Rear, for the Sea, those Castles on the Stocks:
See! The long Keel, which soon the Waves must hide,
See! The strong Ribs which form the roomy Side,

(Borough, I, 79–82)

Slater’s version (d20–d21) begins by setting the context more directly. He then quotes the second couplet verbatim. Unlike the previously adapted quotations (§1.1.1), this quatrain is more abstract, not immediately concerned with action, and so Britten’s deletion seems appropriate.

In the draft (d200–d207) Slater also originally included an adaptation of Crabbe’s musings on the difficulty of depicting the sea:

Turn to the Watery World! — but who to thee
(A wonder yet unview’d) shall paint — the Sea?
Various and vast, sublime in all its forms,
When lull’d by Zephyrs, or when rous’d by Storms,

Its colours changing, when from Clouds and Sun
Shades after shades upon the surface run;
Embrown’d and horrid now, and now serene,
In limpid blue, and evanescent green;

(Borough, I, 163–70)

Slater made a few simplifications. Crabbe’s ‘Zephyrs’ (I, 166) become ‘breezes’ (d204). Crabbe’s ‘Shades after shades’ (168) become ‘Shade after shade’ (d205),
rather more poetically smooth and removing some awkward sibilants when singing but also more abstract and less dramatic. Crabbe’s ‘horrid’ (169) Slater revised to ‘fearful’ (d206). Crabbe’s ‘evanescent’ (170) becomes ‘ever-changing’ (d207). This latter replacement has more action, momentum and drama, and is more suited to the growing tension of the scene. One can see why this passage might have been originally an inspiration, but also, given how general and abstract it is, how Britten thought it redundant and deleted it (see draft notes 79).

§1.1.3 Apprenticeship: The Borough ignored

Crabbe is explicit on the nature of the apprenticeship of orphans:

\[\text{Peter had heard there were in London then, –}\
\text{Still have they being? – Workhouse-clearing Men,}\
\text{Who, undisturb’d by Feelings just or kind,}\
\text{Would Parish-Boys to needy Tradesmen bind:}\
\text{They in their want a trifling Sum would take,}\
\text{And toiling Slaves of piteous Orphans make.}\

\text{Such Peter sought, and when a Lad was found,}\
\text{The Sum was dealt him and the Slave was bound.}\

(Borough, XXII, 59–66)

Knowing this, Britten and Slater choose to reverse the financial element of this procedure and therefore misrepresent it: Peter pays for an apprentice rather than being paid to engage one. In the Prologue (Grimes 1979: 4, line 18) he refers to hiring an apprentice which implies payment for services. The actual system, termed the ‘pauper premium’, was a convenient way for parishes to offload orphans for a single payment of probably around £5 in the 1830s rather than have ongoing maintenance payments to make (Lane 1996: 84). It was reprehensible in that no checks seem generally to have been made on the nature and adequacy of training provided by the ‘master’ or the provision made for the welfare of the apprentice. But in principle it
embodied an element which Britten and Slater’s hiring did not: that having been paid to take on an apprentice the ‘master’ had a moral responsibility to instruct and care for him. Peter is absolved from this. Having hired him, John is no more than a chattel (Grimes 1979: 23, line 25). Crabbe inveighs against the actual system and its outcome. In Britten and Slater’s version the link with slavery, toned down (see 1.1 note 54) is put in a rather abstract manner by Boles (Grimes 1979: 9, lines 8-10), a ranter who is habitually ignored by the community.

§1.2 Crabbe’s The Parish Register

This is not quoted directly. Pencil marks were made in Peter Pears’s copy of Crabbe’s complete poems (Crabbe 1851: The Poetical Works) against significant passages. Brett (1983: Peter Grimes, 53-56) has outlined these with regard to The Borough and their influence on the opera but marks made in The Parish Register have not been discussed. The following passage describes a professional attitude to storms:

The Miller cannot be the Sailor’s foe;
Both live by Heaven’s free gale that plays aloud
In the stretch’d canvass and the piping shroud;
The rush of winds, the flapping sails above,
And rattling planks within, are sounds we love;
Calms are our dread; when Tempests plough the Deep,
We take a Reef, and to the rocking, sleep.  

(Parish Register, Part I, 322–8)

Here in Crabbe’s poem is excitement at the sound and drama of a storm, acknowledgement of natural forces of great energy and that those familiar with them find them exhilarating. Balstrode shows these characteristics from the first suggestion of a storm (Grimes 1979: 7, lines 12-14), and makes the first sighting of the storm-cone and its effect (Grimes 1979: 10, lines 31-4). As it fast approaches only
Balstrode and Peter stay outside to face it (Grimes 1979: 11, from line 26). But in their final exchange the response of the two professionals - retired merchant captain and fisherman - diverge, Balstrode going indoors, Peter staying outside (Grimes 1979: 9, lines 30-31). Balstrode is prudent, Peter stubborn, foolhardy and courageous. Peter has the closer affinity with the storm as its articulation reflects his intrinsic mixture of passions and allows some release to his resultant frustration.

§1.3 The Scenarios

In Britten’s Scenario A the everyday work, greetings and banter which are a feature of the opening section in the final text are not developed but what is first striking (5–6) is the anxiety at an imminent storm. A ‘character’ (6) alerts the community to danger (cf. Balstrode, Grimes 1979: 7, lines 12-14). Ellen considers the sea is the root of all ills, in particular the wayward behaviour of Peter after the death of his apprentice (8–10). In her 1.1 aria (Grimes 1979: 9, lines 35-6; 10, lines 1-10), there is no such attempt to excuse Peter: rather Ellen focuses on the lack of perfection in all and the need for compassion. Significantly in this Scenario Ellen also states what in the opera remains the subtext: ‘Grimes was innocent; misunderstood’ (9).

In Scenario B Pears delineates the mood of the opening: calm sea and neutral community (10). But his chief focus is on character. Peter is linked with the untamed and illimitable nature of the sea as distinct from Ellen’s peacemaking and discipline (3–4). But Ellen’s peacemaking requires assertiveness which means that she, like Peter, stands out in opposition to the community (15), as in her aria in the final text (Grimes 1979: 9, lines 35-6; 10, lines 1-10). Pears views the storm as a backcloth to this contrast of character.
In Pears’s Scenario C the neutral working opening is shattered by a different scheme of happenings to that finally followed. Here Peter enters and announces his apprentice’s death, the chorus reacts but Ellen’s defends Peter (11–13). As in Scenario B the storm seems simply a backcloth but Pears now adds a scene in which Peter identifies with the sea, in particular as the storm is in progress (17). This suggests the influence of *The Parish Register* passage (cf. §1.2).

In Scenario D Pears’s separate input is concerned largely with Peter’s entrance as in Scenario C and the community reaction (35–7). Britten deletes this and focuses simply on the community’s everyday work and then the approaching storm (41–2). This focus is also found in Britten’s separate input (6–9) except that at the end (9) Peter has a monologue about everything. This is the stimulus for his closing soliloquy (*Grimes* 1979: 13, lines 32-9).

§2. Text evolution

§2.1 Draft

Source B, the earliest extant full text, is presented in the Appendix with reference to what survives from source A (d23.1–d71.1). The draft text differs from the final one in three respects. Firstly, it has four characters who were later removed and their lines deleted or reallocated: May Sa(u)nders, Swallow Junior, Polly Boles and Dick Sa(u)nders. Secondly, it gives specific attention to Peter ignoring Swallow’s advice not to get another boy apprentice and then employing a stratagem to ignore Swallow’s resulting remonstration (d173–d190). Thirdly, in a closing soliloquy Peter looks to an idealized future with his new apprentice but is haunted by the fate of two former apprentices.
§2.2 Text

The most distinctive feature of the final text in comparison with the draft is the expansion of the section in which the community in some panic prepares for the storm. What in the draft amounts to 29 lines by the final text in my edition has become 155 lines (1.1.163–318), owing to the repetition and fragmentation of text. The fact that Peter ignores Swallow’s advice is conveniently forgotten in favour of an extended discourse with Balstrode (Grimes 1979: from 11, line 26), who offers advice which Peter rejects. Peter’s shorter closing soliloquy (Grimes 1979: 13, lines 32-9) now posits an idealized future with Ellen in which any difficulties in the past have been reduced to hazy generalizations.

§3. Scene structure & presentation

§3.1 Musical and dramatic structure

The plot development and performance issues of the scene are:

1. Daily life in the Borough (Grimes 1979: 6, line 1 to 8, line 6).
2. Peter’s arrival and varying responses (Grimes 1979: 8, line 7 to 10, line 30).
3. The Borough braces itself for the storm (Grimes 1979: 10, line 31 to 11, line 25).
4. Balstrode and Peter’s discourse and its aftermath (Grimes 1979: 11, line 26 to 13, line 39).

The generality of work and community relationships in section 1 gives way to specific work and action in section 2. Even Peter’s entrance, not until Grimes 1979: 8, line 7, is first only in voice: he has 3 lines. He does not appear physically until Grimes 1979: 8, after line 24 and then has no lines. This emphasizes his isolation from the community. He neither takes part in section 2’s logistics of providing him with an apprentice nor in the community’s preparations for the storm in section 3. He seems impervious to both activities and just gets on with cleaning as if this was a
normal day. He does not articulate, his situation and feelings are not revealed until \textit{Grimes} 1979: 12, line 20 in section 4 and the discussion with Balstrode ends in antagonism and a closing soliloquy in which he views only one chance of happiness, with Ellen.

\section*{§3.2 Presentation of characters}

In the 4 sections I have identified, the characters appearing and the number of lines they have are, in descending order:

1. Chorus (24), Balstrode (7), Auntie (6), Boles (3), Nieces (2), Mrs. Sedley (2), A Fisherman (2), Another Fisherman (1), Rector (1), Swallow (1)
2. Ned (29), Ellen (24), Chorus (15), Hobson (11), Boles (8), Balstrode (6), Mrs. Sedley (6), Auntie (5), Peter (3)
3. Chorus (85), Balstrode (34), Ned (33), Boles (26), Nieces (24), Auntie (22)
4. Peter (71), Balstrode (42).

In total: Chorus (124), Balstrode (89), Peter (74), Ned (62), Boles (37), Auntie (33), Nieces (26), Ellen (24), Hobson (11), Mrs. Sedley (8), A Fisherman (2), Another Fisherman (1), Rector (1), Swallow (1).

Thus it can be seen that the Chorus is the most significant force in this scene owing to its dominance in the longest section (3) and also the opening section. It is surprising that Balstrode is the second most represented character, largely owing to his strong presence in sections 3 and 4. But this accords with his position as a touchstone in the community. Like Peter he is independent but unlike Peter has an active, advising and steering role in relation to the community. Like Peter his influence is largely felt towards the end of the scene but in Peter’s case that influence is almost totally weighted in the final section. This both emphasizes his being apart from the community and allows him finally to hold the stage alone at the end of a scene whose focus thus shifts from the Borough to Peter. Ned’s strong showing is also perhaps surprising. It is owing to his role in making the
arrangements to bring Peter an apprentice and to bring Mrs. Sedley pills (section 2), backed by a strong presence in section 3. Ellen, on the other hand, seems under represented in relation to her significance in the story and in particular Peter’s aspirations. Her lines are confined to section 2 though her aria there is its climactic point. This means her contribution has a telling impact while at the same time she is isolated from the norm of community activity just as Peter is. For the rest Boles, Auntie and the Nieces show a consistent presence with their clearly differentiated respective specialities of ranter, pragmatic businesswoman and flirts, Hobson makes a brief stand of obstinacy, Mrs. Sedley one of disapproval tempered by need. Her contribution will be developed, as to a small extent will those of the Rector and Swallow, but not Hobson.

§4. The set

The set is detailed in the opening SD. Crozier explicates:

The setting must unite four chief centres of action. (1) The stretch of sloping shore where boats are hauled up above high-water mark, with its capstans, bollards and drying posts for nets. (2) Auntie’s pub, ‘The Boar’. (3) The Moot Hall, probably the finest building in the town, with steps leading up to its main doors. (4) The Church porch. If stage space allows, Keene’s apothecary’s shop should also be included as a fifth centre of action.

(Notes on the Production of Benjamin Britten’s ‘Peter Grimes’, Banks 2000: 10).

For Kenneth Green’s original design see Banks 2000: plate 5B, his set-model is plate 21B. There is also a photograph of the original production (plate 22B) with some of the townsfolk and principals gathered in front of The Boar, i.e. a detail of the right side of the stage. As Crozier’s notes suggest, ideally a wide and deep stage is required, but there was also a practical consideration in the first production: this set also serves for 2.1 and 3.1-2. The ‘chief centres of action’ are kept in view and therefore broadly in mind even though only one or two at a particular point may be
the chief focus. The Boar and the sloping shore and accessories are the points of focus in 1.1 but the Moot Hall exterior is a reminder of the Prologue which took place in its interior. The stage backdrop coupled with stage lighting provides an opportunity for varying sky effects but the sea itself is not in view. The shoreline of the sea is in fact the orchestra pit, appropriately given the orchestra plays the ‘sea interludes’. Ned’s shop is brought into play (Grimes 1979: 7, SD after line 18) but the set-model suggests that no more than the left edge of it may need to be in view. It may also be used for the meeting of Ned and Mrs. Sedley (Grimes 1979: 10, lines 14-28) but this is not specified in any SD. Indeed the SD immediately before the meeting suggests it was felt tangential to the action.

The presence and use of boats is a particular problem. A boat needs to be on stage because of the SDs at Grimes 1979: 6, after line 14 and 7, after line 4, probably a small one. Such is depicted in Green’s stage design (Banks 2000: plate 5B) between The Boar and Ned’s shop. In his set-model (Banks 2000: plate 21B) only the prow shows. This suggests the boat on stage need not be a complete construction. Then Peter brings a second boat (Grimes 1979: 8, after line 24) for which he requires assistance. In the notes1 I have suggested that the stipulation in that two boats be hauled in (Grimes 1979: 6, opening SD and 7, after line 4) before Peter’s is unrealistic in terms of stage space. Even the hauling in is problematic as it will most practically be from either wing, which is strictly along the Borough street rather than from the shoreline. To come from there the boat would have to be hauled from either edge of the audience seating and orchestra pit which is difficult.
Introduction to 1.2

§1. Sources & responses

§1.1 Crabbe’s *The Borough*

§1.1.1 The Borough referenced

In 1.2 there are no direct references to Crabbe’s text. Nevertheless Crabbe’s Letter XI, ‘Inns’ is clearly the source of the name of the pub, the name by which its proprietor is known and the reason for that name. Here is Crabbe’s full text regarding *The Boar* :

Shall I pass by the *Boar*? — There are who cry ‘Beware the *Boar,*’ and pass determin’d by: Those dreadful Tusks, those little peering Eyes And churning Chaps are tokens to the Wise. There dwells a kind old Aunt, and there you see Some kind young Nieces in her company; Poor Village Nieces, whom the tender Dame Invites to Town, and gives their Beauty fame; The grateful Sisters feel th’important Aid, And the good Aunt is flatter’d and repaid.

What though it may some cool Observers strike, That such fair Sisters should be so unlike; That still another and another comes, And at the Matron’s Table smiles and blooms; That all appear as if they meant to stay Time undefin’d, nor name a parting Day; And yet, though all are valued, all are dear, Causeless they go, and seldom more appear.

Yet let Suspicion hide her odious Head, And Scandal Vengeance from a Burgess dread: A pious Friend who with the antient Dame At sober Cribbage takes an Evening-Game: His Cup beside him, through their Play he quaffs, And oft renews, and innocently laughs; Or growing serious, to the Text resorts, And from the Sunday-Sermon makes reports: While all with grateful Glee, his Wish attend, A grave Protector and a powerful Friend: But Slander says, who indistinctly sees, Once he was caught with *Silvia* on his Knees; —
A cautious Burgess with a careful Wife
To be so caught! — ’tis false, upon my Life.

(Borough, XI, 165–96)

This is an unsavoury text, made the more so by Crabbe’s suave, coy manner. Even the pub sign is sinister (167–8), symbolic of a predator in charge. Here is the Aunt (169) and her Nieces (170), though it is soon clear the relationship between them is a purely business one (171–4). Slater only gradually introduces us to this. The Nieces do not appear, at least by specific reference, in the Prologue. They are identified in 1.1. as the reason for the nickname ‘Auntie’ (Grimes 1979: 7, SD after line 18). In terms of the actual names, however, they remain anonymous, as does Auntie. Their only individual lines in 1.1 are to bid the Rector and Swallow ‘Good morning!’ (Grimes 1979: 7, lines 20, 24) but this appearance allows Ned to acknowledge Auntie as a fellow entrepreneur (Grimes 1979: 12, line 22) which echoes Crabbe’s 174. But it is not until 1.2 that Slater provides a sympathetic character study of the Nieces, (Grimes 1979: 15, SD after line 9) confirming that they are the pub’s chief attraction but ambiguous about their actual relationship. This is Slater’s muted version of Crabbe’s 175–6. Balstrode opens up this can of worms with his suggestion that they are not genuine relations (Grimes 1979: 15, line 20) which is the provocation for Auntie’s immediate arioso of rebuke.

On the other hand the situation set out by Slater is different from Crabbe’s. To start the designation ‘Auntie’ is the ‘familiar, endearing form’ (OED) of Aunt which is first recorded in the late 18th century. The term ‘aunt’ itself is double-edged. The OED points out it can mean, in dialect use by the late 19th century, ‘a term of familiarity or respect applied to elderly women not necessarily implying relationship’ (OED 1b). In the cast list in E Auntie’s age is given as 50, the same as Mrs. Sedley. But in the 17th century ‘aunt’ also meant ‘a bawd or procuress’ (OED
3) and Crabbe’s Aunt is clearly running a full-scale brothel (177-8), a kind of apprenticeship for females parallel to that of boys to fishermen. Its apprentices also disappear under mysterious circumstances (179–82). Slater’s Auntie, on the other hand, only has two ‘nieces’ and their employment seems reasonably secure. Nevertheless there are strong hints in Slater of the scenario Crabbe depicts later (183–96). Swallow fits the role of ‘A grave Protector and a powerful friend’ (192) in the way he propositions the First Niece in 3.1 (Grimes 1979: 34, line 1 to 35, line 23) but in this section opening the scene the Nieces outwit Swallow and it is apparent from their outlined strategy that they can continue to do so. It is ambiguous, but possible, that Swallow, Ned and, in the revised version of the text, Boles are single men which makes their flirting less culpable than with Crabbe’s dignitary.

The Boar was not the natural choice of pub according to Crabbe’s classification. ‘Houses on the Quays for Sailors’ (Crabbe 1988, i, p.462) would be more appropriate, among which is The Green Man and its landlord James, as featured in Slater’s draft of 1.1. The Boar seems to have been the final choice because of its Aunt and Nieces, a practical consideration in opera in that it would allow for the featuring of more female roles in what would otherwise be a male dominated cast. Two more lines from Crabbe influenced the set design of the original production (cf. §4.2 below). They refer to another sailors’ pub, The Anchor:

In small smok’d Room, all Clamour, Crowd, and Noise;
Where a curv’d Settle half surrounds the Fire,

(Borough, XI, 214–15)
§1.2 The Scenarios

In Britten’s Scenario A some features of the final text are already present. Firstly, the servants, too frightened to sleep, come down from their quarters into the pub (15–16). The Nieces do this in the final version but this Scenario pre-dates their inclusion in the cast as a result of the transfer from Slater’s draft of 1.1 from The Green Man and landlord James to The Boar and landlady Auntie. Secondly, the landlord (as then) suggests a song to calm anxiety about the storm (18). In the final version the round is primarily to calm the atmosphere after Boles’s attempted fight with Peter. Thirdly, Peter interrupts the others’ songs with his own (19–20) and then aggressive behaviour starts. In the final version Peter disrupts the round but the others soon reintroduce their version which quells Peter’s. A feature of this scenario not in the final version is that it is Peter who is drunk. This is as the Peter portrayed by Crabbe.

Taking a step further than Scenario A, in Pears’s Scenario B the landlord starts a song to cheer his customers (21), but Peter’s song in this scenario is just one verse among the rest, albeit a bleak one (22). This is how Slater treats Peter’s contribution in his draft of the scene (1.2.d.155–d158), but in this scenario Peter continues singing when everyone else has left. The interruption here is the firing of a rocket (23). This emphasizes that Peter is a loner and, as in Scenario A, he is drunk. The boy’s arrival, rescued from shipwreck, is treated sentimentally by Ellen but allows Peter opportunism: ‘Ellen acclaims boy as her child, Grimes (aside) as his apprentice (prey?)’ (25–6). This is the Grimes of Crabbe whereas there is no suggestion in Slater’s final text that Peter’s interest in the apprentice is for anything other than work.
Within the terseness of Pears’s Scenario C the stress is on the alarm of the community, the ‘confused servants’ (21), finally to become the Nieces (cf. Scenario A), first mentioned. In the final version it is they in 1.2 (Grimes 1979: 15, from line 10) who revive the hysteria of 1.1 (Grimes 1979: 10, from line 31). As in Scenario B the landlord starts a drinking song (23) and Peter comes in and sings his song (24) though it is unclear whether or not it challenges the community singing. As in Scenario B a rocket is fired, everyone goes out except Peter and when people come back it is with the boy (25). Ellen will look after him (26). There is no mention of any thoughts of Peter so it may be considered a less blackguardly Peter is being developed here, especially as there is no mention of him being drunk, or at least since the Prologue of this scenario.

In Scenario D Britten’s separate input simply marks out the pub setting, the backdrop of the storm and arrival of Ellen and the boy (10-11). Pears’s uncompleted separate input which Britten deletes only notes the setting (40).

§2. Text evolution

§2.1 Draft

Source B, the earliest extant full text, is presented in the Appendix. The draft text differs from the final one in three respects. Firstly, it has two characters who were later removed and their lines deleted or reallocated: May Sanders and Dick Sanders. Secondly, the round is relatively tamely introduced, simply to counterbalance the effect of Peter’s entrance and arioso (d122). Thirdly, the nature of the round is different: the opening three lines of its quatrain are the same, then
every character has his/her own distinctive line. Peter’s is only one of ten such and in no way disrupts the others.

§2.2 Text

As in 1.1 the most distinctive feature of the final text in comparison with the draft is the expansion of its major choral section, here the round. What in the draft amounts to 39 lines (d123–d162) by the final text has become 218 lines (251-469), owing to the repetition and fragmentation of text. Not entirely felicitous, however, was the reallocation of the part of Dick Sanders to Balstrode who originally entered following Ned at Grimes 1979: 17, SD after line 8. It means that at the beginning of this scene he acts in the disparaging way of a blunt fisherman, a way he did not act before and does not again. This is tempered by the addition from source C of his moralizing solo (Grimes 1979: 16, from line 25). The effectiveness of Peter’s ‘Great Bear’ aria at his entrance (Grimes 1979: 17, lines 32-3, 18, lines 1-13), the centrepiece of the scene, was consolidated by revisions (notes 66-7), Slater’s addition of a third stanza (Grimes 1979: 18, lines 9-13) and Britten’s repetition of ‘Who’ in his setting of line 13.

The round in the draft was originally rather casually suggested by Auntie (d122) following May Sanders and the Nieces’ comments on Peter’s aria. In the final version it is more convincingly introduced as the defusing of blows traded between Boles and Peter in an element of the scene first added to the draft version (d122a–d122n). As to the round itself, it took five attempts to create a satisfactory one. The problem was as much structural as textual. This is to say that the guidelines of Scenario A, that Peter interrupts the others with his own song (cf. §1.2) were insufficiently followed. For this interruption to be effective it was not possible to
have several other characters having their own distinct contributions as in Slater’s draft round (d123–d162) or his light-hearted second version (d162a–d162i). Slater’s third version (my edition 1.2.469a-h) properly focuses on Peter’s interrupting and its effect. But Peter’s text is only of a generalized malign nature whereas the final version brings Peter’s specific concern, the death of his former apprentice that haunts him, to the fore. The fourth version, by Britten (my edition 469i-ad), also has Peter being haunted but its community opening is very odd, chiefly designed to allow Peter to tweak ‘Winding Street’ to ‘Winding sheet’.

§3. Scene structure & presentation

§3.1 Musical and dramatic structure

The plot development and performance issues of the scene are:

1. Balstrode on edge: Auntie’s response and moral (Grimes 1979: 14, line 1 to 16, line 7)
2. Boles on edge: Balstrode’s response and moral (Grimes 1979: 16, line 8 to 17, line 9)
3. Peter on edge: The Borough’s and Boles’s response (Grimes 1979: 17, line 10 to 18, line 31)
4. Everyone on edge: The round as a response and its aftermath (Grimes 1979: 18, line 32 to 20, line 3).

The scene is a continuous study of people on edge because of the storm. As at the approach of the storm in 1.1 Slater tempers this by introducing comic elements. Firstly there is the reference to Mrs. Sedley as one of Ned’s women (Grimes 1979: 14, line 5) and the whole situation of Mrs. Sedley being in the pub for the first time. More surprisingly there is the manner of Balstrode who begins this scene cruelly dismissive of Auntie’s management in general and the nieces in particular. The explanation for this lies in the draft: this portion of Balstrode’s part originally belonged to the fisherman Dick Sanders. Nevertheless this gives Auntie the
opportunity to put him down roundly, even if Britten writes in source C that her doing so is ‘half angry, half comic’ and his accompaniment to her song (Grimes 1979: 15, from line 21) makes this clear. There is, however, a broader strategy: to show that all characters have some flaw. Balstrode’s manner at the beginning of this scene is his.

Balstrode regains his respectability by preventing drunken Boles from fondling the nieces. Then he assumes the moral high ground with his song about living and letting live and folk keeping their hands to themselves (Grimes 1979: 16, from line 25) The irony here is Slater’s humour at its best, for in order to live and let live Boles is forced into a chair. I have above divided the scene into 4 parts. This, the second, is structurally an expansion of the first while the third, Peter’s aria and the Borough’s response, is structurally a variant of this second section.

All four sections have a song and ensemble centrepiece. The first section’s ensemble (Grimes 1979: 15, from line 26) is a brief refrain. Niece 2 echoing Niece 1, a miniature anticipation of the later round. The nieces sing plaintively, poking fun at Balstrode. At the same time Mrs. Sedley tartly enunciates her disapproval of the place and its occupants (Grimes 1979: 15, from line 27). So this first ensemble is one of comic discord. The second section’s ensemble is also a brief refrain: the Borough’s repeating that of Balstrode’s ‘living and letting live’ song (Grimes 1979: 17, lines 1-2). Unlike the first ensemble this is one of concord. The chorus in unison is joined in the second repeat of Balstrode’s second strain by everyone in the pub, even Mrs. Sedley and Boles (Grimes 1979: 17, lines 7-8). It is, however, a concord infused with irony, because the laissez-faire approach is that taken by the Borough community of Crabbe, not that of Slater and Britten in which Boles’s and Peter’s activities are checked by actual force or the threat of it. The song and its singing
bring unanimity and contentment which is curtailed almost as soon as it arrives as this couplet repeat breaks off at the end of its first line when Ned enters.

The third section is structurally a variant of the second in that a song, the longest in the scene, titled ‘aria’ by Britten, is followed by a chorus, the second most extended in the scene. But this time the chorus is in opposition to the song and constitutes the most elaborated antagonism so far directly expressed by the Borough against Peter. They do not understand his song, the ‘Great Bear’ aria (Grimes 1979: 17, lines 32-3, 18, lines 1-13) which places the storm in a broader context of universal and, in its final two lines, very much individual, suffering, lines which encapsulate the drama’s tragedy. Peter is trying to make a fresh start but he is forever stigmatized because of past events. Britten’s title ‘Ensemble’ for the chorus element (Grimes 1979: 17, from line 14, but not so titled there) acknowledges its presentation in turn by specific voice parts, with only the nieces among the named characters also involved.

Section 4 is structurally and musically the climax of the scene, a round for all characters on stage (Grimes 1979: 18, from line 33), in my edition with Britten’s musical repetitions acknowledged 217 lines long, 45% of the scene. It begins as a four line solo song delivered by Ned. Auntie joins him for his first repeat, other named characters follow with repeats. The chorus enters later and is joined by different named characters for different repetitions. So, as in section 2, there is a sense of the community in accord which this time Peter disrupts with his entry, (Grimes 1979: 19, from line 11). He has his own particular version of the round in which he re-enacts returning home with his former apprentice dead. The nautical slang reference to Davy Jones (Grimes 1979: 19, line 14) is to the evil influence of the
spirits of the sea, but also alludes to Davy Jones’s locker, the grave of those who perish at sea (*OED*). Peter’s disruption is fairly soon overpowered. As with his protest to Swallow in the Prologue (*Grimes* 1979: 4, from line 18) his individual perspective is ignored. 1.2 ends with everyone except Ellen scoffing at Peter’s home environment (*Grimes* 1979: 20, line 3) and deriding any claim Ellen or Peter might have to normal domesticity.

§3.2 Presentation of characters

In the 4 sections I have identified, the characters appearing and the number of lines they have are, in descending order:

1. Auntie (29), Niece 1 (21), Niece 2 (17), Balstrode (17), Mrs. Sedley (13), Boles (2)
2. Balstrode (21), Boles (9), Auntie (4), A Fisherman (1)
3. Chorus (52, *i.e.* Chorus Basses 13, Chorus Altos 11, Chorus Tenors 11, Chorus Sopranos 9, Full Chorus 8), Peter (18), Ned (13), Nieces (9), Boles (6), Auntie (4), Balstrode (4), Mrs. Sedley (3)
4. Auntie (62), Ned (59), Balstrode (53), Boles (47), Nieces (47), Mrs. Sedley (43), Chorus 35 (of which Chorus Tenors & Basses 4), Peter (14), Ellen (5), Hobson (2)

In total: Auntie (99), Balstrode (95), Chorus (87), Niece 1 (77), Niece 2 (73), Ned (72), Boles (64), Mrs. Sedley (59), Peter (32), Ellen (5), Hobson (2), A Fisherman (1)

Aptly, Auntie has the strongest representation as the scene is set in her pub. Balstrode is the second largest part as befits his role as moral guardian of the Borough, specifically shown here in section 2, though he is silent for a good while when being scolded by Auntie in section 1. The Borough as a mass is firmly represented by the chorus but only gradually as the scene develops. It also has some representation in ensembles which include named characters. The chorus does not enter until line 133 in my edition but the nieces’ quite strong showing is owing to their involvement in section 1. Peter’s contribution, his central aria and attempt to
break the round, is significant but not large. As in 1.1 his entrance is delayed for
dramatic purpose. He does not enter here until after 156 lines in my edition. Ellen’s
involvement is minimal but it is her entrance that terminates the round (Grimes 1979:
19, SD after line 18).

§4. The set

The set is briefly described in the opening SD (0.1-6). Crozier elaborates

Scene 2 takes place in the small private-room leading off the public bar in a seaport-
pub – with low ceiling, heavy rough beams, and smoky walls. Essential elements in
the set are a broad log-fireplace with curved settles either side of it and a lamp
hanging above; the entrance to the bar itself, where new-comers go to fetch their
drinks before settling down in the room; a narrow winding staircase to the upper
floor of bedrooms; and the main door giving onto the street, with shuttered windows
upstage or down-stage of it. This main door is important throughout the action of
the scene, and must be so placed that people coming into the pub are clearly visible
even when the room is full of people. It is a strong door with large bolts, and must
correspond with the outside view of the building that we saw in the previous scene.

(Notes on the Production of Benjamin Britten’s ‘Peter Grimes’, Banks 2000: 12).

The photograph of the original set (Appendix E, Figure 2) shows a central trestle
table flanked on three sides by stools, a settle to the right of that and then a fireplace
to its right. Behind the table is an exit to the public bar. Upstage left stairs lead to the
servants’ quarters, downstage left is the door through which entry is made from
outside, the shuttered windows to its left. The statement that there is no bar (Grimes
1979: 14, opening SD of Scene 2) means that the bar is not visible, for the set is an
antechamber through which all entering the pub must pass before proceeding to the
bar. As the set has no exterior view, the main door is a reminder of the force of the
elements outside when it is opened 9 times in the course of the scene, from the
opening SD, and there is a struggle to close it again. The shutters fly open and a
window pane smashes (Grimes 1979: 15, SD after line 2). This effect is easier to see if
the shutters are downstage. But is it difficult to achieve safely and is it therefore likely to be ignored? The nieces come down the staircase (*Grimes* 1979: 15, SD after line 9). For Kenneth Green’s original design see Banks 2000: plate 5A. There is also a close-up photograph of the original production (plate 23A) in which Peter is surrounded by the nieces and Borough folk. The chorus involvement in the scene from *Grimes* 1979: 17, line 1 may seem odd in an antechamber but Crozier points out that the room fills quickly from the back as a result of the fight between Boles and Balstrode (*Grimes* 1979: 16, SD after line 24). Slater’s SD after line 32, however, only notes ‘bystanders’ already there. As in the Prologue it is a case of the chorus as a lurking presence, not immediately involved in the action but happy to become involved.
Introduction to 2.1

§1. Sources & responses

§1.1 Crabbe’s The Borough

§1.1.1 The Borough quoted

The one quotation is ‘Grimes is at his exercise’, the only quotation in the opera from Crabbe’s Letter on Peter Grimes. Its immediate context is the Borough folk’s reaction to the apprentice’s audible suffering:

Some, on hearing Cries,
Said calmly, ‘Grimes is at his Exercise.’

(Borough, XXII, 77–78)

They are accustomed and indifferent to this. The opera’s Borough folk are also accustomed to this but work themselves into a fury of indignation as a result of which the Rector, himself having been criticized, suggests to the Mayor that Peter be approached.

§1.1.2 The Borough loosely referenced or ignored

Boles’s criticism of the Rector for ignoring evils growing at his door like his fancy flowers (Grimes 1979: 26, lines 35-7) alludes to Crabbe’s account of the Vicar tending his flowers, but these are not noted as exotic. Rather they are used by the Vicar as gifts and for a moral lesson (Borough, III, 85–90). Boles is implying the Rector is a fop.

Ellen’s allusions to her hard life in the draft are as often sourced in Slater’s imagination as in Crabbe’s poem. Perhaps being saved from prison (d65) is not
there. Regarding her husband’s bankruptcy and resultant death (d128), there is a hint of potential but not actual bankruptcy (Borough, XX, 226–9). His suicide is the outcome of his resentment of Ellen’s bastard child (245–53). Ellen does not have defiant daughters (d129) but one bastard half-wit (212–17). But she did have a son in prison (d132), a charmer hanged for some undisclosed offence (260–301).

§1.2 The Scenarios

The catalyst of the scene’s momentum, Peter insisting on having John for work against Ellen’s wishes, features in Scenarios B–E. However, only Scenario B is the source of other points of interest. Here John is silent, but in a more dramatic fashion: he is dumb. Here Peter mocks Ellen, but this is mockery of a slapstick rather than the intellectual kind of the draft. Here Peter threatens violence, but only threatens.

§2. Text evolution

§2.1 Draft

Here John speaks, not much but pointedly. He asks Ellen when she is going to marry Peter and persists in this question when she avoids answering it by poking fun at the Borough characters (d8–d45). Then she has an enigmatic song (d64–d83). John admits his bruise is from Peter but thrice begs Ellen not to tell Peter. Ellen makes obscure references to her own hard life (d125–d132).

Highly articulate yet insensitive, Peter mocks rather than rails at Ellen, confident she will still support him (d156–d169); but Ellen in response foresees Peter’s desolation (d175–d187). He kicks the basket she has left and raises his hand
threateningly as he orders John home. May Saunders has a lengthy diatribe against the evils of workhouse apprenticeship (d239–d256), focusing on the worst abuses to a community soon to believe John is one of those ‘Whipped and driven to their deaths’ (d246). When criticized by the community for her association with Peter, Ellen analyses the weaknesses of the Rector and community (d278–d302) when dealing with ‘one different from the rest’ (d285).

§2.2 Text

John is silent. Like Ellen we can only surmise his feelings and Ellen does not ask if his bruise came from Peter, thus leaving the matter ambiguous. Ellen talks only about her experience as a schoolmistress and everything she says is clear. In the draft Peter and Ellen are equally effective in argument; here Ellen is in charge, probing and then acknowledging their failure. Peter can only acknowledge with violence which gives more excuse for the community’s vigorous response. Boles’s criticism of workhouse apprenticeship is brief (Grimes 1979: 26, lines 26-7); the community is more engaged in his complaint against the Rector (Grimes 1979: 26, lines 30-33). When criticized, Ellen’s response is simply to state her failed purpose and ask that her good intentions be appreciated and goodness of heart acknowledged. In this she has only Auntie and Balstrode as allies. A minority force, they nevertheless criticize the community’s hardness of heart (Grimes 1979: 28, line 2). In the women’s quartet which closes the scene in Britten’s music setting Ellen alone is given the line about the bitterness of love (Grimes 1979: 29, line 18) which all had in the draft, emphasizing the sorrow of her personal failure with Peter. Without the distractions of Ellen’s past and May Saunders’s lament, the scene has a more cogent, inevitable progression.
§3. Scene structure & presentation

§3.1 Musical and dramatic structure

The plot development and performance issues of the scene are:

1. Ellen and John: optimism tempered by discovering John’s bruise (Grimes 1979: 20, line 4 to 22, line 30 first part)
2. Ellen and Peter: her realization of failure, his violent response (Grimes 1979: 22, line 30 second part to 24, line 37)
3. Community reaction: as expected from Peter but Ellen guilty? (Grimes 1979: 25, line 1 to 28, line 9)

This scene constantly juxtaposes the individual and collective response. The church service words, heard intermittently borne on the wind with the porch door open, provide ironic comment on the foreground text. When John’s coat is discovered badly torn, we hear from the General Confession ‘And we have done those things which/We ought not to have done’ (my edition lines 57–8, though not present in Grimes 1979). Against Peter’s avowal that Ellen should believe in him (Grimes 1979: 24, line 4) comes the intoning of the Creed’s belief in God (from line 5). At the scene’s and opera’s pivotal climax point, when Peter strikes Ellen, comes the congregation’s ‘Amen’ and Peter’s English version, ‘So be it!’ (Grimes 1979: 24, lines 36-7). There is musical as well as textual linking. Peter now challenges God to have mercy upon him (Grimes 1979: 24, line 37), the melody of which is then taken up, first by Ned and Auntie (Grimes 1979: 25, line 4), then gradually by the whole community as ‘Grimes is at his exercise!’ As an obsessive mantra Britten makes sure the message is clearly put across by its initial presentation thrice in a trio, in a display of Purcell-like ensemble virtuosity by Auntie, Boles and Ned. Thereafter the chorus community can kick it around as it wishes, with 11 statements, as a backcloth to a variety of individual viewpoints. These are less successfully conveyed because
there cannot be that individual focus which provided clarity to the earlier sections featuring Ellen and Peter. Ellen’s justification for her actions gets submerged in an ensemble of constant interruptions by all the other individual characters in the opera save Peter (Grimes 1979: 27, line 9 to 28, line 8). Textually these provide a fascinating variety of perspective from the sympathetic Auntie (Grimes 1979: 27, lines 31-2), via the remonstrating Rector (Grimes 1979: 27, lines 15-16), only financially concerned Ned (Grimes 1979: 27, lines 27-8), to the rational Balstrode (Grimes 1979: 27, lines 33-4), or outright accusation of Boles (Grimes 1979: 27, lines 25-6). Whether musically these can be heard in the general mêlée is another matter, but the repetition emphasizes the variety. Does one viewpoint prevail from this cauldron? Frighteningly yes, Boles’s, that Ellen’s kindness amounts to no less than murder (Grimes 1979: 28, lines 7-8), preceded by ‘Ha-ha’s added by Britten and not in Grimes 1979, as if from the witches’ chorus in Purcell’s Dido and Aeneas. And everyone except Ellen, Auntie and Balstrode joins in the cackling.

§3.2 Presentation of characters

In the 4 sections I have identified the characters appearing and number of lines they have are, in descending order:

1. Ellen (60), Chorus (25), Rector (13, 5#)
2. Chorus (35), Ellen (32), Peter (28)
3. Chorus (79, 14#), Boles (51, 16#), Ned (40, 16#), Auntie (35, 14 #), Mrs. Sedley (25, 4#), Rector (22, 9#), Ellen (21, 4#), Swallow (21, 13 #), Balstrode (20, 4#), Nieces (19, 4#), Hobson (16, 12#), Fellow Lawyer (4, 2#), Fisherwoman (3, 2#)
4. Rector (19, 15#), Swallow (17, 13#), Mrs. Sedley (17, 15#), Nieces (16, 8 #), Ned (16, all#), Boles (15, all#), Chorus (15, all#), Ellen (12, 6#), Auntie (11, 6#), Balstrode (1), Hobson (1, all#).

In total: Chorus (154, 14#), Ellen (113, 4#), Boles (66, 16#), Ned (56, 32#), Rector (54, 29#), Auntie (46, 20#), Mrs. Sedley (42, 19#), Swallow (38, 26#), Nieces (35, 12#), Peter (28), Balstrode (21, 4#), Hobson (17, 13#), Fellow Lawyer (4, 2#), Fisherwoman (3, 2#).
As often the Chorus has the dominant contribution. Although from *Grimes* 1979: 20, line 12 to 24, line 36 it is unseen as the church community, it is still the same singing body. Ellen’s primacy among the soloists accords with the scene’s focus on her analysis of and coming to terms with the situation. By contrast, while Peter is the dominant subject in terms of comment and action, he appears less and speaks almost less than any other character. As rabble-rouser Boles features highest among the others although the sharing of lines becomes more pronounced as the community pools together malevolently. Balstrode’s small contribution seems at odds with his status in the community but with Ellen spotlit as the voice of reason he is left briefly as a voice of protest (*Grimes* 1979: 25, lines 25-8; 27, lines 33-4). He knows when he is out of touch and must simply observe. He becomes uncertain (my edition SD at 502.3) and takes instruction from Ellen (my edition SD at 511.2)

§4. The set

The set is as for 1.1 (*Introduction to 1.1* §4). A particular issue in this scene is the visibility of the church porch and audibility of the proceedings inside. The photograph of the original set (Appendix E, Figure 3) shows the porch forward left so sounds ought to be heard clearly from that position. Ellen and John are pictured forward right. There is ample space behind them for Mrs. Sedley to cross and observe Ellen discovering the coat tear and neck injury (*Grimes* 1979: 21, SD after line 35). The window to the right of the door of The Boar is a vantage point for Auntie to view Ellen and Peter’s quarrel (my edition SD at 170.1) while there is enough depth of stage behind Ellen for Ned and Boles to cross it and observe Ellen and Peter (my edition 175.1).
Introduction to 2.2

§1. Sources & responses

§1.1 Crabbe’s *The Borough* (loosely referenced)

The only link is when Peter is haunted by his memory of the dead apprentice in the fatal fishing trip (*Grimes* 1979: 31, lines 21-27). Crabbe does refer to the boy’s fear (*Borough*, XXII, 145) and that the water supply was exhausted (148). But Crabbe’s later text of Peter’s father and dead apprentices haunting him (*e.g.* 338–47) is a matter of fantasy rather than memory. This does not take place in his hut but he feels compelled to visit and view them on the river.

§1.2 The Scenarios

Scenario B states the boy’s death was accidental (64) which is how the final stage direction at *Grimes* 1979: 32, after line 30 presents it. There is in no scenario any distraction by parties other than Peter. Scenario E has a drunken, angry Peter driving the boy to the cliff door and the boy bolting in panic (19-20). *Grimes* 1979: 32, line 28 has nothing stronger than Peter encouraging the boy to get moving. Scenarios C (42) and D (18) have Crabbe’s Peter more in mind, with the death not accidental.

§2. Text evolution

§2.1 Drafts & experiments

There are three sources for text other than the final one: the draft fragments, additional text by Slater in N and experimental revised texts in M-Goodall and M-Britten. In the draft fragment Peter advises John to avoid having his will and
individuality taken over by Ellen’s religious conduct. Angered, Peter’s violence to John becomes overt. Britten wants more of this from Slater who obliges (d12a–d12j). It is formulated as a game with patter lines (d9–d12) and an urbane scrutiny of the flesh about to be broken (d12f–d12h), an intellectual appraisal which makes the action more immoral. When it ceases Peter (d13–d22) shows an understanding of John’s experience, that it has been Peter’s. The inference here is that Peter was beaten by his father, as he states in Scenario B (59). But Peter here goes beyond this in revealing he has at times a ‘desire’ (d22) to beat John.

Slater’s additional text seems to be an intermediate version between the draft fragment and final text. The violence is as tempered as in the latter. Peter is matey with John and shows more empathy for John’s mindset than in the draft fragment, not only acknowledging that John is a ‘landlubber’ (2.2 my edition \(^\text{note}^7\) line 5) but also that he himself experiences fear (2.2 my edition\(^{10}\) quoted lines, 8). Lacking this display of empathy, the final text (Grimes 1979: 30, lines 10-24) offers a less sympathetic picture of Peter who there simply attempts to encourage John with his own excitement before revisiting his early vision of fishing prosperity, cf. 1.1 (Grimes 1979: 13, lines 2-12),

The experimental revised texts (2.2 my edition\(^{13}\)) appear to be later versions of Grimes 1979: 30, lines 1-9. Firstly, the audience is required to pick up that it is the bruise Peter believes John has been telling lies about. He hasn’t: Ellen in 2.1 surmises the truth (Grimes 1979: 22, lines 9-10). Secondly, Peter believes there is no tale to tell. This may be because he did not cause the bruise or because he refuses to accept that he did. Peter’s protest at line 8 in either revision is, however, less openly violent than line 8’s final text.
§2.2 Text

The draft fragment is Crabbe’s Peter. The text is Britten and Slater’s more generally controlled conduct. John gets pushed into the hut (Grimes 1979: 30, SD before line 1), boots (SD after line 3) and clothes (SD after line 7 and Grimes 1979: 31, SD before line 1), thrown to him, shaken but not necessarily violently (Grimes 1979: 30, SD after line 7), coat torn off (Grimes 1979: 31, SD before line 1) and shoved which knocks him over, not necessarily intentionally (SD after line 2). That is the sum of physical contact between Peter and John. Crucially there is none immediately preceding John’s accident. The closing SD (Grimes 1979: 33, SD after line 20), was much developed by Britten to provide in effect a mini-interlude as a lament for John. It also teasingly suggests Balstrode has more knowledge as well as more nous than the Rector and Swallow.

§3. Scene structure & presentation

§3.1 Musical and dramatic structure

The plot development and performance issues of the scene are (my headings):

1. Peter’s anger, calmed by make-believe for an idyllic future, destroyed by sighting a ghost (Grimes 1979: 30, line 1 to 31, line 27).
2. Peter’s challenge to, then preparations to avoid, the community with John caught up in the hasty preparations (Grimes 1979: 31, line 28 to 32, first paragraph of SD after line 30).
3. The uneventful outcome and ironic moral of the Borough posse’s inspection (Grimes 1979: 32, second paragraph of SD after line 30 to 33, SD after line 20).

This scene starts with two mood swings from Peter. Having begun with the anger with which he stormed out of 2.1, this is swept away by an idyllic vision of happiness with John and Ellen. This tranquillity is shattered by another vision: that of the dead apprentice. Reality arrives, however, in hearing the Borough posse
approaching. Peter has two highly contrasted responses to it as well: first to confront, then to escape, the latter doubling with his desire to go fishing. This sequence of waves of tension is too much for John, who panics and falls. But Peter’s escape leaves the posse nothing to do, except for Balstrode, an unwilling member of it, to determine the likely action.

§3.2 Presentation of characters

In the 3 sections I have identified the characters appearing and number of lines they have are, in descending order:

1. Peter (57)
2. Peter (32), Boles & Rector, Swallow & Ned, Chorus Tenors & Basses (13, all#)
3. Rector (11), Swallow (9), Ned (2)

In total: Peter (89), Rector (24, 13#), Swallow (22, 13#), Ned (15, 13#), Chorus Tenors & Basses (13, all#).

This, then, is Peter’s scene with the Rector and Swallow providing an ineffectual pretence respectively of moral and civil authority. Balstrode, who has no lines, is shown in the closing SD (Grimes 1979: 33, SD after line 20) to be more alert.

§4. The set

The set is detailed in the opening SD (0.2-6). Crozier explicates:

Peter Grimes’s hut is an upturned boat, built upon a low brick or earth wall, with a door leading into the cliff-path cut in the stern timbers, and a hatch-door leading onto the edge of the cliff, in the middle of the back wall, with several steps leading up to it. …The lighting of the scene should be very low in key: it is only when one of the doors is opened that a shaft of sunlight gives a clear view of the hut and its contents.

(Notes on the Production of Benjamin Britten’s ‘Peter Grimes’, Banks 2000: 16).
The photograph of the original set (Appendix E, Figure 4) shows a spick and span hut, necessary for efficiency in such a confined space but confirming the Rector’s approbation (Grimes 1979: 33, lines 11-12). The chief light source and thrust of this working home is outwards, with the central way to the cliff dominating and a simple, functional door on the right from the road.
Introduction to 3.1

§1. Sources & responses

§1.1 The Scenarios

Scenario B focuses on Ellen’s feeling of despair and wish to find Peter before the ‘evil’ villagers who want to hunt him down (69–71). Here stated explicitly is the implicit irony at the heart of the opera: the hunted is innocent, stubborn but principled, the hunters are guilty and unprincipled. Slater adds a character, Balstrode, in Ellen’s wish to help Peter and one to offset her despair (Grimes 1979: 38, lines 19-28).

Scenario C introduces Ellen’s ‘Jacket Song’ (44). In Scenario D it is John’s coat that is found (20), in Scenario E ‘a little cap or coat’ (24). Slater has a jersey knitted by Ellen and therefore a personal gift and the song is the scene’s central ‘Embroidery Aria’ (Grimes 1979: 38, lines 5-18). The mood is clear. In Scenario D Ellen’s response is termed a ‘lament’ (22), in Scenario E she is in mourning (23). In Scenario C there is a ‘Chorus of Horror’ (45), in Scenario D, ‘Fury of villagers’ (21), apparently in response to the finding of the clothing and, in Scenario C, Ellen’s reaction. In the opera the discovery and Ellen’s song are only heard by Balstrode and Mrs. Sedley. The community’s bloodlust is engaged simply by Peter’s return. The remainder and bulk of this scene are Slater’s invention.
§2. Text evolution

There is no extant draft for 3.1. It is possible that the ‘draft’ stage for Act 3 coincided with Slater’s production of the typescript of the complete libretto. On 3 October 1942, Britten wrote to William Mayer ‘the first draft of the libretto is done’ (Letters vol. 2: 1100) but Banks 2000:176 conjectures that a revised one would not have been ready until December 1943. We know from Britten’s letter to Pears of 10 January (Letters vol. 2: 1181) that he began composition on 8 or 9 January 1944.

§3. Scene structure & presentation

§3.1 Musical and dramatic structure

The plot development and performance issues of the scene are (my headings):

1. Contrasting means of entertainment: flirting, sleuthing, genial conviviality (Grimes 1979: 34, line 1 to 37, line 25)
2. Ellen and Balstrode’s response to their findings (Grimes 1979: 37, line 26 to 38, line 32)
3. The community mobilized (Grimes 1979: 38, line 33 to 40, line 26).

§3.2 Presentation of characters

In the 3 sections I have identified the characters appearing and number of lines they have are, in descending order:

1. Mrs. Sedley (39), Swallow (22), Niece 1 (20, 12#), Niece 2 (20, 12#), Rector (17, 6#), Ned (15), 1st Burgess (12, 10#), other Burgessess (11, 10#)
2. Ellen (26), Balstrode (20)
3. Chorus (119, 64#), Mrs. Sedley (81, 42#), Swallow (53, 37#), Hobson (42, 27#), Ned (42#), Nieces (40#), Boles (36#), Auntie (12)

In total: Mrs. Sedley (120, 42#), Chorus (119, 64#), Swallow (75, 37#), Niece 1 (60, 52#), Niece 2 (60, 52#), Ned (57, 42#), Hobson (42, 27#), Boles (36#), Ellen (26), Balstrode (20), Rector (17, 6#), Auntie (12), 1st Burgess (12, 10#), other Burgessess (11, 10#).
Overall Mrs. Sedley is shown to be the dominant force as the instigator of the mobilization just as in the opening section her obsession with Peter as murderer casts a long and gloomy shadow over the otherwise sportive proceedings. However, as a body of malevolent action in this scene the Lynching Chorus has the greatest impact. Swallow’s high profile matches his standing in the community rather than his personal competence. Auntie’s surprisingly small contribution is because she takes no part in the Lynching Chorus. Everyone else does, except Ellen, Balstrode and the Rector.

§4. The set

The set is as for 1.1 (*Introduction to 1.1* §4). Movement between the Moot Hall and The Boar (*Grimes* 1979: 34, opening SD) is a significant element in its dynamism.
Introduction to 3.2

§1. Sources & responses

§1.1 Crabbe’s The Borough referenced or quoted

The soprano solo (Grimes 1979: 43, line 1, designated ‘CHORUS’) and semi-chorus (Grimes 1979: 43, lines 2-4, designated ‘CHORUS’) which begin the final section of this scene are Slater’s adaptation of:

There as we pass the jingling Bells betray,
How Business rises with the closing Day:
Now walking silent, by the River’s side,
The Ear perceives the rimpling of the Tide;

(Borough, I, 287–90)

Slater changes the time focus because the operatic context is another morning. The tone remains elegiac, like Crabbe’s. The adaptation renders more passive and impersonal what was more active and personal in Crabbe’s original, but this neutrality is appropriate in the new context of following the death of Peter Grimes. Slater’s use of ‘ripple’ rather than ‘rimpling’ might be for easier understanding but more likely denotes that his source of Crabbe’s text was later than the first and second editions as ‘rippling’ occurs from the third edition. Slater may well have used Peter Pears’s copy of Crabbe 1851 (see Appendix G §2).

Slater’s chorus (Grimes 1979: 43, lines 10-13) is almost verbatim Crabbe:

Or measur’d cadence of the Lads who tow
Some enter’d Hoy, to fix her in her row;
Or hollow sound, which from the Parish-Bell,
To some departed Spirit bids farewell!

(Borough, I, 291–94)
Slater’s change (43, line 12) from Crabbe’s 293 to ‘that from the passing bell’ is less specific but more euphonious. The opera ends (Grimes 1979: 44, lines 1-4) with more virtually verbatim Crabbe:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{With ceaseless motion comes and goes the Tide,} \\
\text{Flowing, it fills the Channel vast and wide,} \\
\text{Then back to Sea, with strong majestic sweep} \\
\text{It rolls, in ebb yet terrible and deep:}
\end{align*}
\]

\textit{(Borough, I, 37–40)}

Again Slater’s change (44, line 1) of Crabbe’s 37 to ‘In ceaseless motion’ and (44, line 2) of Crabbe’s 38 to ‘broad and wide’ result in a smoother sound, albeit Crabbe’s ‘vast’ is a more awe inspiring adjective that better anticipates the tone of the following couplet. But retained is that combination of sombre routine and absorbed witness that is in the lines, beginning ‘When Tides were neap, and, in the sultry day’ (Borough, XXII, 181) that first attracted Britten (see Perspectives on Crabbe §1.1) and like them contains a lurking sinister element.

\section*{§1.2 The Scenarios}

Scenario B takes place after sunset and has the ‘near crazy’ Peter (72), feeling ‘The Sea calls him’ (73), jumping in. This is a voluntary suicide after a visit from the ghosts of his father and former apprentices. Scenario E also has this dénouement, introduces the fog and timing of Peter dying at dawn. In the ‘draft’ of 3.2 Peter recalls his father’s death (d7) and addresses two apprentice ghosts, William Spode (d9–d13) and John (d46–d53). In Scenarios CDE 3.2 is termed Peter’s ‘Mad scene’, for which there is ample precedent in opera, and the intention is logged to end with fisherfolk singing, specified in D as at the beginning of 1.1. Britten used
the same music as at the beginning of 1.1 (Grimes 1979: 6, lines 1-8) but different words, though as in 1.1 still derived from Crabbe (see §1.1).

§1.3 Quotations from the libretto

Duncan (1981) states he persuaded Britten to incorporate quotations, verbal and therefore also musical, from earlier in the opera. A delirious man might well relive his recent experiences in this manner. The sources of the quotations are documented in 3.2 notes.

§2. Text evolution

§2.1 Draft

Strictly, as with 3.1, there is no extant draft for 3.2. It is possible that the ‘draft’ stage coincided with Slater’s production of the typescript of the complete libretto. But as Britten, with the help of the poet Ronald Duncan, modified 3.2 between this typescript and the staging of the opera, I am publishing in Appendix B Slater’s typescript version of 3.2 which is the earliest extant, as though it were the draft so it may readily be compared with the final text.

From the revision that took place Britten clearly did not like the references to Peter’s father and the former apprentices. He felt the preparing of Peter’s boat (d54–d77) was too protracted. In particular Balstrode suddenly gets uncharacteristically homely and finally sentimental (d68–d71). Yet Peter’s initial lack of comprehension of Balstrode’s activity (d55, d59, d63) and then his wish to stall things (d73) show poignantly human aspects of him distinct from our sympathy for his suffering which
is the crux of the scene. Ellen and Peter have a conversation (d19–d45) but it only becomes an argument during which Ellen tells lies (d29–d30, d33).

§2.2 Text

The opening is an improvement: no abstruse allusions to the dead but a fitting fixation with water imagery and pithy, halting recollections of earlier events. The addition from source J in the spoken section of ‘No!’ by Ellen (Grimes 1979: 42, line 31) means that she does not collude with Balstrode in the directed suicide, as she does in the draft when she states she is fetching Balstrode to help him prepare his boat (d44–d45).

§3. Scene structure & presentation

§3.1 Musical and dramatic structure

The plot development and performance issues of the scene are:

1. Revisiting recent torments and seeking peace, Peter again confronts the community, if only their voices, but is unaware of Ellen beside him (Grimes 1979: 41, line 1 to 42, line 29)
2. Balstrode spells out Peter’s suicide to him (Grimes 1979: 42, lines 30-34)
3. The community stoically takes in another day, untroubled by news of a sinking boat too far out to view (Grimes 1979: 43, line 1 to 44, line 4).

The community is invisible until after Peter’s departure, so their alternation of greater and lesser prominence in sound alone mirrors for us Peter’s experience. Peter openly reveals his love for Ellen (Grimes 1979: 42, line 28), not knowing she is beside him. Balstrode helping Peter out with his boat (Grimes 1979: 42, SD after line 34) echoes his help in 1.1 (Grimes 1979: 8, lines 12-13).
§3.2 Presentation of characters

In the 3 sections I have identified the characters appearing and number of lines they have are, in descending order:

1. Peter (60), Chorus (54), Ellen (6)
2. Balstrode (4), Ellen (1)
3. Chorus (16, 8#), Swallow (9, 6#), Auntie (8, 6#), Boles (7, 6#), Nieces (6#), Mrs. Sedley (6#), Rector (6#), Ned (6#), Hobson (6#)

In total: Chorus (70, 8#), Peter (60), Swallow (9, 6#), Auntie (8, 6#), Boles (7, 6#), Nieces (6#), Mrs. Sedley (6#), Rector (6#), Ned (6#), Hobson (6#), Ellen (7), Balstrode (4).

The scene is Peter’s. As ever he is the central focus. But the greater number of lines of the Chorus is a reminder that he is in this tragic position because of their hounding. Balstrode’s few lines are the next most significant: he becomes the Borough’s efficient executioner. Ellen’s presence is more telling than her words: she is the empathizing, suffering onlooker.

§4. The set

The set is as for 1.1 (Introduction to 1.1 §4). But the unique feature of this scene is a thick fog, so only parts of the set are intermittently visible. What ought to be visible, however, is the capstan to which Peter’s boat’s rope is tied and the stern of his boat as he launches it.
Peter Grimes

AN OPERA IN THREE ACTS AND A PROLOGUE
derived from the poem of George Crabbe

Words by MONTAGU SLATER
Music by BENJAMIN BRITTEN

Op. 33

New corrected edition – 1979

BOOSEY & HAWKES
Prolegomena

{Slater’s Introduction, Synopsis, Second Introduction & Characters, Britten’s Instrumentation & Duration: Texts}

The opera is derived from George Crabbe’s poem, “The Borough”, in much as the story and many of the characters are to be found in Crabbe, but what Crabbe sketched broadly has, of course, been elaborated in the libretto. Textually the libretto bears practically no relation to Crabbe, the only quotations being part of the first and all of the final chorus.

The Borough, as described by Crabbe, is a small fishing and shipbuilding town on the East Coast. Crabbe sets himself to examine the Borough from all aspects, entitling the main sections of his poem ‘The Church’, ‘Sects and Professions in Religion’, ‘Professions (Law, Physic)’, ‘Trades’, ‘Amusements’, ‘Inns’, ‘The Poor of the Borough’, ‘Prisons’, ‘Schools’, and little by little, character by character, assembling a picture of the whole life of a nineteenth century town. The main characters of the opera reflect the Borough’s activities.

The Rector, Mr. Horace Adams, is one, Crabbe says, who had “... some desire to rise, But not enough to make him enemie; He ever aim’d to please; and to offend Was ever cautious; for he sought a Friend; Yet for the Friendship never much would pay, Content to bow, be silent, and obey, And by a soothing suff’rance fin’d his way.”

Round him, of course, we find the widows and maiden ladies—“To antient Females his devoirs were paid; ... The easy follower in the Female train, Led without Love, and Captive without Chain.”

In this opera, this group of gossips and scandalmongers is typified by Mrs. Sedley, sometimes called Mrs. Nabob—one who takes an interest in her neighbours: “While the Town Small-talk flows from lip to lip; Intrigues half-gather’d, Conversation scraps, Kitchen-cabals, and Nursery-mishaps.”
Crabbe, in his preface, goes out of his way to apologise for the unfriendliness of his portrait of Swallow, the lawyer, Coroner and wealthy burgher of the Borough. “The people cursed him, but in times of need trusted in one so certain to succeed: by laws by-ways he had stored his mind with wicked knowledge how to cheat mankind.”

These, with the retired sea-captain Balstrode, a solid, sensible, charitable figure, are the leading citizens of the town. In the section called ‘Inns’, Crabbe deals with the Borough's less reputable side, and particularly with ‘The Boar’, whose landlady is nicknamed ‘Auntie’, for a good reason. “Shall I pass by the Boar?—there are who cry ‘Beware the Boar’, and pass determined by: those dreadful tusks, those little peering eyes and churning chaps are tokens to the wise. There dwells a kind old aunt, and there you see some kind young nieces in her company; poor village nieces, whom the tender dame invites to town, and gives their beauty fame;”

‘Auntie’ has a fellow-tradesman in Ned Keene, the apothecary, of whose deluded clients Crabbe says—“though he could neither reason, write nor spell, they yet had hope his trash would make them well; and while they scorned his parts, they took his oxymel.”

Among the poor folk of the town is the lovable Ellen Orford, a widow and the Borough schoolmistress, who sums up her own character—“... I looked around, and in my school a blest subsistence found—my winter-calm of life: to be of use would pleasant thoughts and heavenly hopes produce;”

As for the poor Methodist fisherman, Bob Boles—“he rails, persuades, explains, and moves the will, by fierce bold words, and strong mechanic skill.”

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° Oxymel {of squills: a medicinal drink made with bulbs of the squill (sea-onion)}
In this Borough of simple and very ordinary people, Peter Grimes fits uneasily. He is a fisherman—visionary, ambitious, impetuous and frustrated—poaching and fishing without caution or care for consequences, and with only one friend in the town, the schoolmistress Ellen Orford. He is determined to make enough money to ask her to marry him, though too proud to ask her till he has lived down his unpopularity and remedied his poverty.

The Prologue which opens the opera shows Peter under cross-examination—practically on trial—for the death of his apprentice during a recent fishing trip. The inquest is conducted by Swallow, who clearly shares the general fear and mistrust of Grimes, but dismisses him with a warning from lack of evidence.

In Act 1, Peter is faced with the impossibility of working his boat without help, but Ned Keene brings news of having found him a new apprentice at the workhouse, and, braving the antagonism of the Borough, Ellen Orford agrees to accompany the carrier in to the Market Town, to bring the boy home to Peter.

The Borough is on that part of the East Coast where the encroachment of the sea makes coast erosion and landslides a very real danger when gales swell the high tides of the equinox. Peter's troubles are quickly forgotten when a storm breaks, bringing fears of flood and destruction.

The next scene shows 'The Boar' that night, where some of the fisherfolk are sheltering from the storm howling outside. The coast road has been flooded, and the carrier's cart, bringing Ellen and the boy, has been delayed. Peter comes into the pub to wait for them. There are drunken brawls, and the news comes that a landslide has swept part of the cliff away up by Peter's hut.

Despite the storm and the floods, the carrier reaches the Borough, and amid the hostile mutterings of the fisherfolk, Peter takes the boy out into the gale to his desolate hut.

Act 2 begins later in the summer, on a Sunday morning, sunlit and calm in contrast with the storm and terror of the previous act. Ellen comes with the boy to sit and enjoy the sun by the sea, outside the parish church, but she soon realises, from tears in his clothing, and bruises on his neck, that Peter has begun to ill-treat him, and when Peter arrives, her questions lead to a quarrel.

Ellen is in despair that their plan of re-establishing Peter in the eyes of the Borough by hard work, successful fishing and good care of the boy should have failed, and Peter furiously drives the boy off to launch for a shoal he has observed out at sea.

The quarrel has roused the Borough—Mrs. Sedley has overheard the conversation about Peter's brutality towards the boy—and after an outburst of indignation, the townsfolk follow the Rector and Swallow off to Peter's hut to find out the truth.

The next scene follows immediately, as Peter forces the boy into his hut, roughly ordering him to get ready for fishing. Relenting, he tries to soothe the boy's terror of him, and pictures what their life might be if all goes well.
His language grows wilder and wilder, foreshadowing his eventual madness, and when the Borough is heard climbing up the road to the hut, he loses his head, and chases the boy out of the cliff-side door.

The boy slips and falls: Peter climbs swiftly down after him as the men reach the hut. The Rector and Swallow are surprised and taken aback to discover only a neat, empty hut.

Act 3 takes place a few nights later, when the town is gay with a dance in progress at the Moot Hall. There is a steady passage of males between the Hall and 'The Boar', and the nieces are in great demand.

Mrs. Sedley hails Ned Keene, to tell him her own theories about what has happened to Peter and his boy, who have been missing for some days. She overhears Ellen tell Balstrode about a jersey found washed up on the beach, and summons the men to hunt for Grimes.

They scatter, calling and searching for him.

A few hours later, there is a thick fog, and only the calls of the people at their manhunt, and the sound of the fog-horn, break the silence, as Peter staggers in, weary and demented, shrieking back in answer to the voices.

Ellen finds him, and tries to soothe him, but he is beyond help: she fetches Balstrode, who tells him to take out his boat, row beyond sight of land, and go down with it. Peter does as he is told, and Balstrode leads Ellen away.

The dawn is breaking as the men come back from their fruitless search, and disperse. A new day begins in the town, with its unchanging routine of tasks. Word comes from the coastguard-station of a boat sinking far out at sea, but nothing can be seen from the Borough, and the people dismiss it as a rumour, and go on with their work.

It remains to add a note on the form of the libretto and its setting. The form—a four-beat line with half rhymes—seemed appropriate for the quick conversational style of the recitatives. The prologue, however, is written in prose.

In the original production at Sadler's Wells we indulged in a calculated inaccuracy in the setting. Historically, Crabbe and the poem belong to the last years of the 18th century: we have set the opera in the early years of the 19th. There is a time-lag between a change of ideas and mode of life and its reflection on costume. If it is thought Crabbe was ahead of his time and anticipated the spirit and the problems of the 19th century, then it seems sensible to dress the opera in 19th century clothes.
Peter Grimes, the opera, was first performed at Sadler's Wells in June 1945. I owe the idea, the title, the names of three of the characters and the first and last chorus to George Crabbe. And the place is Crabbe's 'Borough.' Given this amount of derivation the work must still, I think, be judged in its own right.

As printed here Peter Grimes differs from the libretto as sung, inasmuch as I have omitted some of the repetitions and inversions required by the music— I believe it is a difference between the musical and the literary form that one welcomes, and the other avoids repetition. Thus the present text is to all intents and purposes the one to which the music was composed. In writing it I worked in the closest consultation with the composer, Benjamin Britten, from the moment when he first suggested the theme. We worked very much as a script-writer and director work on a film, the composer in this case being the director. The comparison has value, because for several reasons I believe it is useful at the present moment to dwell on how much there is in common between the arts of drama, opera, radio and film.

The verse form I chose in Peter Grimes is a four-stress line with rough rhymes for the body of the drama, though I used a variety of metres for the set numbers. (The prologue is in prose.) The departure from the five-stress line which, whether in rhyming or blank verse, has been traditional for so long in English poetic drama was inspired by the feeling that the rotundity of five-stress verse is out of key with contemporary modes of thought and speech. A four-stress line can have a conversational rhythm, but it demands rhyming couplets. Fortunately our ears have become re-acquainted with assonance and consonantal rhyme, and by their use it is possible to use this rhythm with a sense of naturalness. Indeed I believe the return of the rough rhyme is likely to help the return of poetic drama to the English stage.
CHARACTERS

PETER GRIMES, a fisherman (30)

BOY (JOHN), his apprentice (14)

ELLEN ORFORD, a widow, schoolmistress of the Borough (35)

CAPTAIN BALSTRODE, retired merchant skipper

AUNTIE, landlady of “The Boar” (50)

NIECE 1, main attractions of “The Boar” (Sopranos)

NIECE 2 (each about 20)

ROBERT BOLES, fisherman and Methodist (40)

SWALLOW, a lawyer, the Borough Mayor & Coroner

MRS. (NABOB) SEDLEY, a rentier widow of An East India Company’s factor (50)

REV. HORACE ADAMS, the rector

NED KEENE, apothecary and quack

HOBSON, carrier & policeman

DR. CRABBE

CHORUS of townspeople and fisherfolk

SCENE: The Borough, a small fishing town on the East Coast.

TIME: Towards 1830.
**INSTRUMENTATION**

- 2 Flutes (doubling Piccolos)
- 2 Oboes (second doubling Cor Anglais)
- 2 Clarinets in Bb and A (2nd doubling Eb Clarinet)
- 2 Bassoons
- Double Bassoon
- 4 Horns in F
- 3 Trumpets (1st and 2nd in C, 3rd in D)
- 3 Trombones
- Tuba
- Timpani
- *Percussion (2)
- Celesta
- Harp
- Strings
- Off-stage
- 3 Organ
- Bells
- **Tuba (Foghorn)**
- **Dance Band**
- 2 Clarinets in Bb
- Solo Violin
- Solo Double Bass
- ***Percussion
- xylophone, rattle, whip, tambourine, side drum, tenor drum, bass drum, triangle, cymbals, suspended cymbal, gong
- **taken from the orchestra
- **side drum, bass drum, cymbal

**Note.** If the Dance Band requires reinforcement, a piano should be used, for which a separate part is available.

**DURATION**

- Act I: c.55 minutes
- Act II: c.51 minutes
- Act III: c.41 minutes
PROLOGUE

(COURT THEME, THEN RECITATIVE THROUGHOUT.)

A room inside the Moot Hall, arranged for a coroner's inquest.

The room is crowded with the excited inhabitants of the Borough kept back by Hobson acting as Constable.

Swallow is sitting at a raised table.

He is the leading lawyer of the Borough and at the same time its Mayor and its Coroner.

A man of unexceptionable career and talents he nevertheless disturbs the burgesses by his air of a man with anarrière pensée.

One is never quite sure whether he is speaking ironically.

He is both flat and reckless.

HOBSON (shouts) Peter Grimes!

Peter Grimes steps forward from among the crowd.

SWALLOW (reading from deposition) Peter Grimes, we are here to investigate the cause of death of your apprentice William Spode, whose body you brought ashore from the boat, "The Boy Billy" on the 26th ultimo.

Do you wish to give evidence?

Peter nods.

CURTAIN
Peter Grimes

Will you step into the box?

Peter steps into the witness box. Hobson brings him a large Bible.

Peter Grimes! Take the oath! After me!

(emphatically)

"I swear by Almighty God."

PETER

(intonently)

"I swear by Almighty God."

SWALLOW

"That the evidence I shall give."

PETER

"That the evidence I shall give."

SWALLOW

"Shall be the truth."

PETER

"Shall be the truth."

SWALLOW

"The whole truth and nothing but the truth!"

PETER

"The whole truth and nothing but the truth!"

SWALLOW

Tell the court the story in your own words.

Peter is silent.

You sailed your boat round the coast (lightly)

with the intention of putting in to London. Why did you do this?

PETER

We'd caught a huge catch, too big to sell here.
The wind turned against us, blew us off our course. We ran out of drinking water.

SWALLOW: How long were you at sea?
PETER: (far away, reliving that time again) Three days. …

SWALLOW: What happened next?
PETER: He died (with horror) lying there among the fish.

SWALLOW: What did you do?
PETER: Threw them overboard, set sail for home.

SWALLOW: You mean – you threw the fish overboard? …

SWALLOW: When you landed, did you call for help?
PETER: I called Ned Keene.

SWALLOW: The apothecary here? (indicates Ned)

PETER shows himself among the crowd.

Was there anybody else called?
PETER: Somebody brought the parson.

SWALLOW: You mean the Rector, Mr. Horace Adams?
The Rector steps forward.

Swallow waves him back.

{SWALLOW}

All right, Mr. Adams.

He turns back to Peter.

Was there a certain amount of excitement?

PETER

Bob Boles started shouting.

Boles gesticulates from the crowd.

{SWALLOW}

There was a scene (lightly)

in the village street from which you were rescued by our landlady?

PETER

Yes. By Auntie.

SWALLOW

We don't call her that here …

Auntie laughs from the crowd.

_______________________________________________

_____________________

__________________________________________________________________________________________________
Peter Grimes

You then took to abusing a respectable lady?

Peter glares.

Answer me …

Mr. Sedley pushes forward.

Mrs. Sedley is the widow of a retired factor of the East India Company and is known locally as 'Mrs. Nabob'. She is 65, self-assertive, inquisitive, unpopular.

You shouted abuse at a certain person?

MR S. SEDLEY Say who! Say who! Say who!

SWALLOW Mrs. Sedley here.

PETER (fiercely) I don't like interferers!

A slight hubbub among the spectators resolves itself into a chorus which is more like the confused muttering of a crowd than something fully articulate.

______________________________________________

° factor {an agent exchanging merchandise {OED n.4.a.}, the third class of the East India Company servants {OED n.4.b.}}

________________________________

44 - 49 ♪{/except 44o-48o B, original version} {44o-46.1o Slater, 47o-48o Britten}

[SW J You were later subjected to persecution in the form of enquiries by an amateur Bow Street runner in the person of Mrs. Sedley? (Peter doesn't reply. Mrs Nabob snorts)

[Lies! HOBSON Silence]

SWALLOW You then took to abusing a respectable lady.

Silence.

You shouted abuse at a certain person.

Mrs. Sedley pushes forward.

MRS. SEDLEY Say who it was. Say who. SWALLOW Mrs. Sedley here.

PETER (glumly) I don't like (Nosey Parkers.)

Mrs. Sedley moves forward.

Say who! Say who!!

Say who! Say who!! Say who!!

DE {Britten} + other ♪ (glumly)

Interferers!

Nosey Parkers.

... resolves itself into {end of SD}

Hubbub among the spectators.

__________________________________________

32 SD variation

33 Lines revised

34 SD extended
CHORUS TENOR 1S

When women gossip the result

CHORUS BASS 1S

(gliding between notes)

CHORUS TENOR 2S

(gliding between notes)

CHORUS BASS 2S

(gliding between notes)

CHORUS TENOR 1S

Is someone doesn't sleep at night!

CHORUS BASS 1S

Is someone doesn't sleep at night!

CHORUS TENOR 2S

Is someone doesn't sleep at night!

CHORUS BASS 2S

Is someone doesn't sleep at night!

CHORUS TENOR 1S

Then someone doesn't sleep at night!

CHORUS BASS 1S

Then someone doesn't sleep at night!

CHORUS TENOR 2S

Someone doesn't sleep at night!

CHORUS BASS 2S

Sleep at night!

HOBSON

(shouts)

Silence!

CHORUS BASS 1S

Sleep at night!

CHORUS TENOR 2S

Sleep at night!

HOBSON

Silence!

SWALLOW

(when silence has been restored)

Now tell me this. Who helped you carry the boy home? ®

The crowd indicate Ellen.

HOBSON

(shouts)

Silence!

SWALLOW

Silence please.

HOBSON

(shouting)

HJOQU

Now … home?

Did anybody help you to carry the boy home? B

Did anyone help you to carry the boy home? C

Ellen Orford? B

{Britten deletes this answer in DE}
The schoolmistress, the widow, Mrs. Ellen Orford? Renewed hubbub. Ellen steps forward to Swallow.

CHORUS ALTO 2S (gliding between notes)

O when you pray you shut your eyes

CHORUS ALTO 1S (gliding between notes)

O when you shut your eyes

CHORUS SOPRANO 2S (gliding between notes)

O when you shut your eyes

CHORUS SOPRANO 1S (gliding between notes)

O when you shut your eyes

CHORUS ALTO 2S

And then can’t tell the truth from lies!

CHORUS ALTO 1S

You then can’t tell the truth from lies!

CHORUS SOPRANO 2S

You then can’t tell the truth from lies!

HOBSON (shouts)

Silence!

HOBSON

Silence!

SWALLOW (thrustfully)

Mrs. Orford,

CHORUS SOPRANO 2S

Truth from lies!

HOBSON

Silence!

SWALLOW
Ellen looks at him with contempt. Swallow waves her away.

(to Grimes) There's something here perhaps in your favour. (speedily)

I'm told you rescued the boy from drowning in the March storms. Peter is silent. Have you something else to say? Peter is silent. No? — Then I have! (pompously)

Peter Grimes. I here advise you — do not get another boy apprentice. Get a fisherman to help you — big enough to stand up for himself.

Our verdict is — that William Spode, your apprentice, died in accidental circumstances. But that's the kind of thing people are apt to remember!

______________________________

______________________________
Peter has stepped forward and is trying to speak.

HOBSON (shouts)
Silence!

CHORUS TENORS & BASSES
Dare to fix the guilt!

CHORUS SOPRANOS & ALTOS
Fix the guilt!

CHORUS TENORS & BASSES
Fix the guilt!

CHORUS SOPRANOS & ALTOS
Fix!

Peter Grimes
PETER

Your honour!

CHORUS BASSES

Fix the guilt!

CHORUS ALTOS

Fix the guilt!

HOBSON (shouts)

Silence!

CHORUS TENORS

Fix the guilt!

PETER

Your honour!

CHORUS SOPRANOS

Fix the guilt!

HOBSON (shouts)

Silence!

PETER

Like (every syllable emphasized)

every other fisherman

CHORUS BASSES

Guilt!

PETER

I have to hire an apprentice.

I must have help—

SWALLOW {140}

Then get a woman help you look after him.

PETER

That's what I want—but not yet—

SWALLOW

Why not?

PETER

(emphatically)

Not till I've stopped people's mouths!

Swallow rises—everyone else stands.

SWALLOW

(makes a gesture of dismissal)

Stand down! Clear the court! Stand down!

___________ _____________________ ______ ________________________________ ______

136, 138 ♪, ♫, ♩, ♪{except C} {I can't, can I?} [I cannot] C + FGI {except I} choice!

136 ♪ ♩ {original C} ♪ {except F} marc.

marc.

141 ♪ ♩ from E{ later } The only way for me to fish is by hiring a boy apprentice. I have no choice.

136 ♪ ♩ {original C} ♪ {except F} marc.

marc.

142 ♪ {except F} {Crozier} + later ♪ ♩ {original C} {I record a verdict of accidental death. Grimes, stand down.} E {Britten, bracketed and then erased} E {Slater, deleted by Crozier} court! ♪ ~.

______________________________

145 <That will do.> [Clear the court. Stand down!]

E {Crozier} + later ♪ {original C} [I record a verdict of accidental death. Grimes, stand down.]

______________________________

Punctuation variation

Chorus layout

Swallow interrupting again

Line revised

SD variation

SD in
"Stand down!" you say. You wash your hands.

The case goes on in people's minds.

The charges that no court has made

Will be shouted at my head.

Then let me speak,

When women gossip the result

Let me stand trial,

Is someone doesn't sleep at night.

Bring the accusers into the hall.

Is someone doesn't sleep at night.

But when the crowner sits upon it,

Let me thrust into their mouths,

Who can dare to fix the guilt?

The truth itself,
Who can dare to fix the guilt?

Who can dare to

The simple truth,

Who can fix the guilt?

Fix the guilt!

Fix the guilt!

Fix the guilt!

Fix the guilt...

Swallow leaves pompously, and the crowd go out through the main door.

HOBSON (shouts)

Clear the court!

Clear the court!

Clear the court!

Clear the court!

leaving only Ellen and Peter.

DUET

PETER The truth— the pity— and the truth.

Ellen comes up to Peter.

____________________________________________________________________________

Swallow pompously leaves and the crowd gradually go out the other way leaving only Peter and Ellen standing separately.

{sv}

Swallow rises with slow dignity. Everybody stands up while he makes his ceremonial exit. The crowd then begins to go out. Peter and Ellen are left alone.

{placed at 177.1} D{Britten} E{Slater}

+ later

Against them all Constable Hobson shouts his:

Clear the court! U [Clear the Court!] D{Britten} +

EHJNQ {except} court.

E HJNQ 176+ {Slater's original text in C} Silence!

Silence!/

and Peter repeats:

PETER O let me thrust into their mouths/The truth, the pity and the truth/

HOBSON Silence!/ CURTAIN

The truth...

friend.

Music indicator: Britten maps out the duet
ELLEN (sweetly) ﮯ Peter, Peter, come away!

PETER (agitated) ﮯ Where the walls themselves

ELLEN (calmly) ﮯ But we'll gossip, too,

PETER While Peeping Toms

ELLEN There'll be new shoals to catch:

PETER Ay!

ELLEN Life will be kind.

PETER Only of

ELLEN Unclouded,

PETER Time will not

_______________________________________

71 Which walls?

72 Rejecting a revision

A late coming together

Lines added
ELLEN

The hot sun will spread his rays around.

PETER

And fate is blind.

ELLEN

My voice out of the pain.

PETER

Is like a hand that can feel, and know:

ELLEN & PETER

Here is a friend, here is a friend!

They gradually walk out together as the CURTAIN FALLS.

ELLEN

Come home, come home, which you can share.

PETER

Come home, come home, and share a home content that here you feel — and know.

Here is a friend, here is a friend.

She touches him.

They walk off slowly.

Variant readings

The coming together

Brackets

SD extended

SD variation
{Act 1 Scene 1}

Dawn

'Everyday', grey seascape

ACT I

Scene 1

The Borough beach and street. The Moot Hall, Boar Inn, Ned Keene's apothecary's shop, Church porch and a boat are all visible.

It is a cold grey morning, before high tide, several days later. Everyday work is going on, and the people sing quietly to themselves as they move about their work, folding and cleaning nets, baiting lines, mending sails.

Captain Balstrode stands on a breakwater, looking out to sea through his glass. Balstrode is a retired merchant captain, shrewd as a travelled man should be, but with a general sympathy that makes him the favourite rentier of the whole Borough.

He chews a plug of tobacco while he watches.

INTERLUDE

'Everyday', grey seascape

CURTAIN
No. 1  GENERAL ENSEMBLE

CHORUS OF FISHERMEN AND WOMEN

CHORUS

(simply)

 Oh hang at open doors the net, the cork, While squalid sea-
dames at their mending work.

(intently)

 Welcome the hour when fishing through the tide The weary hus-
bond throws his freight aside.

Several fishermen cross to “The Boar” where Auntie stands in the doorway. Find rest in public bars where fiery gin will aid the warmth that languishes within.

A FISHERMAN – 1st Bass Solo

Auntie!

AUNT

Come in, gentlemen, come in!

BOLES (protesting)

Her vats flow with poison’d gin!

Boles the Methodist fisherman stands aside from all this dram drinking.

BALSTRODE

Boles has gone Methody!

(points and laughs)

AUNTIE

( jocularly)

A man should have hobbies to cheer his private life!

Fishermen go into “The Boar”. Others remain with their wives at the nets and boat.

WOMEN’S CHORUS

(simply)

 Dabbling on shore half-naked sea-
boys crowd, Swim round a ship, or swing upon a shroud:

° Methody °° shroud
Small boys are scrambling over the boat.

{WOMEN'S CHORUS}

Or in a boat purloined with paddles play
And grow familiar with the wat'ry way.

BALSTRODE

Shoo!

(Shoo! every syllable emphasized)
Shoo! you little barnacles!

Balstrode chases the boys away.

Up your anchors! Hoist your sails!

A more respectable figure now begins, with much hat-raising, his morning progress down the High Street. He makes straight for "The Boar".

A FISHERMAN – 1st Bass Solo

(touches cap) Dr. Crabbe!

BOLES (points as the swing door closes)

He drinks 'Good Health' to all diseases!

ANOTHER FISHERMAN – 2nd Bass Solo

Storm?

A few people shade their eyes looking out to sea.

A FEW FISHERMEN – A few Tenors

Storm?

BALSTRODE (glass to his eye)

A long way out. Sea horses.

The wind is holding back the tide.

(Shoo! every syllable emphasized)

If it veers round, watch for your lives.

While the second boat is being hauled in, boys are scrambling over the first boat.

(placed at 21.1)

Balstrode chases them from the boat.

Dr. Crabbe comes down the street and makes straight for the "Boar."

~.

A few people

They

A FEW FISHERMEN

A FEW FISHERWOMEN

(A few Tenors)
CHORUS OF FISHERS

And if the spring tide eats the land again

Till e'en the cottages and cobbled walls of fishermen

As if in sleep, thieving for thieving's sake!

The Rector comes down the High Street.

The two 'Nieces' who give Auntie her nickname call from "The Boar."

The Rector is followed as always by the Borough's second most famous rentier, the widow, Mrs. (Nabob) Sedley.

RECTOR (right and left)

Good morning, good morning!

NIECES

Good morning!

Mrs. SEDLEY

Good morning, good morning, dear Rector.

Keene calls from his shop.

NED (jocularly)

Had Auntie no nieces we'd never respect her!

Swallow follows down the street.

SWALLOW

Good morning! Good morning!

NIECES

Good morning!

Mrs. SEDLEY

Good morning, your worship, Mr Swallow!

___________________________________________

°

patter

__________________________________________

SP

{a rapid delivery, close in manner and tone to speech}

__________________________________________

{except AB} + ♪ CHORUS 31 e'en ♪

{set as one syllable}

{other}

{original A-C}

thievish {Britten} ♪ {except GIKL} the thievish {original A-C}

largamente ♪ sake! GKL 33.1 ♪

The Rector comes down the High Street. He is followed as always by the Borough's second most famous rentier, the widow, Mrs. (Nabob) Sedley. From "The Boar" come the two 'nieces' who give Auntie her nickname. They stand in front of the pub taking the morning sun. Ned Keene, seeing Mrs. Sedley, pops out of his shop door.

The Rector and Mrs. Sedley meet coming down the street–the Nieces call from the "Boar."

[No. 1 continued]

SEXTET [lively, "patter"] CD {Britten}

[Good morning, good morning] Dear Rector. D {Britten} +♪ Good morning, dear Rector. ♪

~

Good morning! Good morning! Swallow. DE {Britten} + later ♪ Swallow! ♪

_____________________________________________________________
Auntie answers Keene from "The Boar."

AUNTIE

(jocularly)

You jeer, but if they wink you're eager to follow!

The Rector and Mrs. Sedley continue towards the Church.

No. 1 continued RECITATIVE OVER CHORUS

CHORUS

SOPRANO

For us

CHORUS ALTOS, TENORS & BASSES

For us sea-

NED

(shouts across to Auntie)

I'm coming tonight to see your nie-

CHORUS ALTOS

Death

CHORUS TENORS & BASSES

Death to our gardens of fertility.

AUNTIE

(dignified)

"The Boar" is at its patron's service.

BOLES

(impetuous)

God's storm will drown your hot desires!

CHORUS TENORS

Yet

CHORUS BASSES

(Tenors and Basses emphazised)

Yet only such contemptuous springtide can

BALSTRODE

(solemn)

God stay the tide, or I shall share your fears.

CHORUS BASSES

Tickle the virile impotence of man.
PETER (calls off) Hi! Give us a hand! Everyone stops working.

PETER Haul the boat! Nobody will help him.

BOLES (shouts back) Haul it yourself, Grimes!

PETER (off) Hi! (every syllable emphasized) Somebody bring the rope!

Nobody does. Presently he appears, makes the rope fast to the capstan and takes the capstan rope himself and pulls it after him (off) to the boat. Then he returns. The fishermen and women turn their backs on him and slouch away awkwardly.

No. 3  QUARTET

('Working' Quartet, Balstrode and Keene heavy accents, Auntie and Boles quicker)

BALSTRODE (going to capstan) spaciously I'll give a hand, the tide is near the turn.

NED (going to capstan) spaciously We'll drown the gossips in a tidal storm.
Peter Grimes

1.1

Peter Grimes goes back to the boat. Balstrode and Keene turn the capstan and gradually Peter's boat comes into sight.

Auntie and Boles stand aside, commenting.

AUNTIE
(at the door of "The Boar")

Parsons may moralise and fools decide,
But a good publican takes neither side.

BALSTRODE
O haul away! The tide is near the turn.

NED
Man invented morals but tides have none.

BOLES
(with arms akimbo)

This lost soul of a fisherman must be

Shunned by respectable society.

AUNTIE
I have my business.

BALSTRODE
The tide that...

BOLES
Oh let the captains hear,

NED
The tide that...

AUNTIE
Let the preachers learn:

BALSTRODE
Floods will...

BOLES
Let the scholars learn:

AUNTIE
Hell may be fiery,

but the pub won't burn!

BALSTRODE
Ebb, the tide, the tide will turn,

HELL MAY BE FIERY

but the pub won't burn!

BALSTRODE
Ebb, the tide, the tide will turn,
BOLES

\[\text{they share,}\]

\[\text{they share}\]

\[\text{the people's scorn!}\]

NED

\[\text{Ebb, the tide, the tide will turn!}\]

The boat is hauled up. Grimes appears.

NED

\[\text{I've got a prentice for you.}\]

Balstrode

\[\text{A workhouse rat?}\]

NED

\[\text{(every syllable emphasized)}\]

\[\text{I called at the workhouse yesterday.}\]

\[\text{All you do now is fetch the boy.}\]

\[\text{We'll send the carter with a note.}\]

\[\text{He'll bring your bargain on his cart!}\]

HOBSON

\[\text{(enters)}\]

\[\text{(heavily)}\]

\[\text{Cart's full, sir. More than I can do.}\]

NED

\[\text{Listen, Jim. You'll go to the workhouse}\]

\[\text{And ask for Mr. Keene his purchase.}\]

\[\text{Bring him back to Grimes!}\]

HOBSON

\[\text{Cart's full, sir.}\]

\[\text{(angrily)}\]

\[\text{Hobson, you'll do what there is to be done.}\]

Fishermen and women gather round. Boles takes his chance.

\[\text{Through the ensuing scenes}\]

\[\text{Grimes sits}\]

\[\text{He calls Hobson from the}\]

\[\text{you!}\]

Hobson enters
BOLES

1.1

Is this a Christian country? Are Ellen Orford has come in, and stands listening. She is a widow of about 40. Her children have died, or grown up and gone away, and in her loneliness she has become the Borough schoolmistress. A hard life has not hardened her. It has made her the more charitable.

Pauper children so enslaved That their bodies go for cash?

HOBSON, will you do your job?

HOBSON (heavily) I have to go from pub to pub Picking up parcels, standing about. My journey back is late at night. Mister, find some other way To bring your boy back.

CHORUS BASSES He's right!

CHORUS ALTOS He's right!

CHORUS TENORS & BASSES Dirty jobs!

FULL CHORUS Dirty jobs!

HOBSON Mister, find some other way To bring your boy back.

CHORUS BASSES Dirty jobs!

CHORUS ALTOS, TENORS & BASSES Dirty jobs!

FULL CHORUS He's right!

HOBSON Mister, find some other way To bring your boy back.

ELLEN Carte! I'll mind your passenger.
CHORUS (whispered)

What! And be Grimes' messenger?

ELLEN

Whatever you say, I'm not ashamed.

CHORUS

You'll be Grimes' messenger!

ELLEN

Somebody must do the job.

CHORUS

You!

ELLEN (heavily)

The carter goes from pub to pub,
Picking up parcels, standing about.

The boy needs comfort late at night,
He needs a welcome on the road,
Coming here strange he'll be afraid.

NED

Mrs. Orford is talking sense.

CHORUS (intently)

Ellen – you're leading us a dance,
Fetching boys for Peter Grimes,
Because the Borough is afraid
You who help will share the blame!

ELLEN

Whatever you say …

No. 5  ARIA

(Slow, determined tune)

Let her among you without fault
Cast the first stone
And let the Pharisees and Sadducees
Give way to none.
But whosoever feels his pride
Humbled so deep
There is no corner he can hide
Even in sleep!
Will have no trouble to find out
How a poor teacher
Widowed and lonely finds delight
In should'ring care.

No. 6  RECITATIVE
(as she moves up the street)
Mr Hobson, where's your cart?
I'm ready.

HOBSON
Up here, ma'am. I can wait.

The crowd stands round and watches.
So some follow Ellen and Hobson as they go off.

MRS. SEDLEY
(whispers to Ned)
Have you my pills?

NED
I'm sorry ma'am.

MRS. SEDLEY
My sleeping draught?

NED
The laudanum
Is out of stock and being brought
By Mr. Carrier Hobson's cart.

MRS. SEDLEY
Good Lord! Good Lord!

Good Lord!
Meet us both in the pub, “The Boar” Auntie’s we call it. It’s quite safe.

MRS. SEDLEY
I’ve never been in a pub in my life.

NED
You’ll come?

MRS. SEDLEY
All right!

NED
Tonight?

MRS. SEDLEY
All right!

Mrs. Sedley moves off up the street sedately bowing – there is some tittering among the crowd.

NED
If the old dear takes much more laudanum She’ll land herself one day in Bedlam!

BALSTRODE
(looks seaward through his glass)
Look! The storm cone!

Consternation in the crowd.

(lively ensemble with quick interjections, approaching storm)

BALSTRODE
No. 7  SOLO & CHORUS
(lively ensemble with quick interjections, approaching storm)

BALSTRODE
No. 7  SOLO & CHORUS
(lively ensemble with quick interjections, approaching storm)
Peter Grimes

1.1

{BALSTRODE} (spaciously) 

Now the flood tide 

CHORUS BASSES II (every syllable emphasised) 

Look out for squalls!

CHORUS BASSES I (every syllable emphasised) 

It's veering in from sea!

CHORUS TENORS I (every syllable emphasised) 

Look! The storm cone!

BALSTRODE 

And seahorses

CHORUS BASSES I 

The wind veers 

In at gale force.

BALSTRODE 

Will gallop over

CHORUS BASSES II 

Look out for squalls!

CHORUS TENORS II 

It's veering in from sea!

BALSTRODE 

The eroded coast

CHORUS TENORS I 

Make your boat fast!

CHORUS BASSES I 

Make your boat fast!

NED (spaciously) 

Now the flood tide

CHORUS BASSES II 

Yes, make your boat fast!

_______________________

_____________________________________________
CHORUS SOPRANOS I
Shutter your windows!

General activity – hauling of boats, nets and shuttering of windows etc.

NED
And sea-horses

CHORUS BASSES I
Make your boat fast!

CHORUS SOPRANOS II

CHORUS TENORS
Look!

NED
Will gallop over

CHORUS TENORS
Look!

BALSTRODE
The wind veers

CHORUS SOPRANOS
Look!

BALSTRODE
At gale force.

CHORUS ALTOS I
Look out for squalls!

CHORUS ALTOS II
Shutter your windows!

NED
The eroded coast!

CHORUS SOPRANOS
Bring in the nets!

CHORUS TENORS & BASSES
And bring in all the nets!

AUNTIE (spaciously)
Now the flood tide

BALSTRODE
Look!

CHORUS ALTOS
Make your boat fast!

CHORUS BASSES
Look!

____________________

182.1 * general ... nets, etc.
F 201 boat

____________________________
CHORUS SOPRANOS
Bring in the nets!

CHORUS BASSES
Look!

CHORUS TENORS
Bring in the nets!

CHORUS BASSES
And bring in all the nets!

AUNTIE
And sea-
horses

NED
Look!

NIECES
(spaciously)
Now the flood tide

BALSTRODE
The wind veers in at gale force!

NED, CHORUS SOPRANOS & ALTOS
Look!

CHORUS ALTOS
Look out for squalls!

NED
Look!
the storm cone!

BALSTRODE
At gale force,

CHORUS SOPRANOS
Shutter your windows!

NIECES
And sea-
horses.

CHORUS TENORS
And bring in all the nets!

BOLES
(spaciously)
Now the flood tide

CHORUS ALTOS
Look!

CHORUS BASSES
And bring in all the nets!

CHORUS ALTOS
Look!

CHORUS TENORS
Make your boat fast!

BALSTRODE & NED
Look!

NIECES & AUNTIE
Look!
BALSTRODE & NED

Look!

CHORUS SOPRANOS

Shutter your windows!

NIECES & AUNTIE

Look!

BALSTRODE & NED

Look!

BOLES

And seahorses

NIECES & AUNTIE

Now it's veering in from sea!

NED

It's veering in from sea!

CHORUS SOPRANOS & ALTOS

And bring in all the nets!

CHORUS TENORS & BASSES

(spaciously)

Flooding, flooding

BALSTRODE

A high tide coming.

BOLES

A high tide coming

CHORUS TENORS & BASSES

Our seasonal fears.

NIECES & AUNTIE

Will eat the land, will eat the land.

NED

A high tide now will eat the land.

CHORUS SOPRANOS & ALTOS

(spaciously)

Flooding, flooding

BALSTRODE

A tide no breakwaters can withstand.

NIECES

Will eat the land.

CHORUS SOPRANOS & ALTOS

Our seasonal fears.

BOLES

A tide no breakwaters can

Flooding, flooding

Our seasonal fears,

Look! The storm cone

The wind veers.

A high tide coming

Will eat the land

A tide no breakwaters can withstand.®
1.1

CHORUS TENORS & BASSES

Flood, flooding

NED

Will eat the land.

AUNTIE

A tide no breakwaters can withstand.

BALTRODE

A high tide coming.

CHORUS SOPRANOS & ALTOS

Flooding, flooding

CHORUS TENORS & BASSES

Our seasonal fears.

2ND NIECE

A tide no breakwaters can withstand.

BOLES

Will eat the land.

2ND NIECE

A tide no breakwaters can withstand.

CHORUS TENORS & BASSES

Flooding, flooding

CHORUS SOPRANOS & ALTOS

Our seasonal fears.

AUNTIE

A high tide now will eat the land.

BOLES & NED

Will eat the land.

CHORUS TENORS & BASSES

Our seasonal, seasonal, seasonal fears.

CHORUS SOPRANOS & ALTOS

Seasonal, seasonal fears.

BALTRODE, BOLES & NED

Will eat the land.

NIECES, AUNTIE & BOLES

Look! the storm cone

CHORUS SOPRANOS

Fasten your boats!

BALSTRODE & NED

The storm cone

CHORUS ALTOS

Fasten your boats!

84

Partial dovetailing

85

Lines variously allocated

265
CHORUS TENORS

Fast

en your boats!

CHORUS BASSES

Fasten your boats!

NIECES, AUNTIE, BOLES, BALSTRODE & NED

As the wind veers.

CHORUS SOPRANOS & ALTOS

The springtide's here

With a gale behind,

NIECES, AUNTIE, BOLES, BALSTRODE & NED

Now the flood

tide

CHORUS TENORS & BASSES

The

springtide's here

With a gale behind,

NIECES, AUNTIE, BOLES, BALSTRODE & NED

And sea-
horses

CHORUS SOPRANOS & ALTOS

With a gale behind.

CHORUS TENORS & BASSES

With a gale behind.

ALL

Look! The storm cone!

The wind veers

In from sea

At gale force.

CHORUS TENORS & BASSES

Is there much to fear?

CHORUS SOPRANOS & ALTOS

Is there much to fear?

NED

Only for the goods you're rich in:

It won't drown your conscience, it might

flood your kitchen.

BOLES

(passionately)

Go
d has his ways

which are not ours:

CHORUS BASSES

Look out for squalls!

CHORUS TENORS

Look! The storm cone!

CHORUS BASSES

It's veering in from sea.
CHORUS ALTOS
\textit{Look out for squalls!}

CHORUS SOPRANOS
\textit{Look!}

CHORUS TENORS
\textit{It's veering at gale force!}

CHORUS SOPRANOS
\textit{Look!}

BOLES
\textit{His high tide swallows up the shores.}

CHORUS BASSES
\textit{Shutter your windows!}

CHORUS SOPRANOS
\textit{Look!}

CHORUS ALTOS
\textit{Shutter your windows!}

CHORUS TENORS
\textit{Make your boat fast!}

CHORUS BASSES
\textit{Make your boat fast!}

CHORUS SOPRANOS
\textit{And bring in all the nets!}

CHORUS ALTOS & TENORS
\textit{The springtide's here}

BOLES
\textit{Repent!}

CHORUS SOPRANOS & BASSES
\textit{The springtide's here}

BOLES
\textit{Repent!}

FULL CHORUS
\textit{With a gale behind!}

BOLES
\textit{Repent!}

NED
\textit{And keep your wife upstairs.}

OMNES
\textit{(spaciously)}

\textit{O Tide that waits for no man,}
\textit{Spare our coasts!}

There is a general exeunt – mostly through the swing doors of "The Boar".

Dr Crabbe's hat blows away, is rescued for him by Ned Keene who bows him into the pub.
O Tide that waits for no man,
Spare our coasts!
O Tide, that waits for no man,
Spare our coasts!

Peter is still working at his boat. Balstrode comes up to him.

No. 8 SCENE (Mostly conversational, mood quiet at first, gradually becoming more and more lively as storm increases)

BALSTRODE (every syllable emphasized)
And do you prefer the storm To Auntie's parlour and the rum?

PETER (intently)
I live alone. The habit grows.

BALSTRODE Grimes, since you're a lonely soul Born to blocks and spars and ropes Why not try the wider sea With merchantman or privateer?

PETER (with feeling)
By familiar fields, Marsh and sand, Ordinary streets, Prevailing wind.

BALSTRODE You'd slip the se moorings if you had the mind.

PETER (with feeling)
By the shut faces Of the Borough clans; And by the kindness Of a casual glance.
Peter Grimes

You'll find no comfort there!

When an urchin's quarrelsome,

Brawling a

his little games,

Mother stops him with a threat,

"You'll be sold to Peter Grimes!"

Selling me new apprentices,

Children taught to be ashamed

Of the legend on their faces

"You've been sold to Peter Grimes!"

Then the Crowner sits to

Hint, but not to mention crimes,

And publishes an open verdict

Whispered about this "Peter Grimes".

Your boy was workhouse starved

Maybe you're not to blame he died.
Peter Grimes

1. Picture what that day was like,
That evil day.
We strained into the wind
Heavily laden,
We plunged into the waves' Shuddering challenge.
Then the sea rose to a storm
Over the gunwales,
And the boy's silent reproach
Turned to illness.
Then home
Among fishing nets,
Alone, alone, alone
With a childish death.

Have you ever been afraid of the fear
Of a cringing child?
Or known life being bound
To a scared companion?
Have you tried solitude
Doubled by a shy one?
When evening brings despair
To your gaunt cabin
And you launch your boat to find
Comfort in fishing ....
And the sea rises to a storm
Over the gunwales
And the child's reproach
Turns to illness ....
Have you tried nursing
死亡?

Picture what my life was like
Tied to a child
Whose loneliness, despair
Floode
ded the cabin.
I launched the boat to find
Comfort in fishing.
Then the sea rose to a storm
Over the gunwales,
And the child's silent reproach
Turned to illness
And I watched

Lines rewritten
This storm is useful. You can speak your mind
And never mind the Borough comment'ry.

There is more grandeur in a gale of wind
To free confession, set a conscience free.

PETER (lightly)

They listen to money
These Borough gossips
I have my visions
Fiery visions.

They call me dreamer
They scoff at my dreams
And my ambition.

But I know a way
To answer the Borough
I'll win them over.

BALSTRODE
With the new prentice?
PETER (lightly)

We'll sail together.

These Borough gossips listen to money:

I'll fish the sea dry, sell the good catches –

That wealthy merchant Grimes will set up household and shop.

You will all see it!

I'll marry Ellen!

BALSTRODE (every syllable emphasized)

Then the old tragedy is in store:

New start with new prentice just as before!

The wind has now risen to gale height and the two men shout angrily against it.


**Peter Grimes**

**Text**

1.1

---

PETER (emphatically)

What Peter Grimes decides

BALSTRODE

You fool, man, you fool!

PETER

Is his affair.

BALSTRODE

You fool, man, you fool!

PETER

Is his affair!

BALSTRODE

New start

PETER

What Grimes

BALSTRODE

With new prentice

PETER

Decides ...

BALSTRODE

Just as before.

PETER

Are you my conscience?

BALSTRODE

Might as well

Try shout the wind
down as to
tell

PETER

Take your advice,

BALSTRODE

As to tell,

PETER

Put it where your mon

BALSTRODE

The obvious truth!

PETER

(hurriedly)

Put it where your money is!

BALSTRODE

(emphatically)

The storm,

is here.

PETER

(emphatically)

The storm is here and

---

**Lines rewritten or expanded**

**Line revised**

**Contrast of solo and duet**
O come away!

PETER

and I shall stay!

Auntie comes out of "The Boar" to fasten the shutters – Balstrode goes to help her. He looks back at Peter, shakes his head and he and Auntie go into "The Boar".

Hush before storm breaks, ominous.

Peter alone – gazing intently into the sea and approaching storm.

PETER (with feeling)

What harbour shelters peace?

Away from tidal waves, away from storms (with feeling)

What harbour can embrace terrors and tragedies?

With her there'll be no quarrels, (with feeling)

With her the mood will stay,

Her breast is harbour too

Where we ... where we ... where we ...

The storm is rising. Auntie comes out of "The Boar" to fasten the shutters, in front of the windows. Balstrode goes to help her. He looks back towards Peter, then goes into the pub.

PETER

Young stranger shall we sail beyond the borough streets, the timid land? Is the way out to sail against the wind? This time there'll be no quarrels, this Time our wills not cross. Stranger, we'll find out what the others missed.

Two other youngsters sailed with me. We shared luck. It was all unlucky. Young stranger, we shall sail – but they – but they

Young stranger of my peace

Storms

Terrors and tragedies

With her our wills not cross. With her the mood will stay,

Her breast is harbour too

Where we ... where we ... where we ...

Night becomes day.

A harbour evermore
The wind rises. He stands a moment as if leaning against the wind.

CURTAIN

{Slater’s original, 432.1C–432.1bC}

The song fades out.

The wind rises. He stands a moment as if leaning against the wind.

Then moves off, away from the Bo rough.

{Britten’s version in F, 432.1C–432.1bC}

The wind drowns the song – Peter Grimes stands a moment as if leaning against the wind – CURTAIN

<as apparently he is drenched by an enormous wave>

[before moving along the cliff away from the town]
{Act 1 Scene 2}

INTERLUDE II

Storm

Storm at its height

Scene 2

CURTAIN

Interior of "The Boar" the same night, typical main room of a country pub.

No bar. Upright settles °, tables, log fire.

When the curtain rises Auntie is admitting Mrs. Sedley.

The gale has risen to hurricane force and Auntie holds the door with difficulty against the wind which rattles the windows and howls in the chimney.

They both push the door closed.

▀

No. 1  RECITATIVE (over single percussion instrument, agitated)

(storm always to be felt)

AUNTIE

Past time to close!

MRS. SEDLEY (nervous)

He—he—he said half past ten.

AUNTIE

Who?

MRS. SEDLEY

Mister Kine.

AUNTIE

Him and his women!

MRS. SEDLEY

You referring to me?

AUNTIE

Not at all, not at all!

What do you want?

MRS. SEDLEY

(expansively)

Room from the storm.

°

settles {long wooden benches with high backs and boxes under the seats}

______________________________________________________________________
AUNTIE (rhythmically and vehemently) \(\rightarrow\) That is the sort of weak politeness \(\rightarrow\) Makes a publican lose her clients. \(\rightarrow\)

Keep in the corner out of sight.

Balstrode and some fishermen enter. They struggle with the door.

(Storm music, as if let in by the door.)

BALSTRODE (whistles)

That's a bitch of a gale all right! \(\rightarrow\)

AUNTIE (nods her head towards Mrs. Sedley) Sh-\(\quad\)-h.

BALSTRODE Sorry. I didn't see you, missis.

You'll give the regulars a surprise.

AU\(\quad\)NTIE She's meeting Ned.

BALSTRODE Which Ned?

AUNTIE The quack.

(aside) \(\rightarrow\) He's looking after her heart attack.

BALSTRODE Bring us a pint.

AUNTIE It's closing time.

BALSTRODE You fearful old female — why should you mind?

AUNTIE The storm!

Boles and some other fishermen and women enter. The wind howls through the door and again there is difficulty in closing it.

BOLES (rapidly) \(\rightarrow\) Did you hear the tide Has broken over the Northern road? \(\rightarrow\)

________________________________________

________________________________________

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________________________________________
He leaves the door open too long with disastrous consequences.

A sudden gust howls through the door, the shutters of the window fly open, a pane blows in.

**BALSTRODE (shouts)**

Get those shutters.

**AUNTIE (screams)**

Oooo!

**BALSTRODE (emphatically)**

You fearful old female, why do you leave your windows naked?

**AUNTIE**

Oo! Oo!

**BALSTRODE (rhythmically)**

Better strip a niece or two and clamp your shutters!

The two 'nieces' run in. They are young, pretty enough though a little worn, conscious that they are the chief attraction of "The Boar". At the moment they are in mild hysterics, having run downstairs in their night clothes, though with their usual instinct for precaution they have found time to don each a wrap. It is not clear whether they are sisters, friends or simply colleagues; but they behave like twins, as though each has only half a personality and they cling together always to sustain their self-esteem.

**1st NIECE**

Oo-o!

**2nd NIECE**

Oo-o!

It's blown our bedroom windows in.

—

It's blown our bedroom windows in.

—

____

________

_____

The window shutters blow open.

**MPRT**

V

**I**

{sv}

**26.1 FG**

I

{sv}

**26.2**

S

hutters ... in.

F{sv}

**27, 28 SD**

Oooo! Oo-o-o-o-o-o!

Oo!

{later Oos also*, see 13}

—

con forza

{old}

**DE**

{Britten}{original C}

ritmico

**33.4**

usual

{other}

**34 1st**

{m}*

{later SPs also *, see 16}

**BOTH NIECES**

Oo! Oo! {line 34 with 35}

NIECES

Oo! Oo! {other}

—

{line 34 with 35}

**35 2nd NIECE**

{m}*

**38 bedroom {except I} bedroom's**

{also in 39, 41, 42}
1st NIECE

It's blown our bedroom windows in.

2nd NIECE

It's blown our bedroom windows in.

1st NIECE

Oo-o-o!

2nd NIECE

Oo-o-o!

1st NIECE

We'll all be drowned.

2nd NIECE

We'll all be drowned.

1st NIECE

We'll all be drowned.

2nd NIECE

We'll all be drowned.

BALSTRODE

Perhaps in gin!

(laughs)

1st NIECE

I wouldn't mind if it didn't howl,

2nd NIECE

I wouldn't mind if it didn't howl,

1st NIECE

Wouldn't mind if it didn't howl,

2nd NIECE

Wouldn't mind if it didn't howl,

1st NIECE

It gets on my nerves!

2nd NIECE

It gets on my nerves!

(BALSTRODE)

(spaciously)

D' you think we Should stop our storm for such as you?

Coming all over palpitations!

(mimicking)

"O-o-o-o-o!

(falsetto

◊

O-o-o-o-o!"

Auntie! Get some new relations!
No. 2 SOLO (with TRIO) (half angry, half comic)

AUNTIE (takes it ill)

Loud man, (emphatically)

I never did have time

For the kind of creature who spits in his wine!

A joke’s a joke and fun is fun!

A joke’s a joke and fun is fun!

But say your grace and be polite for all that we have done.

1st NIECE (plaintively)

For his peace of mind,

2nd NIECE (plaintively)

For his peace of mind,

MRS. SEDLEY (every syllable emphasized)

This is no place for me!

1st NIECE

For his peace of mind,

2nd NIECE

For his peace of mind,

MRS. SEDLEY

This is no place for me!

1st NIECE

For his peace of mind.

2nd NIECE

For his peace of mind.

MRS. SEDLEY

This is no place.

AUNTIE

Loud man, you’re glad enough to be playing your cards in our company.

A joke’s a joke and fun is fun!
A joke's a joke and fun is fun!
But say your grace and be polite for all that we have done!

For his peace of mind,

This is no place for me!

For his peace of mind!

This is no place for me!

A FISHERMAN (1st Bass Solo)
There's been a landslide up the coast!

No. 3 RECITATIVE (as before)

Some more fishermen and women come in - the usual struggle with the door.

A FISHERMAN U   1st FISHERMAN {other}

coast!
BOLES (sweetly but very deliberately)◊ (rising unsteadily)

I'm drunk! Drunk!

BALSTRODE (accusingly)

You're a Methody° wastrel°°!

BOLES (staggers to one of the nieces)

Is this a niece of yours?

AUNTIE (arms akimbo°°°)

That's so.

BOLES (sweetly and softly) I want to pay my best respects (automatically) To the beauty and misery of her sex.

BALSTRODE (heavily) Old Methody, you'd better tune Your piety to another hymn!

BOLES I want her!

BALSTRODE Sh-h-h!

BOLES I want her!

AUNTIE (cold)

Turn that man out.

BALSTRODE (rhythmically) He's the local preacher.

He's lost the way of carrying liquor.

He means no harm.

BOLES (expansively) No, I mean love!

Boles hits him.

Balstrode quickly overpowers Boles and sits him in a chair.

_____________________________________________________________
Come on, boy!
Mrs. Sedley screams.
We live … and let live, and look we keep our hands to ourselves.
Boles struggles to his feet.
Balstrode sits him down again, laying the law down.

Pub conversation should depend
On this eternal moral;
So long as satire don't descend
To fisticuff or quarrel.

We live … and let live, and look …
We keep our hands to ourselves.

And while Boles is being forced into his chair again, the bystanders comment:

CHORUS (whispered)
We live … and let live, and look …
We keep our hands to ourselves!

BALSTRODE (gaily)
We sit and drink the evening through
Not deigning to devote a
Thought to the daily cud we chew
But buying drinks by rota!

CHORUS
We live … and let live, and look …
We keep our hands to ourselves.

____________________________
____________________________________

124.1* {see
37
125  We U,

126.1

126.3

127

parlante

131

133

*

134 ourselves!

135

139

140

141

142

143

144

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187
We live … and let live … and look!

The door opens again. The struggle with the wind is worse than before as Ned Keene and some fishermen get through.

No. 5  RECITATIVE (Storm and then Recitative as before)

NED (serious) (without a regular beat)

Have you heard the cliff is down Up by Grimes’s hut?

AUNTIE Where is he?

MRS. SEDLEY Thank God you’ve come!

NED You won’t blow away.

MRS. SEDLEY (agitated)

The carter’s over half an hour late!

NED ®

He’ll be later still: the road’s under flood.

MRS. SEDLEY I can’t stay longer. I refuse!

NED (casual)

You’ll have to stay if you want your pills.

MRS. SEDLEY With drunken females and in brawls?

NED (gaily and rhythmically)

They’re Auntie’s nieces, that’s what they are, And better than you for kissing, ma!

Mind that door!

BALSTRODE (alarmed)

Mind that door!

CHORUS Mind that door!

________________________________________________________________________________

141.3 ▲ [No. 5] CD{Britten}

RECITATIVE CDEH {sv}

[ (Storm ... Recit. as before ) ] CD{Britten}

142 SD* [ (serious) ] M - Britten{Britten}

143 senza misura ♪{except} F

144 ~

145 NED ♪ BALSTRODE 

146 refuse! ♪

147 ~.

148 SD* [ gay! ] M - Britten{Britten}

149 Goodall {Britten}

150 ♪

151 brawls? F

152 SD* [ serious ] M - Britten{Britten}

153 ♪

154 SD* [ gay! ] M - Britten{Britten}

155 ♪

156 CHORUS
The door opens again. Peter Grimes has come in. Unlike the rest he wears no oilskins. His hair looks wild. He advances into the room shaking off the raindrops from his hair. Mrs. Sedley faints. Ned Keen catches her as she falls. Balstrode and others push the door closed.

NED Get the brandy, Aunt!

AUNTIE Who'll pay?

NED Her! I'll charge her for it.

As Peter moves forward, the others shrink back.

CHORUS TENORS & BASSES Talk of the devil and there he is.

NIECES & CHORUS SOPRANOS & ALTOS Talk of the devil and there he is.

CHORUS TENORS & BASSES Talk of the devil and there he is.

NIECES & CHORUS SOPRANOS & ALTOS And a devil he is!

CHORUS TENORS & BASSES And a devil he is!

NIECES & FULL CHORUS And a devil he is!

Grimes is waiting his apprentice.

NED (rhythmically) This widow's as strong as any two Fishermen I have met.

Everybody's very quiet! No one answers.

Silence is broken by Peter, as if thinking aloud.
No. 6  ARIA (quiet, ecstasy)

PETER
(intently)

Now the Great Bear

°

and Pleiades

°°

where earth moves

Are drawing up the clouds

of human grief

(with feeling)

Breathing solemnity in the

darkly

deep night.

Who can decipher

in storm or starlight

The written character

–

(with more feeling)

As the sky turns, the world for us to change?

But if the horoscope's

bewildering

(emphatic)

Like a flashing turmoil

of a shoal of herring

Who,

Who, who, who,

Who

(can turn skies back

and begin again?)

____________________________________________________________________________________________

Silence again. Then muttering in undertones

CHORUS BASSES

every syllable detached

He's mad or drunk!

CHORUS ALTOS

every syllable detached

He's mad or drunk!

CHORUS TENORS

every syllable detached

He's mad or drunk!

CHORUS BASSES

Why's that man here?

____________________________________________________________________________________________

Great Bear {the constellation Ursa Major}
Pleiades {an open cluster of stars in the constellation Taurus}
CHORUS SOPRANOS (every syllable detached)
He's mad or drunk!

CHORUS ALTOS
Why's that man here?

CHORUS TENORS
Why's that man here?

CHORUS BASSES
He's mad or drunk!

CHORUS SOPRANOS
Why's that man here?

NIECES
His song alone would sour the beer!

CHORUS ALTOS
He's mad or drunk!

CHORUS TENORS
He's mad or drunk!

CHORUS BASSES
Why's that man here?

CHORUS SOPRANOS
He's mad or drunk!

CHORUS ALTOS
Why's that man here?

CHORUS BASSES
Why's that man...

CHORUS BASSES (every syllable detached)
His temper's up.

CHORUS ALTOS (every syllable detached)
His temper's up.

CHORUS TENORS (every syllable detached)
His temper's up.

CHORUS SOPRANOS (every syllable detached)
His temper's up.

CHORUS BASSES
O chuck him out!

CHORUS TENORS
His temper's up.

CHORUS ALTOS
O chuck him out!

CHORUS SOPRANOS
O chuck him out!

CHORUS BASSES
His temper's up.
I wouldn't mind if he didn't howl!

His temper's up.

O chuck him out!

His temper's up.

O chuck him out, chuck him out!

He looks as if he's nearly drowned.

You've sold your soul, Grimes!

Come away!

He's mad or drunk.

Satan's got no hold on me.
BALSTRODE
Leave him alone, you drunkard!

BOLES (marked slurring between notes)
I'll hold the gospel light before
The cataract that blinds his eyes.

PETER (as the drunk stumbles up to him)
Get out!

Peter thrusts Boles aside roughly and turns away.

BOLES
His exercise
Is not with men but killing boys.

Boles picks up a bottle and is about to bring it down on Peter's head when Balstrode knocks it out of his hand and it crashes on the floor.

AUNTIE
For God sake, help me keep the peace.

For peace sake, someone start a song!

[...]

Line revised

SD often absent

Lines revised

SD added

SD variant positioning

and variation

SD variation

Line revised
Ned Keene starts a round.

* AUNTIE (enthusiastically) That's right, Ned!

Ned & Auntie in unison

Old Joe has gone fishing and Young Joe has gone fishing and You Know has gone fishing and Found them a shoal.

Ned Pull them in in han'fuls, And in canfuls, And in panfuls.
NED & AUNTIE

Pull them in in handfuls,
And in canfuls,
And in panfuls.

195

BALSTRODE & NIECES

Old Joe has gone fishing and
Young Joe has gone fishing and
You Know has gone fishing and
Found them a shoal.

NED

Bring them in sweetly,
Gut them completely,
Pack them up neatly,
Sell them discreetly,

NIECES & BOLES

Old Joe has gone fishing and
Young Joe has gone fishing and
You Know has gone fishing and
Found them a shoal.

AUNTIE & BALSTRODE

Pull them in in handfuls,
And in canfuls,
And in panfuls.

NED & AUNTIE

Bring them in sweetly,
Gut them completely,
Pack them up neatly,
Sell them discreetly,

BOLES & MRS. SEDLEY

Old Joe has gone fishing and
Young Joe has gone fishing and
You Know has gone fishing and
Found them a shoal.

BALSTRODE & NIECES

Pull them in in handfuls,
And in canfuls,
And in panfuls.
AUNTIE & BALSTRODE

Bring them in sweetly,
Gut them completely,
Pack them up neatly,
Sell them discreetly,

MRS. SEDLEY & TENOR & BASS CHORUS

Old Joe has gone fishing and
Young Joe has gone fishing and
You Know has gone fishing and
Found them a shoal.

NIECES & BOLES

Pull them in in han’fuls,
And in canfuls,
And in panfuls.

NED

Oh, haul a -
way!

NIECES & BALSTRODE

Bring them in sweetly,
Gut them completely,
Pack them up neatly,

CHORUS

Old Joe has gone fishing and
Young Joe has gone fishing and
You Know has gone fishing and
Found them a shoal.

MRS. SEDLEY & BOLES

Pull them in in han’fuls,
And in canfuls,
And in panfuls.

NED & AUNTIE

Oh, haul a -
way!

♪ {except F}
~
{+}
~
!!
MRS. SEDLEY & BOLES

Bring them in sweetly,
Gut them completely,
Pack them up neatly,
Sell them discreetly,

NED & AUNTIE
Old Joe has gone fishing and
Young Joe has gone fishing and
You Know has gone fishing and
Found them a shoal.

CHORUS
Pull them in in han'fuls,
And in canfuls,
And in panfuls.

NIECES & BALSTRODE
Oh, haul a-
way!

CHORUS
Bring them in sweetly,
Gut them completely,
Pack them up neatly,
Sell them discreetly,

AUNTIE & NED
Pull them in in han'fuls,
And in canfuls,
And in panfuls.

MRS. SEDLEY & BOLES
Oh, haul a-
way!

AUNTIE & NED
Bring them in sweetly,
Gut them completely,
Peter Grimes

Text

1.2

198

Peter's entry upsets the course of the round.

PETER (loud)

When I had gone fishing

CHORUS (very soft)

Old Joe has gone fishing

and

PETER (loud)

When he had gone fishing

MRS. SEDLEY, AUNTIE, BALSTRODE & NED (very soft)

{365}

Young Joe has gone fishing

and

PETER (loud)

When You Know'd gone fishing

NIECES & BOLES (soft but growing louder from 'fishing')

You Know has gone fishing

and found

them

a shoal.

PETER (growing very loud)

We

°

Davy Jones ®

°

Davy Jones {the sailors' devil, who presides over the evil spirits of the deep}

CHORUS (very very soft but growing louder from 'way')

Oh, haul a-way!

PETER (agitated)

Bring him in with horror!

Bring him in with terror!

CHORUS (growing loud)

Oh, haul a-way!

PETER

And bring him in with sorrow!

__________________________________________________________

°

Davy Jones {the sailors' devil, who presides over the evil spirits of the deep}

__________________________________________________________

361.1 ♪ {m}

362, 364, 366, 369, 371-

2, 374-

Round version 5 original} D {Slater}

(Hush, as Grimes sings)

When I had gone fishing &

When he had gone fishing &

When You Know had gone fishing &

Found Davy Jones

Bring him in with horror & with terror & with sorrow

362, 364

f ♪

363, 365

pp ♪

367

p ♪

367-

8

{crescendo marked from 'fishing' to} f at

369

♪

{crescendo marked from entry to} ff  at 'Davy'

They found them  [We found

us] Davy Jones  F   He found him Davy Jones  E {original D = 369o}

370

ppp {but} cresc.{at}

'way'

371

agitato

♪

373

{crescendo marked from 'haul' to} f at 'a-

}
NIECES, MRS. SEDLEY, AUNTIE, BOLES, BALSTRODE & NED (loud)

CHORUS (very soft)

PETER (sad)

Oh, haul a-way!

NIECES, MRS. SEDLEY, AUNTIE, BOLES, BALSTRODE & NED (louder than before)

You Know has gone fishing

And found a shoal, and found

You Know, You Know has found them a shoal.

Peter is overwhelmed and the round continues.

CHORUS

Old Joe has gone fishing

AUNTIE

Bring them in sweetly,

BALSTRODE

Bring them in sweetly,

MRS. SEDLEY

Pull them

NED

Old Joe has gone

______________________________________________________________

100

CHORUS

Old Joe has gone fishing

AUNTIE

MRS. SEDLEY

NED

__________________________
AUNTIE

Gut them completely, Pack them up neatly

MRS. SEDLEY

in han'fuls, And in canfuls,

NED

FISHING

Young Joe has gone fishing and You Know has gone fishing

CHORUS

And Young Joe has gone fishing

BALSTRODE

Gut them completely, Pack them up neatly

BOLES

Pull them in in han'fuls

NIECES

Oh, ha- ul

AUNTIE

Sell them discreetly. Pull them

MRS. SEDLEY

And in panfuls. Bring them in sweetly,

BOLES

And in canfuls And in panfuls.

NIECES

a-way! Oh,

CHORUS

And You Know has gone fishing

NED

And found them a shoal.

BALSTRODE

Sell them discreetly. Old Joe has gone

_________________

398, 410* ♪
NIECES haul a-way!

MRS. SEDLEY Gut them completely,
Pack them up neatly,
AUNTIE In handfuls
And in canfuls.

BALSTRODE fishing and Young Joe has
gone fishing
And You Know has gone

NED in sweetly.
Sell

CHORUS And found them a shoal.

BOLES Old Joe has gone fishing
And found them a shoal.

MRS. SEDLEY Sell

AUNTIE And in panfuls.

BALSTRODE fishing
And found them a shoal.

NED a-way!

NIECES Pull them in in

CHORUS Old Joe has gone fishing and

BOLES Bring them in sweetly,

CHORUS Young Joe has gone fishing and

NIECES han’fuls
And in

MRS. SEDLEY meat
Oh,
AUNTIE Oh,
haul a-

BOLES sweet
ly

NED Oh,
haul

_____________________

423, 432, 435 *
CHORUS

You know has gone fishing

NIECES

canfuls, pack them

MRS. SEDLEY

haul a-way!

AUNTIE

,

BOLES

completely

103

BALSTRODE

Oh, haul a-way!

NED

a-way!

CHORUS

And found them a shoal,

NIECES

in panfuls. Haul a-way!

BOLES

in han'fuls and can...

104

BALSTRODE

A-way!

AUNTIE

Oh, haul a-way!

NED

Bring them in! Haul!
CHORUS

Old Joe, Young Joe, Old Joe, Young Joe,
You Know, We Know, I Know, He Know,
They all know, they found them a shoal.

BOLES

haul a-way!

Bring them in!
haul a-way!

NIECES

haul a-way!

NED

haul a-way!

MRS. SEDLEY

haul a-way!

AUNTIE

haul a-way!

---

(P.G. sings)

As I drank the home-brewed ale

Someone brought a likely tale

That the hops that made the brew

Never in our hopfields grew.

Grimes comes into the round, the others stop

[ (Hush as P.G. sings) ]

Never in our hopfields grew

What was in the wonder brew

For we know the devil's tail

Always stirs a home-brewed ale

This breaks the round but the others recover in a repeat.

---

Unique lines
At the climax of the round the door opens to let in Ellen, Hobson and the boy—Grimes' new apprentice—they are soaked, muddy and bedraggled.

No. 9  RECITATIVE (Entry into storm music as before)

HOBSON
The bridge is down. We half swam over.

NED
And your cart? Is it seaworthy?

ELLEN
We're chilled to the bone.

The Women go to Ellen and the Boy. Auntie fusses over them.

BOLES
(to Ellen)
Serves you right, woman.

________________________________________
____________________________

First he wen’ down Winding Street
Then she wen’ down Winding Street
Then you wen’ down Winding Street
Yip Niddy Boy.

What you saw thru’ curtains
Never never will <be sure> be certain
Hi Niddy’s Bolted!
Gee whoa boy

PETER
First he’s wrapped in Winding sheet
Then she’s wrapped in Winding sheet
(Now) I’m wrapped in Winding sheet
<Hey> Hie prentice boy
<Davy Jones Send us a shoal
From your locker’s Barnacled (Bleaching) Bones
Davy Jones Shoals are boiling
Thro’ the holes in Your tarpaulin
You’ve heard Peter makes this call
When he whistles this for a shoal.

let in Ellen Orford, except F, admit Ellen Orford. The Boy and the Carrier.

they are soaked soaking

RECITATIVE

{Britten} Entry into storm music as before

CD
AUNTIE

My dear,

There's brandy and hot water to spare.

NIECES

Let's look at the boy.

ELLEN

(rising)

Let him be.

NIECES

(admiring)

Nice sweet thing!

ELLEN

(protecting him)

Not for such as you.

Peter moves to the door and holds it ajar, with wind blowing in.

PETER

(becoming the boy)

Let's go. You ready?

AUNTIE

Let them warm up,

They've been half drowned.

PETER

Time to get off!

AUNTIE

(emphatically)

Your hut's washed away.

PETER

(only the cliff)

Young prentice, come!

The Boy hesitates, but Ellen leads him to Peter at the door.

ELLEN

(sweetly)

Goodbye, my dear, God bless you.

Peter will take you home.

OMNES

(except Peter and Ellen)

Home! Do you call that home!

Entry into storm music as before.

Peter takes the boy out of the door into the howling storm.
Sunday Morning
(Sunny, Sparkling music which leads to
and accompanies Ellen's opening song)

CURTAIN
Scene 1
Scene as in Act One, Scene One. The Street, some weeks later.
A fine sunny morning with church bells ringing.
Some of the villagers are standing in a group outside the church door.
The street is deserted till Ellen and Grimes's new boy, John, come in
against the stream of villagers crossing towards the church.
Ellen is carrying a work-
basket.
One or two late-
comers cross and hurry into the church.

ELLEN (expansively)
Glitter of waves
And glitter of sunlight
Bid us rejoice
And lift our hearts on high.

Man alone
Has a soul to save,
And goes to church
To worship
on a Sunday.
As the organ sounds from the church, Ellen sits down between a boat and a breakwater and takes her knitting from the basket – the boy quietly plays by her side.

{ELLEN} (conversationally, still sunny) ♪

Shall we not go to church this Sunday® But do our knitting by the sea?

I'll do the work, you talk.

John says nothing, but goes on playing quietly.

The bell stops and in church the hymn starts.

CHORUS (off) (every syllable emphasized)

Now that the daylight fills the sky®

ELLEN (simply, as if speaking) ♪

Nothing to tell me, nothing to say?

CHORUS (off)

We lift our hearts to God on high®

ELLEN Then shall I Tell you what your life was like? See if I'm right!

CHORUS (off)

That he in all we do or say®

ELLEN I think

You liked your workhouse with its grave, Empty look.

CHORUS (off)

Would keep us free from harm to-

ELLEN Perhaps you weren't So unhappy in your loneliness?

CHORUS (off)

~

______________________________________________________________________________

8.1 As ... down ♪

The organ starts voluntary in church.

8.2 between ... breakwater ♪

She sits down between ... breakwater ♪

{placed between 0.6 and 0.7}

and ... basket. ♪

{continuing text placed between 0.6 and 0.7}

9*

[CD {Britten} ♪ parlando ♪

marcato ♪

Hymn ♪

starts in church. ♪

{except N}

Hymn (off).

13 ♪

semplice (quasi parlato)

18 right!

{except M}

~

? ~.

______________________________________________________________________________

5 SD revised and variant positioning

6, 7 Line revised

8 SD added

9 SD variation

10 Line revised

11 Alternation of chorus and recitative

12 Line added

13 ~

15 Lines revised
CHORUS (off)
May he restrain our tongues from strife

ELLEN
When first I started teaching

CHORUS (off)
Shield from anger's din our life

ELLEN
The life at school to me seemed bleak and empty

CHORUS (off)
And guard with watchful care our eyes

ELLEN
But soon I found a way of knowing children

CHORUS (off)
From earth's absorbing vanities!

ELLEN
Found the woes of little people hurt more, but are more simple.

She goes on with her work. John says nothing.

CHORUS (off)
So we, when this day's work is o'er

ELLEN
John, you may have heard the story Of the prentice Peter had before.

The boy stops playing.

CHORUS (off)
And shades of night return once more

ELLEN
But when you came, I said, Now this is where we make a new start.

CHORUS (off)
Amen.

ELLEN
Ev'ry day I pray it may be so.
Morning prayer begins and the Rector's voice is heard from the church.

RECTOR (speedily)

Wherefore I pray and beseech you, as many as are here present, to accompany me with a pure heart and humble voice, saying after me, Almighty...

(The music becomes darker)

CONGREGATION

Almighty

RECTOR & CONGREGATION

and most merciful Father; We have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep. The church service continues through the ensuing scene.

ELLEN (agitated)

There's a tear in your coat. Was that done before you came?

Mrs. Sedley stops to listen on her way to church.

Badly torn.

RECTOR & CONGREGATION

And we have done those things which we ought not to have done.

ELLEN

That was done recently. Take your hand away.

RECTOR & CONGREGATION

And grant, O most merciful Father ...
RECTOR (in church)
O Lord, open Thou our lips!

CHOIR (in church)
And our mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

RECTOR (in church)
O God make speed to save us!

CHOIR (in church)  (ominous)
O Lord make haste to help us.

ELLEN
A bruise.
Well … It's begun!

RECTOR (in church)
Glory be to the Father and to the Son

CHOIR (in church)  (ominous)
and to the Holy Ghost;
Ellen gently seats the boy at her feet.

RECTOR (in church)
As it was in the beginning is now…

ELLEN (set aria, quiet)
untlet
Child, you're not too young to know
Where roots of sorrow are
Innocent, you've learned how near
Life is to torture!

RECTOR (in church)
Praise ye the Lord!

CHOIR (in church)
The Lord's name be praised.

ELLEN
Let this be a holiday,
Full of peace and quietness
While the treason of the wa
Glitters like love,

Storm and all its terrors are
Nothing to the heart's despair.
After the storm will come a sleep
Like oceans deep,

Ellen rises and fastens the boy's shirt.
CHOIR (in church)

O all ye works of the Lord, bless ye the Lord,
O ye Sun and Moon, bless ye the Lord,
O ye Winds of God,

PETER

Come boy!

CHOIR (in church)

O ye Nights and Days, bless ye the Lord,
O ye Light and Darkness, bless ye the Lord

ELLEN

Peter – what for?

CHOIR (in church)

Praise Him and magnify Him for ever.

ELLEN

But if there we're then all the boats Would fast be launching.

CHOIR (in church)

O ye Whales and all that move in the waters

PETER

I've seen a shoal. I need his help.

CHOIR (in church)

O ye Wells, bless ye the Lord
O ye Seas and Floods, bless ye the Lord,

PETER

I can see The shoals to which the rest are blind!

CHOIR (in church)

O ye Fowls of the Air, bless ye the Lord,
O all ye Beasts and Cattle, bless ye the Lord,

PETER
This is whatever day I say it is!

CHOIR (in church)
O ye Children of Men, bless ye the Lord,

PETER
Come boy!

CHOIR (in church)
Praise Him and magnify Him for ever.

ELLEN (every syllable emphasized)
You and John have fished all week,

CHOIR (in church)
O ye Servants of the Lord, bless ye the Lord

ELLEN
Night and day without a break

CHOIR (in church)
O ye holy and humble, bless ye the Lord

ELLEN
Painting boat, mending nets, cleaning fish,

CHOIR (in church)
Ananias, Azarias, Misael, bless ye the Lord,

ELLEN
Now let him rest.

CHOIR (in church)
Praise Him and magnify Him for ever.

PETER
Come boy!

ELLEN
But your bargain …

CHOIR (in church)
Glory be to the Father and to the Son,

PETER (emphatically)
He works for me,

CHOIR (in church)
As it was in the beginning is now
PETER

Leave him alone, he's mine!

CHOIR (in church)

And ever shall be,

ELLEN

Hush!

CHOIR (in church)

World without end.

ELLEN

Hush, Peter!

Peter!

Hush, Peter! Hush, Peter! Hush, Peter!

The sound dies down. In church the lesson is being read.

Ellen speaks to Peter, away from the boy.

DUET

ELLEN (darkly)

This unrelenting work

This grey, unresting industry,

What aim, what future, what peace

Will your hard prof

its buy?

PETER

Buy us a home, buy us respect

And buy us freedom from pain

Of grinning at gossips' tales.

BELIEVE IN ME,

(boldly)

we shall be free!

CHOIR (in church)

(one note ostinato)

I believe in

God the Father Almighty,

Maker of heaven and earth:

Fades into background.

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord,

Who was conceived …

ELLEN (calmly)

Peter, tell me one thing, where

The youngster got that ugly bruise?
Out of the hurly burly!

Ellen goes to Peter and puts her hand on his arm.

Peter, were we right in what we planned
To do? Were we right, were we right?

Take away your hand!

Ellen moves unhappily away from him.

Were we mistaken when we schemed
To solve your life by lonely toil?

Wrong to plan!
Wrong to try!
Wrong to live!
Right to die!

Were we mistaken when we dreamed
Boles and Keene walk down the street. They stop for a moment to listen.
That we'd come through and all be well?

Wrong to struggle!
Wrong to hope!
Then the Borough's
Right again!

__________________________________________________________________
ELLEN

Peter! You cannot buy your peace
You'll never stop the gossips' talk,
With all the fish from out the sea.

We were mistaken to have dreamed …

(Peter, distinctly)

Peter! We've failed. We've failed!

Peter cries out as if in agony
—

PETER

Ah!

strikes Ellen, whose work basket falls to the ground.

CHOIR

(in church)

Amen!

PETER

So be it!

—

And

(largamente)

God have mercy upon me!

Peter drives the boy fiercely out in front of him,
Ellen goes out the other way, weeping.

Auntie, Ned Keene, and Boles, who have been watching,
emerge one by one.

Peter ... agony
—

{except F}

crys
He ... agony.

{following 185.1}

The

Boy runs out along the cliff. Peter follows grimly. Ellen stands watching, and then goes out the other
way.

Robert Boles

... windows

—

Auntie, Ned Keene

and Boles have been

watching. They now emerge one by one.

____________________________________

_____________________________

DISTANT CHORUS

 Trinity Church

Amen!

Two voices

... God have mercy upon me!

Peter

... agony.

{except K L}

goes the

188.3

MPRT

Behind closed doors and half-open windows
neighbours have been watching. Three now emerge. First Auntie, then Ned Keene, finally Boles.

{except CDEH}

Robert Boles

... windows

—

Auntie, Ned Keene

and Boles have been

watching. They now emerge one by one.

____________________________________

_____________________________

ALTERNATION OF CHOIR AND RECITATIVE AND LINES REWRITTEN
No. 3 TRIO  ('gossipy', quick)

AUNTIE

Fool! to let it come to this!

Wasting pity, squand'ring tears.

NED (jocularly)

See the glitter in his eyes!

Grimes

& AUNTIE

Grimes is at his exercise!

BOLES

What he fears is that the Lord follows with a flaming sword!

AUNTIE

You see all through crazy eyes.

Grimes

& NED

Grimes

& BOLES

Grimes

ALL

is at his exercise!

BOLES

Where's the pastor of this flock?

Where's the guardian shepherd's hook?

ALL (solemnly)

Parson, lawyer, all at prayers!

The service is over and people gradually collect outside the church door.

NED, BOLES & AUNTIE (in unison, mock pious)

Now

& BOLES

Now

& AUNTIE

Now

ALL the church parade begins, Fresh beginning for fresh sins.

Ogling with a pious gaze...
Each one's at his exercise.

AUNTIE

Each one's at his exercise.

BOLES

Each one's at his exercise.

NED

Each one's at his exercise.

Doctor Crabbe comes first.

No. 4 RECITATIVE

AUNTIE

Doctor!

NED

Leave him out of it!

MRS. SEDLEY

(private)

What is it?

NED

Private business!

___________________________________________________________________

{original C}

~.

Recitative

{except F + U} ~.

~.

___

{215}
MRS. SEDLEY
I heard two voices during psalms
One was Grimes, and one more calm.

BOLES
While you worshipped idols there
The Devil had his Sabbath here!

MRS. SEDLEY
(vehemently)
Maltreating that poor boy again!

BALSTRODE
Grimes is weatherwise and skilled
In the practice of his trade.
Let him be,
(let us forget
What slander can invent!

CHORUS BASSES
(only a few voices)
What is it?

CHORUS SOPRANOS
(only a few voices)
What is it?

CHORUS ALTOS & TENORS
(only a few voices)
What is it?

AUNTIE, BOLES & NED
What do you suppose?
Grimes is at his exercise!

CHORUS BASSES
(whispering)
What is it?

CHORUS ALTOS
(whispering)
What do you suppose?

CHORUS ALTOS & BASSES
(boldly)
Grimes is at his exercise.

CHORUS TENORS
(whispering)
What is it?
What is it?
What is it?

CHORUS SOPRANOS
(whispering)
What do you suppose?

CHORUS SOPRANOS & TENORS
(boldly)
Grimes is at his exercise.

As people come out two by two they circulate the village
green singing their couplets as they reach the centre.
First come Swallow and a fellow lawyer.

_____________________________________________________________________________
No. 5 CHORUS (Cho
rus ostinato with interjections from soloists.
)

FELLOW LAWYER®
Dullards™
build their self-
esteem

CHORUS ALTOS (whispering)
What is it?
What is it?
What is it?
What is it?

FELLOW LAWYER®
By inventing cruelties.

CHORUS BASSES (whispering)
What do you suppose?

CHORUS ALTOS & BASSES (boldly)
Grimes is at his exercise.

CHORUS SOPRANOS (whispering)
What is it?
What is it?
What is it?
What is it?

SWALLOW®
so, the law restrains
Too impetuous enterprise.

CHORUS TENORS (whispering)
What do you suppose?

CHORUS SOPRANOS & TENORS (boldly)
Grimes is at his exercise.

A FISHERWOMAN®
Fish-
ing's a lonely
trade

CHORUS BASSES (whispering)
What is it?
What is it?
What is it?
What is it?

CHORUS ALTOS (whispering)
What do you suppose?

CHORUS ALTOS & BASSES (boldly)
Grimes is at his exercise.

NIECES◄
If a man's work cannot be
Decent,
let him stay ashore.

CHORUS TENORS (whispering)
What is it?
What is it?
What is it?

CHORUS SOPRANOS (whispering)
What do you suppose?

____________________________________
___________________________
250.4
▀
[No. 5]
CD{Britten}
CHORUS
CD
250.5
* Choru

_________________________________
_______________________________
104
Music indicator
105
SP revised
106-
7
Line rewritten
1108
SP revised
1109
Line revised
1110
Lines reallocated
1111
Lines revised
CHORUS SOPRANOS & TENORS (boldly)

Grimes is at his exercise.

CHORUS ALTOS & BASSES (boldly)

Grimes is at his exercise.

RECTOR (gracefully)

My flock – ah what a weight is this My burden pastoral.

CHORUS SOPRANOS (whispering)

What is it? What is it? What is it? What is it? What is it? What is it? What is it? What is it?

MRS. SEDLEY

But what a dang'rous faith is this That gives souls equality!

CHORUS TENORS (whispering)

What do you suppose?

CHORUS SOPRANOS & TENORS (boldly)

Grimes is at his exercise.

CHORUS ALTOS & BASSES (boldly)

Grimes is at his exercise.

CHORUS SOPRANOS & TENORS (boldly)

Grimes is at his exercise.

BALSTRODE

When the Borough gossip starts

CHORUS ALTOS (whispering)

What is it? What is it? What is it? What is it? What is it? What is it?

BALSTRODE (emphatically)

Somebody will suffer!

CHORUS BASSES (whispering)

What do you suppose?

CHORUS ALTOS & BASSES (boldly)

Grimes!

CHORUS SOPRANOS & TENORS (very boldly)

Grimes!

[oh]{Britten} DE {+ later}{original C}

pauses by Ned as he walks round.

grazioso

ah

PP

dangerous

con forza

will suffer!

~

What is it? What do you suppose?/Grimes is at his exercise.

f cresc.

ff

________________________

______________________________
During the hubbub Boles climbs a little way up the steps of the Moot Hall. Ned tries to prevent him from addressing the crowd.

No. 6 RECITATIVE with CHORUS

(BOLES)

People—No! I will speak!

This thing here concerns you all.

The crowd gathers around him.

CHORUS BASSES

Whoever's guilty gets the rap,

CHORUS ALTOS & TENORS

Whoever's guilty!

BALSTRODE

Tub-thumping.

BOLES

This prentice system's uncivilised, unchristian.

BALSTRODE

Something of the sort befits Brats conceived outside the sheets.

CHORUS TENORS

The Borough, the Borough, the Borough,

CHORUS SOPRANOS

The Borough, the Borough, the Borough,

CHORUS ALTOS & BASSES

The Borough, the Borough

Keeps its standards up!

BOLES

Where's the parson in his black?
FULL CHORUS

Where?

Is he here or is he not?

BOLES

Where's the parson?

CHORUS

To guide a sinful, straying flock?

BOLES

Your business? to ignore

Growing at your door,

Evils, like your fancy flowers!

CHORUS

Evils!

RECTOR

Calm now! Tell me what it is.

BOLES

(mimicking)

Your business? to ignore

Growing at your door,

Evils, like your fancy flowers!

CHORUS

Evils!

RECTOR

Calm now! Tell me what it is.

Ellen comes in. She is met by Auntie who has picked up

Ellen's abandoned basket and its contents.

AUNTIE

Ellen dear, see I've gathered

All your things. Come,

rest inside!

BOLES

She can tell you, Ellen Orford,

BOLES & CHORUS TENORS

Ellen Orford,

BOLES & CHORUS TENORS & BASSES

Ellen Orford!

FULL CHORUS

She helped him in his cruel games!

CHORUS ALTOS, TENORS & BASSES

She helped him!

CHORUS SOPRANOS

She helped him!

____________________________________

____________________________________
RECTOR
(holding his hand up for silence)
Ellen please.

ELLEN
What am I to do?

BOLES
(very loudly)
→ Speak out in the name of the Lord!

CHORUS
(very loudly)
→ Speak out in the name of the Lord!

CHORUS SOPRANOS & TENORS
→ Speak (quieter)
→ speak out,
→ speak out!

CHORUS ALTOS & BASSES
(very loudly)
→ Speak
→ out in the name of the Lord,
→ (quieter)
→ speak out,
→ speak out!

CHORUS SOPRANOS & TENORS
(softly)
→ Speak out!

CHORUS ALTOS & BASSES
(whispering)
→ Speak out!

ELLEN
(quiet and reasoned)
→ We planned that their lives should
→ Have a new start,
→ That I, as a friend could
→ Make the plan work
→ By bringing comfort where
→ Their lives were stark.

RECTOR
(interrupting)
You planned to be worldly-
wise But your souls were dark.

ELLEN
We planned new life, fresh start.
It was all the same:
Old fears, old horrors
Returned again.
It was all a mistake.
I should have known.

Her part of the song breaks down. He has no answer.
But the Chorus has and brings it out violently
→ (Interruption)

RECTOR
You planned to heal sick souls
With bodily care.

ELLEN
We planned new life, fresh start.
It was all the same:
Old fears, old horrors
Returned again.
It was all a mistake.
I should have known.
ELLEN
We planned this time to
Care for the boy;
MRS. SEDLEY
(interrupting)
(every syllable emphasized)
O little care you for the prentice
Or his welfare!
ELLEN
To save him from danger
And hardship sore,
BOLES
(interrupting)
(every syllable emphasized)
Call it danger, call it hardship
Or plain murder!
ELLEN
And mending his clothes and giving him
Regular meals.
NED
(interrupting)
But thanks to
flinty hearts
E'en quacks can make a profit!
SWALLOW
(interrupting)
You
planned to heal sick souls
With
bodily care!
NIECES
{370}
Perhaps his clothes you mended
But you work his bones bare!
AUNTIE
You meant just to be kind
And avert fear!
BALSTRODE
You
interfering gossips, this
Is not your
business!
ELLEN
O pity those who try to bring
MRS. SEDLEY
(interrupting)
O little care you for the prentice
Or his welfare!
RECTOR
(interrupting)
You planned to be wise
But your souls were dark
NED
(interrupting)
But thanks to
flinty hearts
E'en quacks can make a profit!
AUNTIE (interrupting) You mean to be kind.

HOBSON (interrupting) Pity the boy!

ELLEN A shadowed life into the sun.

BALSTRODE (interrupting) You interfering gossips, this is not your business!

NIECES (interrupting) Perhaps his clothes you mended But you work his bones bare!

AUNTIE (interrupting) You meant to be kind And avert fear!

BOLES (interrupting) Call it danger, call it hardship Or plain murder!

SWALLOW (interrupting) With bodily care!

ELLEN O hard hearts pity,

RECTOR (interrupting) You planned to be wise

BALSTRODE (interrupting) This is not your business!

MRS. SEDLEY (interrupting) O little care you for the prentice Or his welfare!

HOBSON (interrupting) O pity the boy!

NED (interrupting) But thanks to flinty hearts E'en quacks can make a profit!

SWALLOW (interrupting) You planned to heal souls.

AUNTIE (interrupting) You meant to be kind And to help.

NIECES (interrupting) Perhaps his clothes you mended But you work his bones bare!

ELLEN Pity those who try to bring
RECTOR (interrupting)

But your souls were dark.

BALSTRODE (interrupting)

This is not your business!

HOBSON (interrupting)

O pity the boy!

SWALLOW (interrupting)

You planned to heal sick souls

MRS. SEDLEY (interrupting)

O little care you for the prentice

Boles (interrupting)

Call it hardship

NED (interrupting)

But quacks can make a profit,

RECTOR (interrupting)

You planned
ered

AUNTIE (interrupting)

You meant to be kind

ELLEN

A shadowed life into the sun.

SWALLOW (interrupting)

With bodily care!

NIECES (interrupting)

Perhaps his clothes you mended

BOLES (interrupting)

Call it danger,

Or plain murder!

RECTOR (interrupting)

You planned to be worldly

BALSTRODE (interrupting)

O hard hearts!

HOBSON (interrupting)

O pity,

NED (interrupting)

Thanks to flinty, flinty, flinty hearts!

MRS. SEDLEY (interrupting)

Little care you for the prentice’ welfare!

HOBSON & SWALLOW (interrupting)

Pity the boy!
CHORUS (interrupting)

Who lets us down must take the rap;

Auntie and Balstrode move towards Ellen in sympathy.

MRS. SEDLEY (interrupting)

O little care you for the prentice or his welfare!

BOLES (interrupting)

O call it danger, call it hardship or plain murder!

NED (interrupting)

But thanks to flinty hearts!

E'en quacks can make a profit!

ELLEN, AUNTIE & BALSTRODE (interrupting)

O hard, hard hearts!

RECTOR, SWALLOW & HOBSON (interrupting)

You meant to be worldly-wise!

CHORUS (interrupting)

The Borough keeps its standards up.
CHORUS (interrupting)

Who lets us down must take the rap!

NIECES (interrupting)

Perhaps his clothes you mended
But you work his bones, work his bones bare!

MRS. SEDLEY (interrupting)

O little care you for the prentice, Little care you for the boy.

BOLES (interrupting)

O call it hardship, danger
Or call it murder plain!

NED (interrupting)

But thanks to flinty hearts
I can make a profit,
Thanks to flinty hearts.

ELLEN, AUNTIE & BALSTRODE (interrupting)

O hard, hard hearts!

RECTOR, SWALLOW & HOBSON (interrupting)

With bodily care,
But your souls were dark.

SWALLOW & HOBSON, CHORUS BASSES

Ha-ha!

BOLES, RECTOR, NED, CHORUS ALTOS & TENORS

Ha-ha!
SWALLOW & HOBSON, CHORUS BASSES
 Ha-

NIECES, MRS. SEDLEY & CHORUS SOPRANOS
 Ha-

NED, SWALLOW, HOBSON, CHORUS TENORS & BASSES
185 Tried to be kind ...

OMNES (without Ellen, Auntie and Balstrode)
Murder!

SWALLOW & HOBSON, CHORUS BASSES
 Ha-

BOLES, RECTOR, NED, CHORUS ALTOS & TENORS
 Ha-

SWALLOW & HOBSON, CHORUS BASSES
 Ha-

NIECES, MRS. SEDLEY & CHORUS SOPRANOS
 Ha-

MRS. SEDLEY, BOLES, RECTOR, NED, CHORUS ALTOS & TENORS
Tried to be kind and to help ...

OMNES (without Ellen, Auntie and Balstrode)
Murder!

Auntie leads Ellen away through the crowd, to “The Boar” entrance.

RECTOR
Swallow! Shall we go and see Grimes in his hut?

SWALLOW
Popular feeling’s rising!

RECTOR
Balstrode, I'd like you to come!

BALSTRODE
I warn you we shall waste our time.

RECTOR
I'd like your presence just the same!

______________________________________________________________________________

481, 487 SP ♪ {SP as 4
82 ♪

481 kind ... ♪

487 help ... ♪

{except N}

488.1*

488 Au-

488.2 ▲ [No. 8]

488.2 CD{Britten}

489 Swallow! Shall...

490 ♪{from G}

491 rising! ♪{from G}

492 ♪{from G}

493 come!  ♪{from G}

187 SD added

188 Line revised

189 Lines deleted and

190 line

191 s repositioned
MRS. SEDLEY

Little do the suspects know, I've the evidence. I've a clue!

NIECES, NED, HOBSON & CHORUS

Now we will find out the worst!

SWALLOW

(points to the nieces who join the crowd)

No ragtail no bobtail if you please.

BOLES

(pushes them away roughly)

Back to the gutter – you keep out of this.

RECTOR

(turns to go and, as Mrs. Sedley makes to follow him, he checks her with raised hand)

Only the men, the women stay.

SWALLOW

Cart

er Hobson, fetch the drum.

Summon the Borough to Grimes's hut.

BOLES, RECTOR & NED

To Grimes's hut!

NIECES, MRS. SEDLEY, BOLES, RECTOR, NED & CHORUS

To Grimes's hut!

Hobson sounds his drum and the men line up behind Swallow and the Rector. Ellen, Auntie and the Nieces remain aside, and Balstrode stays hesitating.

▀

No. 9 CHORUS (as they go)

CHORUS OF INSPECTION (march rhythm)

MRS. SEDLEY, BOLES, RECTOR, NED, SWALLOW & CHORUS

Now is gossip put on trial,

Now the rumours either fail (rhythmically)

Or are shouted in the wind

Sweeping furious through the land.

_________________________________________________________________

494

DE{Britten} + later

I've ♪, U I have {other}

~.

F

SP ♪

CHORUS

will ♪, U shall {other}

~.

F

-3

[To ... hut!]

{Britten}

, ♪

-3 SP ♪

CHORUS

502

-3 ♪{from G,sv}

Hobson ... Swallow, the Rector and Mrs. Sedley. Balstrode lags behind. Behind them come the rest of the crowd.

▀*

[No. 9]

CD{Britten} CHORUS (as they go)

CDE [Chorus of inspection (march rhythm)]

CD{Britten} CHORUS OF INSPECTION

DE +H

504 SP ♪

506

ritmico ♪

507 <To sweep> [Sweeping]{Britten} D {original BC}

through ♪ through

_________________________________________________________
The procession sets off up the hill, with Mrs. Sedley and the women following to the edge of the stage.

{ MRS. SEDLEY, BOLES, RECTOR, NED, SWALLOW & CHORUS }

Now the liars shiver for, ♪{from I}  shiver, for ♪

Now if they've cheated we shall know! ♪

(ritmico)

We shall strike and strike to kill

At the slander or the sin.

The women (except Ellen, Auntie & the Nieces) go to their houses.

Ellen motions to Balstrode to follow the procession, which he does.

Now the whisperers stand out

Now confronted by the fact.

(ritmico)

Bring the branding iron and knife:

The sound of the crowd (still singing loudly) disappears.

What's done now is done for life.

Now (dying away)

Auntie, Nieces and Ellen remain dejectedly on the empty stage.

{ No. 10 QUARTET (meditative) }

1st NIECE

From the gutter, ♪

2nd NIECE

Why should we trouble

NIECES

At their ribaldries?
AUNTIE (without a strong pulse)

And shall we be ashamed because
We comfort men from ugliness?

ELLEN & AUNTIE (smoothly)

NIECES (every syllable emphasized)

Do we smile or do we weep
Or wait quietly (with feeling)

till they sleep?

AUNTIE (emphatically, without a strong pulse)

When in storm they shelter here

NIECES (emphatically, without a strong pulse)

We know they'll whistle their good-byes

AUNTIE

When they shelter here

ELLEN On the manly calendar

NIECES Yes,

AUNTIE

When they shelter here

ELLEN

We only mark heroic days.

ELLEN & AUNTIE (smoothly)

NIECES (every syllable emphasized)

Do we smile or do we weep
Or wait quietly (with feeling)

till they sleep?

ELLEN (without a strong pulse)

They are children when they weep
We are mothers when they strive,

Schooling our own hearts to keep
The bitter treasure of their love.

ELLEN & AUNTIE {from 'or do we weep'} (expansively)

NIECES {from 'Do we smile'} (every syllable emphasized)

CURTAIN
INTERLUDE IV
Passacaglia

Scene 2

Later the same morning.

Grimes's hut is an upturned boat.
It is on the whole shipshape, though bare and forbidding.
Ropes coiled, nets, kegs and casks furnish the place.
It is lighted by a skylight. There are two doors, one (back centre) opens on the cliff, the other downstage, opens on the road.

The boy staggers into the room as if thrust from behind.
Peter follows, in a towering rage.

He pulls down the boy's fishing clothes which were neatly stacked on a shelf.

Here's your sea boots!
He throws the sea boots down in front of the boy.

Take those bright And fancy buckles off your feet!

There's you oilskin and sou-

There's the jersey that she knitted,
With the anchor that she patterned.

He throws the clothes to the boy. They fall on the floor around him.
PETER (relents)

Steady! Don't take fright, boy! Stop!

Peter goes to the cliff door, opens it and looks out.

(enthusiastic-set piece)

Look! Now is our chance!

The whole sea's boiling! Get the nets, Come, boy!

(philosphically)

They listen to money, These Boro' gossips,

Listen to money

Only to money. I'll fish the sea dry, Flood the market.

Now is our chance to get a good catch

Get money to choke Down rumour's throat. I will set up

With house and home and shop

I'll marry Ellen,

I'll …

He turns to see the boy sitting on the rope coil, weeping.

He tears off his coat and throws the jersey at him.

Coat off! Jersey on! My boy We're going to sea!

He gives the boy a shove, which knocks him over; he lies sobbing miserably.

Peter changes tone, sits by the boy and breaks into another song.

____________________________

_______________________________________

10  Steady! ♪ {except F}

~. {+}

11 Look! ♪

~.

~.

♫

12 boiling! ♪ from G,

~.

♫

13 ♪ from J   Come

John C

-7

14 ♪

15 Boro' ♪

16

17 poco a poco più

animo

18 ♪

25

26 ♪

27 ♪

28 ♪

28.1

sitting  *   still sitting

♫     30.3

sits ...

234
{PETER} In dreams (expansively)

I've built myself some kindlier home
Warm in my heart and in a golden calm,
Where there'll be no more fear and no more storm.

And she will soon forget her schoolhouse ways
Forget the labour of those weary days

Wrapped round in kindness like September haze.

The learned at their books have no more store
Of wisdom than we'd close behind our door.
Compared with us (sweetly)

the rich man would be poor.

I've seen in stars the life that we might share:

Seen in stars the life we'd share.

Fruit in the garden, children by the shore,
A fair white doorstep, and a woman's care.

And a woman's care!

But dreaming builds what dreaming can disown.

Dead fingers stretch themselves to tear it down.

I hear those voices that will not be drowned.

Calling,

there is no stone In earth's thickness to make a home,

That you can build with and remain alone.

Peter pauses. The boy watches him in fascinated horror.

Hobson's drum, at the head of the Borough procession,
can be heard very distantly coming towards the hut.

Peter doesn't notice.

Sometimes I see that boy here in this hut.

He's there now, I can see him, he is there!

His eyes are on me as they were that evil day.

The drum sounds louder. He stares into vacancy.

He stops. The ... horror: and Peter turns on him suddenly.

{except U} con orrore

He ... louder.

He ...

vacancy.

JQ

___________________________________________________________________
Peter Grimes

{Peter} (speak­ing freely) →

Stop moaning boy. Water? There's no more water …..

You had the last yesterday. You'll soon be home!

(In har­bour still and deep.)

BOLES & RECTOR, SWALLOW & NED, CHORUS TENORS & BASSES (off)

Now! … Now!…

Peter rises, goes quickly to the street door, and looks out.

PETER (qui­et) →

There's an odd pro­ces­sion here, Par­son and Swallow com­ing near.

Suddenly he turns on the boy, who doesn't move.

Wait! You've been talk­ing. You and that bitch were gossip­ing. What lies have you been tell­ing?

The Borough's climb­ing up the hill. To get me, to get me! me! me! me!

O I'm not scared, I'll send them off with a fle­a in their ear.

I'll show them, Grimes ahoy!

The pro­ces­sion is steadily approach­ing.

_________________________________________________________________________________
Peter Grimes

BOLES & RECTOR, SWALLOW & NED, CHORUS TENORS & BASSES

(voice)

Or are shouted in the wind
Sweeping furious thro' the land.

PETER (very smooth)

You sit there watching me
And you're the cause of everything

BOLES & RECTOR, SWALLOW & NED, CHORUS TENORS & BASSES

Now

PETER

Your eyes, like his are watching me
With an idiot's drooling gaze.

BOLES & RECTOR, SWALLOW & NED, CHORUS TENORS & BASSES

... Now confronted by the fact.

PETER

Will you move (gliding between note)
Or must I make you dance?

The boy jumps up and begins dragging nets
and other tackle through the cliff door.

BOLES & RECTOR, SWALLOW & NED, CHORUS TENORS & BASSES

Bring the branding iron
and knife:

PETER (every syllable emphasized)

Step boldly,
... boldly,
... boldly!

For here's the way we go to sea.

BOLES & RECTOR, SWALLOW & NED, CHORUS TENORS & BASSES

What's done now is done for life!

PETER

Down the cliff
To find
That shoal,
That's boiling in the sea!

The procession is now quite near;
The boy climbs through the door onto the cliff edge.

BOLES & RECTOR, SWALLOW & NED, CHORUS TENORS & BASSES

Now the liars shiver, for

PETER

Careful, or you'll break your neck!

__________________________________________________________________________

71, 75, 78, 81, 84, 89 SD ♪  CHORUS (off)

71, 81 ♪ritmicothrough ♪

73 ♪molto legato

82 ♪

84 ♪ {except L + U}

91 ♪ ~^JQU~– D~.N

____________________________________________________________________
Now if they've cheated we shall know:

PETER (more agitated)

-Down the cliff side to the deck.

I'll pitch the stuff down.

BOLES & RECTOR, SWALLOW & NED, CHORUS TENORS & BASSES (off)

We shall strike and strike to kill

PETER

Come on!

He pitches ropes and nets.

BOLES & RECTOR, SWALLOW & NED, CHORUS TENORS & BASSES (off)

At the slander or the sin.

PETER

Now Shut your eyes and down you go!

There is a knocking at the street door.

BOLES & RECTOR, SWALLOW & NED, CHORUS (off)

Now!

Pet

er turns towards it, then retreats.

While Peter is between the two doors, the boy loses his hold outside the cliff door, screams and falls out of sight.

Peter runs to the cliff door, feels for his grip and then swings quickly after him.

The cliff-side door is open.

The street door still resounds with the Rector's knock.

Then it opens and the Rector puts his head round the door.

______________________________

92, 96, 98, 101 SD ♪  CHORUS (off)

93 più agitato ♪

96 ritmico ♪

100 go!

100.1 street FGIKL path MPRT V other ♪

101 ♪

101.1 - retreats. While * retreats: While from M retreats. Meanwhile the boy climbs out. When , FGI K {except GI K L} out, and while … doors,

101.2 - 5 ♪ {except F} - 2 retreats. While * retreats: While from M retreats. Meanwhile the boy climbs out. When , FGI K {except GI K L} out, and while … doors,
RECTOR

[always calling and looking round]

Peter Grimes!

Next come Swallow, Ned and Balstrode, and some of the crowd follow them in.

RECTOR

Nobody here?

SWALLOW

What about the other door?

Swallow and the Rector look out of the cliff-side door, but do not climb out.

RECTOR

[always very conversational]

Was this a recent landslide?

SWALLOW

Yes.

RECTOR

It makes almost a precipice.

How deep?

SWALLOW

Say forty feet.

RECTOR

Dangerous to leave the door open!

NED

He used to keep his boat down there. Maybe they've both gone fishing.

RECTOR

Yet his hut is reasonably kept.

Swallow draws the moral.

SWALLOW

The whole affair gives Borough talk its– shall I say quietus?

Here we come pell-mell Expecting to find out–we know not what. But all we find is a neat and empty hut.

Gentlemen, take this to your wives:

Less interference in our private lives.
There's no point certainly in staying here, and...
{Act 3 Scene 1}

ACT III
INTERLUDE V
Moonlight
Summer night, seascape, quiet.

Scene
Scene as in Act One, Scene One, a few nights later – dark but moonlit.

One of the season's subscription dances is taking place in the Moot Hall which is brightly lit and from which we can hear the band playing a barn dance – loudly and distinctly. There is a regular passage – of the males at any rate – between the Moot Hall and "The Boar" which is brightly lit too.

Presently there is a little squeal and the First Niece scampers down the exterior staircase of the Moot Hall closely followed by Swallow.

№ 1 TRIO (Gay, Swallow slightly pompous)
SWALLOW (to Niece 1) weightily (but immensely jovial, belt top notes, almost a parody)
Assig your prettiness to me, I'll seal the deed and take no fee; My signature, your graceful mark Are witnessed by the abetting dark.

The Second Niece joins the First, arm in arm.

________________________________________________________

0.1 Act One, Scene One
CD E H Act One, other  The village street and beach ♪ nights ♪ days 
0.3 we … a barn dance ♪ we … a polka }{except C} <a polka> [several dances]
0.4 - 5 There is … Boar ♪ which … too * "The Boar" too is brightly lit and, as the dance goes on there will be a regular passage — of the males at any rate — from the Moot Hall to the Inn  0.6 Presently … Niece * The stage is empty when th e curtain rises but presently there is a little squeal and one of the nieces
0.8 № 1 CD{Britten} TRIO CD E
[Gay … pompous] CD{Britten} 1  pesante ♪ (but immen * (immensely ... parody)* (immensely ... parody)
Mg 2  espress. ♪ fee; GOT ~, {others} 4.1 O ♪ {except F}
The second niece appears at the top of the stairs {in except O the SD is placed after Swallow (0.7) and reads}
They haven't got very far before the other niece appears at the top of the Moot Hall stairs.

___________________________________________

1 Music indicators 2 SD variation 3 SD variation and the dances 4 SD variation 5 Music indicators 6 Line revised 7 SD revised and repositioned
BOTH NIECES

Together we are safe
As any wedded wife
For safety in number lies.
A man is always lighter,
His conversation's brighter,
Provided that the tête-à-tête's in threes!

SWALLOW

Assign your prettiness to me
I'll call it real property.
Your sister shan't insist upon
Her stay of execution!

NIECES

Save us from lonely men,
They're like a broody hen,
With habits but with no ideas;
But in their choice of pleasures
They show their coloured feathers,
Provided that the tête-à-tête's in threes.

SWALLOW (aside)

I shall take steps to change her mind;
You have first option on my love.
If my appeal should be ignored
I'll take it to the House of Lords!

NIECE 1

O pairing's all to blame
For awkwardness and shame,
And all these manly sighs and tears,
We'll make an absolute decree.
And all these manly sighs and tears,
Which wouldn't be expended
Of quiet enjoyment which you'll bless
If people condescended
If people condescended
Always to have their tête-à-têtes in threes!
By sending sister somewhere else!
To have their tête-à-têtes in threes!

No. 2  RECITATIVE (OVER DANCE MUSIC OFF)
(Dance music of rustic type: violin, clarinet and drums predominating.

Swallow captures the First Niece.
He (every underlined syllable emphasized)
go to the Boar to have a glass –
Sister and I will join him there.
If you don't want Ned you'd better stay here.
He opens the Inn door.
Niece 1 is about to enter when—
(to Swallow, aside)(whispered)
They're all watching. I must wait
Till Auntie's turned her back!

__________________________________________________________________
She escapes to join her sister and leaves Swallow holding the door open.

SWALLOW

Pah!

He goes into "The Boar" alone.

The Barn Dance stops – applause.

The sisters are halfway up stairs when Ned Keene comes out of the Moot Hall at the top of the stairs. They fly, giggling, and hide behind one of the boats on the shore.

NED (calls after them) Ahoy! Ahoy! Ahoy!

He is halfway to their hiding place when a peremptory voice stops him in mid-career.

Mrs. Sedley is at the top of the Moot Hall stairs.

A slow Waltz starts from the Moot Hall.

MRS. SEDLEY Mister Keene! Mister Keene! Can you spare a moment? I've something to say that's more than urgent! About Peter Grimes and that boy.

She is downstairs by now and has him buttonholed. Neither of them was seen yesterday. It's more than suspicion now, it's fact! (every syllable emphasized)

NED Do you expect me to act Like a Bow Street runner or a constable?

The Two Nieces trip quietly back to the dance.
MRS. SEDLEY
At least you can trouble to hear what I've got to say!

(awed whisper)
For two days I've kept my eyes open;
For two days I've said nothing,
Only watched and taken notes;
Pieced clue to clue, and bit by bit
Reconstructed all the crime.
Everything points to Peter Grimes:
He is the murderer!

NED
(vehemently)
Old woman, you're far too ready
To yell blue murder!
If people poke their noses into others' business
– No! They won't get me to help them
– They'll find there's merry hell to pay!
You just tell me where's the body?

MRS. SEDLEY
(histrionically)
In the sea the prentice lies
Whom nobody has seen for days!

No. 3 SONG (conspiratorial)
(gliding between notes)
Murder most foul it is,
Eerie I find it,
My skin's a prickly heat,
Blood cold behind it!

In midnight's loneliness
And thrilling quiet
The history I trace,
The stifling secret.

Murder most foul it is,
And I'll declare it!

And I shall share it.

______________________________
Recitative (as before, over Dance music)

No. 4  RECITATIVE (as before, over Dance music)

NED  (who is getting bored, thirsty and angry)

Are you mad, old woman,
Or is it too much laudanum?

NED  He's away.

MRS. SEDLEY  

Is Peter Grimes been seen?

NED  Why should it?

MRS. SEDLEY  His hut's abandoned.

The Waltz stops. Applause.

NED  I'm dry.

Good night!

Ned Keene breaks away from her grasp, goes into "The Boar"

and bangs the door after him.

Dr. Crabbe emerges from "The Boar".

Mrs. Sedley accosts him, but he firmly raises his hat and moves away.

Mrs. Sedley retires into the shadow of the boats.

A Hornpipe starts from the Moot Hall.

The Rector and other burgesses come down the Moot Hall stairs.

____________________________________

____________________________

Music indicator

Line revised

SD variation

SD added

SD evolution

____________________________________

____________________________
Come along, Doctor! We're not wanted here, we oldsters!

No. 5  SONG (Parsonic, but amiable)  with CHORUS (Hornpipe)

Good night!

It's time for bed.

Good night!

Good night!

Good sirs, good night!

(CHORUS OF BURGESSES (Tenors and Basses)

(with feeling)

Good night! Good night!

(every syllable detached)

Good night, good people, good night!

(RECTOR

(playfully)

I looked in a moment, the company's gay, With pretty young women and youths on the spree;

(sweetly)

So parched like my roses, but now the sun's down

(enthusiastically)

I'll water my roses and leave you the wine!

(CHORUS OF BURGESSES (Tenors and Basses)

(with feeling)

Good night! Good night!

(every syllable detached)

Good night, good people, good night!

(RECTOR

Good night, Dr. Crabbe, all good friends,

Don't let the ladies keep comp'ny too late.

My love to the maidens, wish luck to the men!

I'll water my roses and leave you the wine!

_____________________________

°parsonic {dogmatic}
The Rector, Dr. Crabbe and the Burgesses gradually disperse to their houses.

RECTOR & CHORUS OF BURGESSES (Tenors and Basses) (with feeling) →

Good night! Good night!

(every syllable detached)

→ Good night, good people, good night!

→ Good night! Good night!

(every syllable detached)

→ Good night, good people, good night!

The Hornpipe fades out.

Mrs. Sedley (still in the shadow of the boats, goes on with her brooding)

Crime, which my hobby is
Sweetens my thinking;
Men who can breach the peace
And kill convention
— So many guilty ghosts,
With stealthy body,
Trouble my midnight thoughts …

Ellen and Balstrode come up slowly from the beach. It is clear they have been in earnest talk. As they approach Balstrode shines his lantern on the name of the nearest boat: Boy Billy. Mrs. Sedley doesn't show herself.

ELLEN Is the boat in?

BALSTRODE Yes – for more than an hour.
Peter seems to have disappeared.

Not in his boat, not in his hut.

ELLEN (holds out the boy’s jersey)

This I found, 

Down by the tide

- mark.

It is getting dark. To see the garment properly

Balstrode holds it to his lantern.

BALSTRODE

The boy’s?

ELLEN (distinctly)

My broidered anchor on the chest!

No. 8

ARIA (meditative, desperately sad)

Embroidery in childhood was

A luxury of idleness.

A coil of silken thread giving

Dreams of a

(seriously)

silk,

and satin life.

Now

(seriously)

my broidery affords

The clue whose meaning we avoid!

(Imitating speech)

My hand remembered its old skill

– These stitches tell a curious tale.

(Imitating song)

I remember I was brooding

On the fantasies of children ….

And dreamt that only by wishing I

Could bring some silk into their lives.

Now

(seriously)

my broidery affords the clue

Now my broidery affords ...

Now my broidery affords ...

The clue

whose meaning we avoid!

The jersey is wet. Balstrode wrings the water out.
No. 9  RECITATIVE, ARIOSO AND DUET

BALSTRODE

We'll find him, maybe give him a hand.

ELLEN

We have no power to help him now.

BALSTRODE

We have the power. We have the power.

In the black moment
When your friend suffers
Unearthly torment,
We cannot turn our backs.

When horror breaks one heart
All hearts are broken.

ELLEN

We shall be there with him.

BALSTRODE

We shall be there with him.

ELLEN

We shall be there with him.

They slowly walk out together.

BALSTRODE

Nothing to do but wait,
Since the solution
Is beyond life —
Dissolution ….
The dance music starts up again with a Galop. When they have gone Mrs. Sedley goes quickly to the door.

MRS. SEDLEY (excited, calling breathlessly through the door)

Mr. Swallow! Mr. Swallow!

Auntie comes to the door of "The Boar".

AUNTIE (heavily)

What do you want?

MRS. SEDLEY (triumphant)

Fetch him please, this is official (emphatically)

Bus'ness about the Borough criminal.

Please do as I tell you!

AUNTIE (with feeling)

My customers come here for peace, for quiet, away from you and all such nuisances!

MRS. SEDLEY (furiously)

This is an insult!

AUNTIE

You'll find as long as I am here, you'll find as long as I am here, you'll find as long as I am here, an insult! an insult! an insult! an insult! an insult!
AUNTIE

You’ll find that I always speak my mind!

MRS. SEDLEY

This is an insult! An insult! An insult! An insult! An insult!

AUNTIE (smoothly)

My customers come here, they take their drink, they take their ease!

MRS. SEDLEY

I’ll have you know your place!

SWALLOW

Hi! What’s the matter?

MRS. SEDLEY

Your place, your place, your place!

AUNTIE

That I will speak my mind!

MRS. SEDLEY

Baggage, baggage, baggage!

SWALLOW

What is it?

AUNTIE

Good night!

MRS. SEDLEY

Baggage, baggage, baggage!

SWALLOW

What is it?

(comes to the door wiping his mouth)

CD

(coming out)

Hi! What’s the matter? *{see} 20 81 20 8 You baggage! JNQU, ♪{except F +D} You hussy. You hussy! ♪
Auntie goes in and slams the door.

MRS. SEDLEY

Baggage, baggage, baggage, baggage!

SWALLOW

What's all this noise about?

MRS. SEDLEY

(POINTS DRAMATICALLY)

Look!

SWALLOW

I'm short-sighted you know.

MRS. SEDLEY

Look!

It's Grimes's boat, back at last!

SWALLOW

That's different! Hey,

Shouts into "The Boar".

Is Hobson there?

Hobson appears.

MRS. SEDLEY

Good,

HOBSON

AY, AZ, SIR!

MRS. SEDLEY

Now things are moving;

HOBSON

AY, AZ, SIR!

MRS. SEDLEY

and about time too!

SWALLOW

You're constable of the Borough,

Carter Hobson.

HOBSON

AY, AZ, SIR!

SWALLOW

As the mayor,

I ask you to find Peter Grimes!

Take whatever help you need.
HOBSON (heavily)

Now what I claims

Is he's out at sea.

®

240

SWALLOW (points)

But here's his boat.

®

HOBSON

Oh!

(vigorously)

We'll send a posse to his hut.

®

SWALLOW

If he's not there, you'll search the shore

The marsh, the fields, the streets, the Borough.

Swallow goes back to “The Boar”.

85

HOBSON

Ay, ay, sir!

245

MRS. SEDLEY (lugubriously)

Crime — that's my hobby — is

Hobson goes into “The Boar” hailing.

87

MRS. SEDLEY

By cities hoarded.

88

MRS. SEDLEY

Rarely are country minds

HOBSON

Hey, there!

Hey!

MRS. SEDLEY

Hey! Come out and help!

MRS. SEDLEY

Lifeted to murder

The noblest of the crimes,

HOBSON

Hey!

Hey! Come out and help!

MRS. SEDLEY

Which are my study.
HOBSON: Come on! Come on!

MRS. SEDLEY: And now the crime is here.

HOBSON: Come on! Come on!

Hobson comes out with Boles and other fishermen.

As the dance band fades out, the dancers and drinkers crowd out of the Moot Hall and "The Boar" and congregate on the green.

No. 10

LYNCHING CHORUS

CHORUS BASSES

(every syllable detached)

Who holds himself apart

CHORUS ALTOS

(every syllable detached)

Who holds himself apart

CHORUS BASSES

Lets his pride rise.

CHORUS ALTOS

Lets his pride rise.

CHORUS BASSES

Who holds himself apart

CHORUS ALTOS

Who holds himself apart

CHORUS BASSES

Lets his pride rise.

CHORUS ALTOS & BASSES IN UNISON

Him who despises us

We'll destroy!

CHORUS TENORS

(every syllable detached)

Who holds himself apart

CHORUS SOPRANOS

(every syllable detached)

Who holds himself apart

CHORUS TENORS

Lets his pride rise.

We'll destroy! We despise! We despise!
256

CHORUS SOPRANOS

Lets his pride rise.

CHORUS TENORS

Who holds himself apart

CHORUS SOPRANOS

Lets his pride rise.

CHORUS TENORS

Who holds himself apart

CHORUS SOPRANOS & TENORS IN UNISON

Him who despises us

We'll destroy!

CHORUS ALTOS & BASSES

And cruelty becomes

His enterprise,

CHORUS SOPRANOS & TENORS

And cruelty becomes

His enterprise,

CHORUS ALTOS & BASSES

And cruelty

CHORUS SOPRANOS & TENORS

And cruelty becomes

His enterprise,

CHORUS ALTOS & BASSES

And cruelty becomes

His enterprise,

CHORUS SOPRANOS & TENORS

And cruelty becomes

His enterprise,

CHORUS ALTOS & BASSES

And cruelty becomes

His enterprise,

256

SP ♪  CHORUS
CHORUS ALTOS & BASS

His enterprise, them who despises us we'll destroy!

Swallow, Boles and Ned come from "The Boar" carrying guns and lanterns.

NIECES, MRS. SEDLEY, BOLES, NED & SWALLOW

Our curse shall fall on his evil day. We shall tame his arrogance!

CHO (smoothly)

Our curse shall fall

NIECES & MRS. SEDLEY (every syllable detached)

Who holds himself apart

BOLES, NED & SWALLOW (every syllable detached)

Who holds himself apart

CHORUS

On his evil day.

NIECES & MRS. SEDLEY

Who holds himself apart

BOLES, NED & SWALLOW

Who holds himself, who holds himself apart.

CHORUS (savage)

We shall tame his arrogance!

NIECES, MRS. SEDLEY

And cruelty becomes his enterprise.

BOLES, NED & SWALLOW

And cruelty becomes his enterprise.

NIECES, MRS. SEDLEY, BOLES, NED & SWALLOW (smoothly)

Our curse shall fall
Who holds himself apart

Chorus Sopranos & Altos

Who holds himself apart

Chorus Tenors & Basses

Let his pride rise,

Nieces, Mrs. Sedley, Boles, Ned & Swallow

On his evil day.

Chorus (smoothly)

Our curse shall fall on him!

Nieces, Mrs. Sedley, Boles, Ned & Swallow

Our curse, our curse

Chorus

Our curse shall fall on him.

Nieces, Mrs. Sedley, Boles, Ned, Swallow, Hobson & Chorus

Him who despises us, we'll destroy!

Him who despises us, we'll destroy!

Nieces, Chorus sopranos

Him who despises us, we'll destroy!

Mrs. Sedley, Chorus altos

Him who despises us, we'll destroy!

Ned, Swallow, Hobson, Chorus basses

Him who despises us, we'll destroy!

Boles, Chorus tenors

Him who despises us, we'll destroy!

Mrs. Sedley, Chorus altos

Him who despises us, we'll destroy!

Ned, Swallow, Hobson, Chorus basses

Him who despises us, we'll destroy!

Nieces, Chorus sopranos
Him who despises us, we'll destroy!

Mrs. Sedley, Chorus altos

Him who despises us, we'll destroy!

Ned, Swallow, Hobson, Chorus basses

Him who despises us, we'll destroy!

Nieces, Chorus sopranos
Him who despises us, we'll destroy!

{Mrs. Sedley, Ned, Swallow, Hobson, Chorus altos & basses}

Him we'll destroy!

{Nieces, Boles, Chorus sopranos & tenors}

We'll destroy!

{Mrs. Sedley, Ned, Swallow, Hobson, Chorus altos & basses}

We'll destroy! We'll destroy!

{all ensemble & Chorus}

NIECES, MRS. SEDLEY, BOLES, NED & CHORUS SOPRANOS, TENORS & ALTOS

(ghoulish gloating)

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha,

{Swallow, Hobson & Chorus basses}

We'll make the murd'rer pay,

{Nieces, Mrs. Sedley, Boles, Ned & Chorus sopranos, altos & tenors}

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha,

{Swallow, Hobson & Chorus basses}

We'll make him pay, Make him pay.

{Nieces, Mrs. Sedley, Boles, Ned & Chorus sopranos, altos & tenors}

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha,

{Swallow, Hobson & Chorus basses}

Him pay, him pay,

{Nieces, Mrs. Sedley, Boles, Ned & Chorus sopranos, altos & tenors}

Ha, ha, ha,

{Swallow, Hobson & Chorus basses}

For his crime!
Peter Grimes

MRS. SEDLEY, NED, SWALLOW, HOBSON & CHORUS ALTOS & BASSES

Peter (with an extended and sustained attack) \textbf{\textit{Grimes!}}

NIECES, BOLES & CHORUS SOPRANOS & TENORS

Peter (with an extended and sustained attack) \textbf{\textit{Grimes!}}

MRS. SEDLEY, NED, SWALLOW, HOBSON & CHORUS ALTOS & BASSES

Peter (with an extended and sustained attack) \textbf{\textit{Grimes!}}

NIECES, BOLES & CHORUS SOPRANOS & TENORS

Peter (with an extended and sustained attack) \textbf{\textit{Grimes!}}

MRS. SEDLEY, NED, SWALLOW, HOBSON & CHORUS ALTOS & BASSES

Peter (with an extended and sustained attack) \textbf{\textit{Grimes!}}

NIECES, BOLES & CHORUS SOPRANOS & TENORS

Peter (with an extended and sustained attack) \textbf{\textit{Grimes!}}

ALL (NIECES, MRS. SEDLEY, BOLES, NED, SWALLOW, HOBSON & CHORUS)

The people (still shouting) scatter in all directions.

CURTAIN
{Act 3 Scene 2}

Some hours later. The stage is quite empty—
a thick fog.
Fog horn and the cries of the searchers can be heard
distantly.

(The orchestra is silent)

NO. 1  SCENE (with CHORUS off)

SOPRANO & ALTO VOICES (off) (very soft)

Grimes!
Grimes!

PETER (freely throughout)

Steady! There you are! Nearly home!
What is home? Calm as deep water.
Where's my home? Deep in calm water.

Grimes!

PETER (much louder but gradually softening)

Steady! There you are! Nearly home!

The first one died,
just died …
The other slipped,
and died …

And the third will …

'Accidental circumstances'

Water will drink my sorrows dry,
And the tide will turn....

Grimes!

PETER (louder, but gradually softening)

Steady! There you are! Nearly home!

The first one died,
just died …
The other slipped,
and died …

And the third will …

'Accidental circumstances'

Water will drink my sorrows dry,
And the tide will turn....

Grimes!
SOPRANO & ALTO VOICES
(off) (very soft) → Griimes!
(growing very loud) → Grimes!

TENOR & BASS VOICES
(off) (moderately loud) → Griimes!
(every syllable accented) ◊

PETER (loud) → Peter Grimes!

PETER (lively) → Here you are! Here I am!
(hurry, hurry, hurry) → Now is gossip put on trial.
Bring the branding iron and knife
For what's done now is done for life…'

PETER (lively) → Come on! Land me!
(slowing down and softer, sweetly) → 'Turn the skies back and begin again!'

TENOR & BASS VOICES
(off)(very very soft) → Peter Grimes!

PETER (very soft, very fast, rhythmically) → 'Old Joe has gone fishing
You'll know who's gone fishing when
You land the next shoal!'

BASS VOICES (off) (very very very soft, scarcely anything) → Peter Grimes!

SOPRANO VOICES (off) (very very soft, sweetly) → Grimes!

PETER (growing softer) → Ellen!

Give me your hand, your hand.

___________________________________________________________________

Lines revised and quotations

Lines added and quotations
There now—my hope is held by you,
If you leave me alone…
'\text{Take away your hand!}'
The argument's finished,
Friendship lost,
Gossip is shouting,
Everything's said…
Peter Grimes!
To hell with all your mercy!
Peter Grimes!
To hell with your revenge.
'\text{And God have mercy upon me!}'
Peter Grimes!
Peter Grimes!
Peter Grimes!
Peter Grimes!
**Peter Grimes**

PETER (loud, impetuously)

Do you hear them all shouting my name?

(D'you hear them?
D'you hear them?

The voices are now close at hand and very distinct.

SOPRANO & ALTO VOICES (off)(moderately loud, rhythmically)

Peter Grimes!

PETER (loud)

Old Davy Jones shall answer:

TENOR & BASS VOICES (off)(moderately loud)

Peter Grimes!

PETER

Come home!

TENOR & BASS VOICES (off)

Peter Grimes!

PETER

Come home!

SOPRANO & ALTO VOICES (off) (gradually louder)

Peter Grimes!

PETER (gradually louder)

Come home!

TENOR & BASS VOICES (off) (gradually louder)

Peter Grimes!

SOPRANO & ALTO VOICES (off) (loud)

Peter Grimes!

TENOR & BASS VOICES (off) (loud)

Peter Grimes!

PETER (very loud, spaciously)

Come home!

SOPRANO, ALTO, TENOR & BASS VOICES (off) (very loud, then gradually softer)

Peter Grimes!

Peter roars back at the shouters.

PETER (very loud, agitated)

Peter Grimes!

Peter Grimes!
Ellen and Balstrode come in, and stand waiting till Peter has calmed.

PETER (slowly, very soft, gradually louder, gradually softer, then slower, very very soft, gradually softer)

PETER (sweetly)

We've come to take you home.

Out of this dread night!

See, here's Balstrode.

Ellen goes up to Peter.

We've come to take you home.

O come home (with feeling, gradually louder, very very soft, gradually softer)

Ellen ... calmed.

Ellen ... have come in and stand watching.

Peter does not notice her and sings in a tone almost like prolonged sobbing.

The voices shouting “Peter Grimes” can still be heard but more distantly and more sweetly.
SOPRANO & ALTO VOICES
(off) (very soft, gradually softer)
Peter
Grimes

TENOR & BASS VOICES
(off) (the two syllables sustained, then gradually softer)
Peter

SOPRANO & ALTO VOICES
(off) ('mes' gradually softer)
Grimes

TENOR & BASS VOICES
(off) (gradually softer)
Peter

SOPRANO & ALTO VOICES
(off) ('mes' gradually softer)
Grimes

TENOR & BASS VOICES
(off) (gradually softer)
Peter
Peter

SOPRANO & ALTO VOICES
(off)
Grimes

TENOR & BASS VOICES
(off) (gradually softer)
Peter

PETER (very sweetly)
What harbour shelters peace

TENOR & BASS VOICES
(off) (gradually softer)
Peter
Peter

SOPRANO & ALTO VOICES
(off) ('mes' gradually softer)
Grimes

TENOR & BASS VOICES
(off) (gradually softer)
Peter

PETER (like speech)
Away from tidal waves,
Away from storms!

TENOR & BASS VOICES
(off) (very soft, gradually softer both times)
Peter
Peter

SOPRANO & ALTO VOICES
(off) (very soft, 'mes' gradually softer)
Grimes

PETER (singing)
What harbour can embrace

Line revised
Peter Grimes

TENOR & BASS VOICES
(off) (gradually softer every time)
Peter
!
Peter
!
Peter
!
Grimes
!

SOPRANO & ALTO VOICES
(off) ('mes' gradually softer both times)
Grimes
!
Grimes
!

PETER

Terrors and tragedies?
PETER

TENOR & BASS VOICES
(off) (very soft, gradually softer both times)
Peter
!
Peter
!
Peter
!

SOPRANO & ALTO VOICES
(off) (very soft, 'mes' gradually softer)
Grimes
!

PETER

Her (gradually louder)
PETER

Harrow—

SOPRANO & ALTO VOICES
(off) (a little louder, then gradually softer)
Grimes
!

TENOR & BASS VOICES
(off) (a little louder, then gradually softer)
Peter
!
Peter
!
Peter
!

SOPRANO & ALTO VOICES
(off) (gradually softer)
Grimes
!

PETER

Where we...

DIMINUENDO {on every word} ♪

DIMINUENDO {on 'mes' both times} ♪

DIMINUENDO {both times} ♪

CRESCEndo {marking after first crotchet beat of 'breast' to 'Har-'} ♪

DIMINUENDO {marking from second crotchet beat of 'Har-' to second crotchet beat of 'too' on 117} ♪

Poco cresc. {on 'Pe', immediately gradually softer every time} ♪

116, 118

Poco cresc. {on 'Gri', gradually softer on 'mes} ♪

119

Poco cresc. {on 'Pe', immediately gradually softer first time, gradually softer second time} ♪

120, 121

DIMINUENDO ♪

D-

IK {sv except H}

When we... when we... when we...   Where

night is turned to day,

FROM J, ♪ FROM L

DIMINUENDO {every time} ♪

Quotation or line variation?

222 Quotation
SOPRANO & ALTO VOICES (off) (gradually softer)

Gri
times

PETER Where we ..

TENOR & BASS VOICES (off) (gradually softer both times)

Peter

Peter

SOPRANO & ALTO VOICES (off) (gradually softer)

Grimes

PETER Where we ..

TENOR VOICES (off) (gradually softer)

Peter!

Peter!

BASS VOICES (off) (gradually softer every time)

Peter!

Peter!

Peter!

PETER Where we ...
Dawn lowly begins and the Borough slowly comes to life. Some stragglers of the manhunt go across the street to their houses. Shutters are drawn back.

Mr. Swallow comes out and speaks to the fishermen.

There's a boat sinking out at sea, Coastguard reports.

Within reach?

No!

Let's have a look through the glasses.
AUNTIE
What is it?
BOLES
Nothing I can see.
AUNTIE
One of these rumours.

Nieces emerge and begin to polish the brasses outside "The Boar".

NIECES, AUNTIE & MRS. SEDLEY, BOLES & RECTOR, NED, SWALLOW & HOBSON, CHORUS (very loud)

In ceaseless motion comes and goes the tide

The stage is now filled with people singing at their daily work.

Flowing it fills (gradually louder)

the channel broad (gradually softer)

and wide (very very loud and sustained)

Then back to sea with strong majestic sweep

SLOW CURTAIN

NIECES, AUNTIE & MRS. SEDLEY, CHORUS SOPRANOS & ALTOS (getting softer)



BOLES & RECTOR, NED, SWALLOW & HOBSON, CHORUS TENORS & BASSES (less loud)



NIECES, AUNTIE & MRS. SEDLEY, CHORUS SOPRANOS & ALTOS (less loud)



In ebb yet terrible

and deep, 

BOLES & RECTOR, NED, SWALLOW & HOBSON, CHORUS TENORS & BASSES (again less loud)



Yet terrible and deep.

154 rumours!
~}

SP ♪{except TWO NIECES... KEENE... CHORUS} {except FG I K L}

OMNES + HJQU ff ♪ 155.1 ♪


crescendo {marking from 'the' to 'channel'} ♪ 157

diminuendo {marking from 'and' to 'wide'} ♪ 158
crescendo ♪ 159, 161


SP ♪{except TWO

NIECES... ALTOS}


{except FG I K L implied}

OMNES {sopranos & altos} + HJQU 159
crescendo ♪ 160, 162


SP ♪{except KEENE... BASSES}


{except FG I K L implied}

OMNES {tenors & basses} + HJQU 160, 161
diminuendo ♪ 162
Prolegomena Notes

Characters Slater invented are Balstrode and Hobson. He also invented the names Boles and Mrs. Sedley, though in this introduction he reveals the passages from Crabbe from which they derive, 28-30 in the case of Mrs. Sedley, 62-3 for Boles.

Identification of quotations is provided in the crit. app. Slater plays down his debt to Crabbe (see my Perspectives on Crabbe). The second chorus (1.1.15-18) is also a quotation. Britten added 'Grimes is at his exercise', Borough, XXII, 77 and used it in Grimes 2.1 from 193. By 291 it has been repeated 13 times.

A problem of definition Slater begins with Crabbe's character study of the Rector but in terms of the amount and significance of his role in the opera, he cannot be regarded as a 'main character'. That description may only reasonably be applied to Peter, Ellen, Balstrode and Swallow. What the opera features is 8 other individuals who provide some spice to the action without being prime movers: the Rector, Auntie and the Nieces, Boles, Hobson, Mrs. Sedley and Ned. The role with the largest quantity and significance is that of the chorus.

Slater's naming and designation The character is not named by Crabbe but designated 'The Vicar'. Slater invents a name and designates him 'The Rector'. Fundamentally the term vicar means proxy whereas rector means governor. A vicar (OED n.2a) could function as a priest in a parish in place of its real parson or rector who retained its tithes. But in the Anglican church the rector (OE D n.2a) was the member of the clergy who had charge of a parish. The distinction becomes significant in that it is therefore appropriate for Boles to expect 'the parson' to take the moral lead in the parish when Peter's conduct is being considered (2.1.31 6-26). Parson, a person given an ecclesiastical living by a bishop (OED n.1), is synonymous with rector.

Slater's characterization of Swallow is introduced here. The character expanded by Slater, while shrewd in his conduct (Grimes, 0.0.5-10) is a pompous buffoon.

Selective quotation Slater hints at the dark side of Auntie's business without going into detail (cf. Introduction to 1.2 §1.1.1). This is in accord with his lighter treatment of it in his text.

Crabbe's characterization of Ned is introduced here. The character expanded by Slater is unashamedly a quack (Grimes, 2.1.401-2) but can certainly reason (e.g. Grimes, 3.1.69-74). The surname Keene is derived from an entirely different character, Abel Keene, the subject of Borough, XXI, a man who disastrously abandons himself to pleasure late in life. Ned's success in discovering Oxymel and making it palatable by the addition of a sweetener, usually honey, is described by Crabbe in Borough, VII, 247-52.

Crabbe's characterization of a Calvanistic methodist is introduced here. Dalrymple-Champneys (1988: 725) identifies him as William Huntington or a follower and (717) that this is the man Crabbe comments on thus in his Preface:...
I would observe that there is something unusually daring in the boast of this man, who claims the authority of a messenger sent from God, and declares without hesitation that his call was immediate; that he is assisted by the sensible influence of the Spirit; and that miracles are perpetually wrought in his favour, and for his convenience. (Borough, Preface, 223-228).

Here Crabbe's attitude varies between bemusement and admiration, only turning acid at the end but in his verse is satirically concerned how the ostentation of form may mask the quality of content. As conceived by Slater, Boles (the name is Slater's) is less imposing. Although his views are serious enough, perhaps because he is also sometimes drunk (Grimes, 1.2.106-107) his rhetoric is deemed little more than ranting.

Mixed characterization
The merging of Crabbe's Peter and Slater's Peter here is clumsy and confusing. Both are fishermen, impetuous and frustrated. But there is no evidence in Slater's final version that Peter poaches and no indication in Crabbe that Peter is visionary or ambitious. This suggests that this introduction was written by Slater with a draft, or portion of a draft no longer extant, in mind in which Peter did poach.

Confusion of terminology
Strictly Peter is not under cross-examination but examination because this is an inquest, not a trial: accordingly there are not two sides in a legal action in which a witness who has given evidence for one side may be examined by the other (OED v.2). As this is a coroner's inquest it is only concerned with investigating the cause of death (OED n.1), whereas a trial determines the guilt or innocence of an accused person (OED n.1.a). Peter asks for a trial so that he can attest his innocence (0.15 2).

Significance of terminology
A market is a place where goods are bought and sold, including livestock (OED n.1.a). With Slater's tweaking of the formalities of an apprenticeship (see Introduction to 1.1 §1.1.3) John the apprentice becomes a chattel and item of livestock. Slater clarified this association when he drafted choruses in 1.1 when the collection of John was discussed (see 1.1.d100-a-e, d107-a-e, d115-a-e) but these were not used in the final text.

John is simply to be collected from the 'workhouse' (1.1.88). As with 12 this suggests this introduction was written by Slater before the final version of the opera text.

Variation of chronology
Again (cf. notes 12, 14) Slater's text appears to refer to an earlier, not extant draft. In the final version of 1.2 Peter makes a dramatic entrance at 156.1 after Ned has announced the cliff erosion and it is unclear what has happened to Peter (142-4) while later Peter can clarify that his hut is still there (1685).

Stating of season
In the final text the season is not specified until 3.1, which is itself 'a few nights later' (3.1.0.1) than Act 2 while there is a lapse of 'some weeks' between Acts 1 and 2 (2.1.0.1) and 'several days' between the Prologue and Act 1 (1.1.0.3).

Variation of emphasis
Again (cf. notes 12, 14-16) Slater's text might refer to an earlier, not extant draft. In the final text there is only one bruise (2.1.69) and, while Ellen draws a negative conclusion from this (70), Peter's explanation (161) is plausible. The quarrel with Peter is not just about John's bruise but Peter disregarding an agreement with Ellen that John is allowed Sundays off and then, as the text here continues, the viability of their plans.

Variation of emphasis
Again (cf. notes 12, 14-17) Slater's text might refer to an earlier, not extant draft. There is no reference here to the climactic moment at 2.1.186.1, Peter striking Ellen. This has also been observed by some members of the community, notably Auntie, Ned and Boles (2.1.188.3-4).
Variation of emphasis

The emphasis here is that of the original version of Slater's final text (2.2.34-5, 40) where Peter envisages a future with John but not necessarily Ellen.

Variation of emphasis

In Britten's final version (2.2.88.2) John goes out of the door alone. In Slater's final version Peter drives John towards the door. In both versions Peter is himself pitching ropes and nets (2.2.97.1) and turns away from the door and John when he hears knocking (2.2.101.1), so he does not chase John out of the door.

Variation of emphasis

Aiming for a terse synopsis Slater omits some significant detail here. Firstly, Mrs. Sedley overhearing Balstrode telling Ellen that Peter's boat is back (3.1.133-4), the information which allows the search to be instigated. Secondly, Mrs. Sedley summoning Swallow (from 3.1.179) who alone has the authority to instigate it.

Variation of emphasis

Events here are as in Slater's draft and own publication of the text (source N). Ellen finds Peter at 3.2.d18.1, leaves him alone at d45.1 and returns with Balstrode at d53.1. In Britten's final text Ellen and Balstrode together find Peter at 3.2.79.1.

A variety of forms

Slater only mentions her the two most highly contrasted forms he uses but in commenting further in Crozier 1945: 19 he points out the form of the recitative is 'not too regular' in order to be conversational and that arias, which he does not mention here, may be 'in any measure, sometimes rhymed and sometimes half-rhymed'. The Prologue also contains verse in a variety of forms. I examine Slater's practice in Perspectives on Crabbe §4.2.

The issue of costume

This is probably really a matter of theatrical instinct: that it was felt that 18th century costumes might make the story seem too remote whereas its issues are pertinent to the present day (see Perspectives on Crabbe §3). Crozier 1946 (in Banks 2000: 7) clarifies the aim of the original staging of 'a selective realism that would convince our audience of the truth of place and people' and saliently comments further (Banks 2000: 8) 'in costume and manners the characters are English provincials of the early nineteenth century, but their vital interest for modern audiences is not in their period, but in their human stuff.' Looking at Kenneth Green's original costume designs (Banks 2000: plates 1-4D) it is striking how colourful they are, with no later Victorian starchiness. Peter (plate 1) has patched, ordinary working clothes whereas Swallow (plate 2A) is neatly cut yet not in the height of fashion while Auntie (plate 2C) and a Niece (plate 4B) occupy roughly the mid-point of this spectrum.

Crabbe characters as sources

Slat

er understates these. There are 10: Peter, Ellen, Swallow, Ned Keene (strictly a composite of 2 distinct characters but with Ned's characteristics), Auntie and the two Nieces, the Rector, Boles and Mrs. Sedley (see Perspectives on Crabbe §2.3).

Music repetition

Slater here acknowledges the significance of the repetition of text in a music setting which is displayed in this edition. But his printed libretto nevertheless incorporates some repetition of text by different characters, e.g. 'Grimes is at his exercise' in 2.1. N has the same amount of repetition as the other editions of the printed libretto (JQU) excepting that it omits Ellen's second 'Whatever you say ...' (1.1.130).

Varieties of rhyme

The key point is that a range of rhyme styles (full, rough and no rhyme) and numbers of beats is used to contrast between ordinary and more contemplative speech. An example of assonance is 'Your boy was workhouse starved – Maybe you're not to blame he died.' (1.1.350-51). An example of consonantal rhyme is 'Where's the pastor of this flock?/ Where's the guardian shepherd's hook?' (2.1.201-2).
Age of character is given only in sources CDE. These are the originally envisaged ages. There are two discrepancies with statements in stage directions in the final text. Mrs. Sedley is 65 (0.45.2) Ellen is 'about 40' (1.1.93.2).

Character of voice
An annotation made by Britten in D to aid his setting of the part, not intended for publication but informative.

Revisions in voice type in this list
For convenience I comment on all such in this note.

Line 2: John was originally to have spoken (see 2.1 draft text). Silence makes him more symbol than person. Line 4: as a mezzo Ellen would have been more matronly, appropriate for a widowed schoolmistress but unsuited to her place in the opera as principal female. Line 5: Balstrode's philosophical nature is better suited to baritone than bass, contrasting with the lighter baritone of Ned; also to have had 3 basses (with Swallow and Hobson) would have made the solo contributions too bass heavy. Line 12: Mrs. Sedley was originally considered as a soprano, perhaps a coloratura one (i.e. fond of virtuoso vocal flurries of rapid note runs, trills and so on); but this would not have suited her age and placed her in a voice range parallel to Ellen, where it is better that she more closely parallels the slightly lower contralto range of Auntie. Line 13: in originally making the Rector a deep bass Britten was probably thinking of his intoning role in the church service in 2.1 but a light tenor is more appropriate given the mildness of his character (see Perspectives on Crabbe §1.2) and contrasts suitably with the lyric tenor of Peter and dramatic tenor of Boles. One deep bass in the opera is enough and Hobson fits that bill well.

Characters deleted
here from AA, the only list in which they are included, are:
May Saunders Soprano (dramatic)
Dick Saunders Baritone
Polly Boles Soprano.

Swallow's standing in the Borough is significant (see 0.0.5-9) so I have added this to the description.

Character deleted and entry revised here from AA which originally read:
Swallow senior Baritone
Swallow junior Tenor.

The inclusion of Crabbe Smith 1959: 26 relates that Britten originally intended Doctor Crabbe to be a narrator but that role disappeared and his silent presence in the opera went by the name of Thorp in early ♪, notably the published M, because Crabbe was no longer alive when the opera was set. Yet the 'Characters' list gives that as 'Towards 1830' and Crabbe died in 1832. Anyway, when Britten recorded the opera in 1958 he reinstated Crabbe as a tribute to his original inspiration and the Doctor was so named in later ♪. except H name him Crabbe. In my edition I ignore ♪' Thorp, the substitute name probably derived from Thorpe Road which is the continuation of Crabbe Street by the Aldeburgh Moot Hall.

Two categories within the chorus
With the concentration at the opening of 1.1 on singing of fishing work, it is easy to forget that other townsfolk who are not fisherfolk are also part of the Borough community. This needs to be reflected in a variety of costumes.

The town itself is Aldeburgh, where Crabbe grew up. It has by its beach the Moot Hall, an inn directly opposite and a parish church tower at a little distance but clearly visible.
Rejigging of chronology see Prolegomena, 133-9. The time of Crabbe's The Borough is not made explicit but assumed to be broadly contemporary with its publication in 1810.

The church bell is first heard in Interlude III and then as it merges into the opening of 2.1 it punctuates Ellen's opening song. It ceases at 11.2. The organ is first heard in 2.1 at the last word of Ellen's opening song, 'Sunday' (8) until the 'Amen' at the end of the Creed (187). It returns briefly just before Doctor Crabbe's entrance at 225, to signify folk coming out of church, with a final flourish before the Chorus Basses whisper 'What is it?' (244). The fog horn is present from the beginning of 3.2, heard as a backdrop at various moments in Peter's recitative with its final appearance just after that ceases at 811.

Dance band starts up from the raising of the curtain of 3.1 after Interlude V, is briefly silent from the orchestral passage at Swallow's 'Pah' (50), resuming after Ned's 'Ahoy!' (51) until his 'I'm dry' (97). It is briefly silent again but introduces a Hornpipe at 976. It returns with a Galop at 1781 and finally 'fades out' at 2612.

Duration These timings, which first appear in P and then in T, were taken from Britten's sound recording (O).
Prologue Notes

One example from C. It shows the sort of music Britten intended and how he subdivided scenes. It is included to clarify Britten's working practice. The 'court them e' is that played by the woodwind at curtain up and sung by Swallow at 'that's the kind of thing people' (0.106).

SD variation 0.3. 'A room' indicates the intended confinement of the scene: the Council Chamber in the extant setting, the Moot Hall, Aldeburgh today would not comfortably hold more than twenty-five people.

SD variation 0.4–5. Conflating the ♩ and ♪ texts clarifies that Hobson the carrier appears here in his civic role as policeman, whereas the ♪ version of the opening of the SD better conveys the seething nature of the crowd.

SD variation 0.5. ♪ version requires less elaborate staging.

SD restored 0.9, from the original text (B) of Britten's earlier expansion (0.5–8).

SD restored 0.10. Deserves restoration as a fair summary of the court scene where Swallow spends time on formalities of witness but then speedily announces a verdict without calling any witnesses. Probably deleted because of Slater's erroneous transcription in C–EH.

Line deleted In B Slater has an opening line by Swallow (senior), 'Call Peter Grimes'. This was deleted by Britten in D–E.

Text repetition In the published libretti Peter Grimes is summoned by name once but when Britten set this text to music he is summoned three, with quite different impact.

SD restored by me from the draft text (d8) as it is the clearest indicator.

Crozier's alterations 2. As producer of the opera, Eric Crozier came relatively late into the formulation of its libretto yet his alterations and additions were accepted, even though they sometimes entailed additional writing (e.g. 22) or rewriting of music.

Text revised 0.4. This change of text from 'your' to the more neutral 'the' is a late example in Britten's performances of avoiding any suggestion of a close relationship between Peter and his apprentice.

SD and lines deleted Swallow junior steps forward SWALLOW SENR You appear for Peter Grimes. SWALLOW JUNIOR I do.

As in the draft, Swallow Senior is Coroner, Swallow Junior acts for Peter. These lines are only found, but also deleted, in B.

SD added 6.1. This SD was added by Britten from the earliest ♪. I use the extended version of the later ♪.
Britten as editor

7. Britten in E edited the version in CD to make the speech and its musical setting crisper.

16. Swallow's briskness Britten set Slater's text so that at 10, 12, 14, 16 Swallow begins his next sentence before Peter has finished, streamlining the proceedings but also intimidating.

17. Lines revised

- 18. The text was extended in C from the original (d85).

- 18. 'in at' was never used by Britten in ♪.

18. Line revised

- 20. Slater's revision makes Peter's answer more colourful and poetic than the terse original which is more consistent with his taciturn demeanour.

19. SD deleted

- 23.1. Presumably because it suggests Peter feels guilty and thereby leaves less scope for ambiguity.

20. Performance indicator and punctuation variation

- 25. The ellipsis best conveys the moment of anguished contemplation as clarified by the performance indicator in Mg.

21. Line and SD deleted

- 25.1. Again (cf. note 19) evidence potentially of Peter's guilt is deleted.

22. Performance indicator significance

Demonstrates that Peter is, to quote Pears (1976), 'a man of sensibility'.

23. Line revised

- 27. Slater's makes Peter's answer more poetically expansive (cf. note 18).

24. Line revised

- 29. Britten's makes Peter's answer more poetically expansive (cf. notes 18, 23) and provides provocation for Swallow's response.

25. Punctuation variation

- 30. I place an en dash after 'mean' because Britten's setting adds a semiquaver rest here. The ellipsis after 'overboard' indicates the pause, the one and a half bars and a quaver rest for the voice, during which Peter likely nods.

26. Text deleted

- 33. In DE Britten cuts both the repetition and the answer {33a}. This creates a choice in interpretation: does Peter nod, as at 0.5.1 though there is no SD here, or does he remain silent, which may add to the impression of sulky truculence (cf. note 21)?

27. Line revised

- 34. Slater's original is rather casual: Britten's alteration exemplifies Swallow's pedantry (see note 28).

28. Swallow's pedantry

- 36. The distinction between a parson, which could refer to any clergyman, and a rector, strictly a member of the clergy who has charge of a parish and can retain its tithes (OED n.2.a.), is proper but again intimidating (cf. note 16).

29. B original and revised texts exist from this point to 49, the revision on an interpolated leaf. Variants are detailed in the crit. app (see also notes 30-31, 33).

30. Line revised and lines deleted

- 39, 39oa-od.

31. Lines revised

- 40o-43oe. Slater's original version begins more casually. The revisions from D E (41) to 'by our landlady' and beginning the following line 'Yes. By' soften the formality of the dialogue, provoking Swallow's immediate reprimand. The first two choruses of the draft (d45a-d45b, d61a-d61b) are now virtually together (43o-43od).
In the draft they first commented on May Sanders as a gossip. In the original B version they comment, less appropriately, on Auntie. But in the revised B version they follow and comment more fittingly on Mrs. Sedley. Also in the final text the later chorus lines only appear in revised form at 0.108 and are more suitably cast to refer to Swallow.

SD variation \(\rightarrow\) 45.1 - 3. A good example of emphasis on practical action on stage as distinct from \(\leftarrow\)' character analysis. I prefer earlier positioning as Mrs. Sedley's coming forward is appropriate to her forceful character, but I prefer stronger description. Mrs. Sedley's age increased from that given with the 'Caste' in C-EH as '50'. Her nickname, 'Nabob', pokes fun at her husband's 'status' as factor (see gloss), 'Nabob' (OED n.1.b) being a high-ranking British person who acquired a large fortune in India. When in C (\(\rightarrow\) 48) Swallow uses it, he both acknowledges and mocks Mrs. Sedley. It had some mileage but this brief appearance was its only one in the text.

33 Lines revised For Slater's original \(\rightarrow\) 44o - 48o. Acting for Peter, Swallow Junior provides a derogatory picture of Mrs. Sedley and Britten's addition has her, like the crowd and unlike Peter, being reprimanded by Hobson for disrupting the proceedings. Slater's revised version \(\rightarrow\) 44r - 48r is effectively a draft of the final text with only fine tuning of 44.1r, 46r, where simple repetition is more effective for a music setting and 48r where the brackets around 48o indicate Slater's unease with 'Nosey Parkers' though this is a more likely term to be used by a fisherman than 'interferers'. However the term 'Nosey Parker°' (°an overly inquisitive or prying person) is an anachronism as the earliest quotation in OED dates from 1890. In the final text's SD of defiance \(\rightarrow\) 49 from DE is truer to Peter's character than the resignation of 48r.

34 SD extended \(\rightarrow\) 49.1 - 2. The nature of this first entry of the chorus is clarified in more detail from C, a blueprint only found in \(\leftarrow\) for Britten's music.

Limiting the chorus \(\rightarrow\) 50 - 65, 67 - 88. The limitation (49.1 - 2) to men's voices is appropriate to the critique of its text. It is answered by a chorus limited to women's voices (\(\rightarrow\) 71 - 84, 86, 89, 92).

36 SD variation \(\rightarrow\) 66. The reading initiated by Britten, 'shouts', is also used in 1, 85, 115, 131 and 176. It indicates the thunderclap of Hobson's command as he does not shout but sings fortissimo.

37 Line revised and line deleted \(\rightarrow\) 70. The removal of Peter's reply emphasizes Swallow's railroading while a Peter uncertain, querying, only in source B, would appear uncharacteristically weak.

38 The treatment of Ellen In the draft text (d74 - d76) Ellen is described by Swallow as one who, as a widow and schoolmistress has had a hard life like Peter and therefore understands his hardship. Here (\(\rightarrow\) 71) Slater's text may be read as disparaging her position in the community. Britten's revision in B is at least critical of the community but was changed again by Britten in D to its final form. When should she step forward? The later \(\rightarrow\) have at 71.1 but the earlier (GIKL) at 93.1, while P has both. If earlier, this is as previously mentioned characters. If later, Swallow quickly moving her away after her brief answer to one question and then not allowing her to answer another emphasizes his dismissiveness.
Notes

280 of their hopes' (d72c–d72d). Later revisions of the Women's lines (72) removed the reference to men and with this the justification in context for setting the text for women's voices.

A second couplet of this latter, 'And when the parson preaches on it/Is it his job to fix the guilt?'

in B revision and C, was deleted by Britten in D-E.

A lingering censure

The chorus begins very softly muttering (72), reaches a very loud remonstrance at 84 and now has become very soft again with lengthening pause between the words so that Swallow's 92 dovetails 'lies'.

Swallow interrupting again

As with Peter (10, 12, 14, 16) Swallow harasses Ellen.

Lines added by Crozier and revised 88, 91, 93-6 were added to E by Crozier. They repeat the singling out of Ellen, arguably disparagingly (see note 38), as a schoolmistress and widow. They also take Swallow out of his proper stance as Coroner to a prejudicial, judgemental one although this may be deemed an example of his recklessness.

I choose Britten's final preference (95-6) to begin with 'brutal' and have the force of the alliteration of 'callous and coarse'.

SD added (96.1).

I add the first sentence which describes the stage business recalled by the original Ellen and explains Swallow's shift in manner, adapting Cross 1989:135: 'Ellen looks him straight in the face and her look is contemptuous. He changes his tone.' The second sentence, Britten's addition, confirms the earlier derogatory treatment of Ellen (see notes 43, 47).

Line revised and punctuation variation ♪ use the regional and colloquial form (OED adv.) of 'perhaps'. The earlier ♪ read 'p'raps', found from the 19th century but the later ♪ have 'p'rhaps', only found in the 18th and 19th centuries. Britten sets the word with a short appoggiatura on the first syllable so it sounds as 'perhaps', but with rapid delivery assured.

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Line spacing for 100-102 indicates the significance of the statements and suggests pauses between them which Britten provided in his setting.

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Lines revised but a loose end ♪ use the regional and colloquial form (OED adv.) of 'perhaps'. The earlier ♪ read 'p'raps', found from the 19th century but the later ♪ have 'p'rhaps', only found in the 18th and 19th centuries. Britten sets the word with a short appoggiatura on the first syllable so it sounds as 'perhaps', but with rapid delivery assured.

Lines revised but another loose end ♪ use the regional and colloquial form (OED adv.) of 'perhaps'. The earlier ♪ read 'p'raps', found from the 19th century but the later ♪ have 'p'rhaps', only found in the 18th and 19th centuries. Britten sets the word with a short appoggiatura on the first syllable so it sounds as 'perhaps', but with rapid delivery assured.

Extraordinarily Slater does not provide a verdict in B, though there was one in the draft version (d99-d100). In E he adds 'I record a verdict of Accidental death' to 145. Swallow does make a prejudicial statement that makes clear that this is not the first of Peter's apprentices to have died. Britten replaces the verbosity of Slater's original with a crisper, more direct statement. But first appeared as d102-d104 which related to the discussion of Peter's harsh treatment of his apprentices (d26-d97). Without that discussion Swallow's remark comes out of the blue.

Lines revised but another loose end ♪ use the regional and colloquial form (OED adv.) of 'perhaps'. The earlier ♪ read 'p'raps', found from the 19th century but the later ♪ have 'p'rhaps', only found in the 18th and 19th centuries. Britten sets the word with a short appoggiatura on the first syllable so it sounds as 'perhaps', but with rapid delivery assured.

Without that discussion Swallow's remark comes out of the blue.
Text B finishes with Swallow's verdict (d101-d106) followed by the Clerk's 'The Court is rising' (d107). Text B has just a chorus and Hobson's reprimand:

CHORUS
When women gossip, the result
Is someone doesn't sleep at night.
And when the crowner sits upon it,
But who can dare to fix the guilt?

HOBSON
shouts Silence, silence!

CURTAIN

The opening couplet of this chorus is retained in C but from D it is omitted. In C the second couplet begins 'And then'.

Chorus scoring
This is the first time two chorus parts have entered together and the first chorus with a loud entry. The effect is of a gradual awareness of an antagonistic community.

SD in place before Peter's 'Your honour!' but I place it as earlier at 115, indicating its context within simultaneous activities.

What starts in the chorus as a question, 'guilt?' (109, 110, 112, 114) transmutes from 117 to an affirmation, 'guilt!'. This can only be shown by representing as, without the musical repetition, only convey the question. The effect is repeated (question 162-3, 165-6, 168; affirmation from 169).

Punctuation variation
Follows that of the later ♪ to indicate that in this music repetition Britten has Peter's call resonating, having become louder and the final syllable three times its length in Peter's first call.

Chorus layout
The final two, very soft chorus statements are carefully placed in association with Peter's words so he is identified in shadowy fashion as the outsider ('other') and the 'man' guilty.

Swallow interrupting again (see notes 16, 41).

Line revised ♢141. Slater's revision shows Peter with a clear plan of action whereas 'I cannot' is defeatist, 'I can't, can I?' bewildered.

SD variation ♢143.1. I follow ♪ which indicate this is where Swallow determines the proceedings have ended. The direction in ♪ is apposite but Britten in setting the text chooses to have the crowd hubbub at 150.1. ♢65 'Swallow rising occurs later (♢175.1, 177.1).
Chorus scoring unlike its first appearance, this time the chorus is scored for male and female voices, emphasizing that the entire Borough community is seething.

Punctuation variation At the first appearance of the opening couplet (50+57 and repetitions) there is no punctuation until 'night'. At this appearance (153+154 and repetitions) have a comma after 'gossip' and ♪ have one after 'is'. In neither case is this necessary as music, rhythm and the intended effect of rapid muttering are the same though the key is different. I have therefore again provided no punctuation until 'night'.

Performance indicator I have retrieved this from what in is a retrospective SD, effectively after 167, 'He shouts this excitedly against the hubbub chorus. In U the chorus lines are bracketed with Peter's lines from 155 but my text shows how they interrelate in simultaneous presentation.

Lines revised in two sequences: {+ 162} and {+ 167 + 170}.

Placing of Peter's entry Britten sets 'Let me' (160) as the second and third quavers of a triplet, preceded by the first of its quavers as a rest. The effect therefore is that he enters between the sopranos and altos 'When' and 'the' (159) and, simultaneously, the tenors and basses' 'sits' and 'up', literally breaching them in mid speech. In context the relatively longer crotchet to which Britten then sets 'thrust' (160) emphasizes this.

Punctuation change as at 117 (see note 5).

Performance indicator I have retrieved this from what in (176) is Slater's prompt to Britten who chose, however, when he came to set the music not to have Hobson shouting over the rest but singing fortissimo and thus stopping them (the chorus tenors and basses literally) in full flow. Slater's libretto from Text C envisages an ambitious simultaneous three layer presentation: Peter's protesting arioso, the hubbub chorus and Hobson's shouts of 'Silence!'. This does exist briefly but only earlier, from 127-34. Britten's music rather concentrates on arioso and chorus in combination ending with Peter's 'The truth itself!' matched against the chorus's 'Fix the guilt!', a neat encapsulation of the crux of the opera.

Slater's original ending {+ 176+. The draft ends (d101-d107) with Swallow's verdict and the clerk's statement. Here Slater allows Peter to repeat his earlier plea to establish his innocence, again dismissed by Hobson. Such a focus is diffused by the replacing duet's pitting of negative and positive predictions for the future.

SD variation {+ 175.1, 177.1. ♪'presentation in two phases allows time for the crowd to disperse before the duet begins.

Music indicator: Britten maps out the duet {+ 177.2. At the end of C, without duet text, Britten notes 'Peter is left alone a the scene, Ellen returns, comforts him, & there is a short love duet – tentative at first, then warming —'. This is intended to replace Slater's original ending (see note 68) which Britten places in brackets.

Which walls? These lines make better sense as Peter's response to Ellen's original preceding line (179), 'Peter, come home!' but that line was probably changed because it suggests Ellen and Peter are living together. It is, nevertheless, arguable that for Peter 'the walls' can mean any walls in the Borough.

Rejecting a revision {+ 183. The original text (Britten's in DE) gives a more rounded picture of domesticity and balances better the preceding line's 'gossip' whereas the revision repeats the idea of gossip. Crozier's revision is similarly tautologous.
A late coming together

Though headed duet (\textbullet 177.2) it is really a dialogue that develops from here to become duet, just as Peter and Ellen, first separated on stage, gradually come together and walk out together. At the outset (194-6) their statement cuts across each other like Swallow's earlier interruptions.

Lines added 194, 196-205 were added by Crozier in E. In DE Britten had added after 195 'ELLEN You'll marry with children/To make you proud' but no lines for Peter. Crozier ignored the same lines when he added his.

Variant readings \textbullet 201. The reading of the early \textsection links with Peter's vision of the dead apprentice (2.2.51-57). But Britten also created the final reading and took care that Peter's 'witness' stands out at a point Ellen is not singing. For Peter this dead witness is more significant than any living ones.

The coming together \textbullet 206-211. Britten's original text and music setting have Ellen and Peter at the end singing different words simultaneously until the second 'feel' (209+210). The D text has Ellen singing 206o-209o while Peter sings 207-8, 210 (including \textsection), 211 (without \textsection). Crozier's revised text and Britten's revised music setting provide an earlier passage of different words sung at the same time (193-205) but bring Ellen and Peter together throughout the final passage (206-211).

Brackets This specific indication of the presentation of simultaneous text occurs only in U.

SD extended \textbullet 208.1. In his copy of the vocal score Goodall pencilled 'She touches him' at 'Is like a hand' (208). I make the action more explicit adding, given the duet's words, Peter's response.

SD variation (\textbullet 211.1-2). I blend \textsection and ♪ here. ♪ more scrupulously indicate the span of time as the curtain is falling. \textsection clarify Peter and Ellen are now together (see note 76).
1.1 Notes

Stage directions differ markedly between  and ♪. Sometimes, e.g. 0.4-6, ♪ provide a more flexible generalization of what was previously more prescriptive. At other times Slater's original directions enrich the performance indicators available. The sources of all stage directions are made clear in the critical apparatus. SDs were also modified as the practicalities of performance became more evident. For example,  call for two boats to be hauled in (0.4, 16.1) whereas ♪ settle on boats being on stage (16.1) or, this edition suggests more realistically, a boat, with the same modification made at 14.2. This then needs to be indicated at the opening scene setting: 0.2. With regard to Balstrode and the breakwater (0.7), having him stand his presence on stage is more apparent.

In the right margin Britten in CD Britten adds 'quiet, regular rhythms continue – and accompany' with a squiggly line indicating this note applies from here to No. 4 (78.2), linking this scene opening with Interlude 1.

The first time Britten employs all the chorus voices together homophonically which gives a hymn-like quality to their song about their daily routine. But by line 5 Britten begins again having different voice parts of the chorus presenting.

An initial plan to divide the chorus between inside and outside The Boar (see draft notes 7) was abandoned when Britten came to set the music, for male voices only, for a more practical repositioning still on stage of part of the chorus. ♪ supply the SD at 6.1, as adopted here.  supply it at 8.1.

Slater's original in B, 'diluted' and second version in C, 'watery gin' are more realistic but 'fiery' is more in keeping with the optimism of 'Welcome' (1.1.3), the 'warmth' that follows (8) and matches better Boles' accusation of tampering (11).

 are vague but ♪ necessarily indicate specific voices which recur.

SD revised and rendered less prescriptive, offering more scope for variety of interpretation. The original (d10.1) fixes him to a specific location on stage.

Boles's first line (1.1.11) accords with his introduction in the Prologue (0.39) as a ranter. Balstrode's first line, on the other hand (1.1.12), as allocated in ♪ begins a picture of him as a reliable yet genial commentator on the Borough folk.

For the earliest version and rewrites see d13,  d13 and dn12. 13-14 were established from C. Although in H Slater deleted 14 and replaced it with 'Some thing to brighten up his life' this line was not adopted elsewhere.

♪ are more exact. They place the SD at 16.1 just before the chorus sings about the action so that it can be identified as it is being described, rather than, as , at 18.1, after the action is described.  ( 16.1) less practically require a second boat to be hauled on stage (see 1).

For the original of 15-18 see Crabbe 1988: The Borough, Letter I, 87-90.  read 'watery' but this obscures the
Peter Grimes

1. Notes

1.1

scansion and setting by Britten to two syllables. ♪
read 'watry' but this form is not in use after the 17th century (OED). I use FG's 'wat'ry', strictly in use until the 18th century.

SD variant positioning and form I follow ♪
whose positioning at 20.1 relate the action more closely to the text than  at 21.1.

13

Designation of singing parts see 7. For the evolution of the SP and SD  d20 and

draft notes 16.

14

Designation of singing parts
For the evolution of the SP see draft notes 22.

Britten set the line for a bass. The clearest designation is achieved by combining U and ♪ ( 25).

16

SD variant positioning and form
This SD is first found in C. ♪'s positioning at 25.1 relate the action more immediately to the text than  at 26.1. The text of ♪ is both more specific in this context and capable of freer interpretation, i.e. those shading their eyes and those singing do not have to be the same people.

17

Designation of singing parts
Again (cf. note 15) the clearest indicator is achieved by combining U and ♪. For the evolution of the SP  26.

18

SD variation
I amalgamate ♪ and  and reposition the references to characters in the order of the presentation of the text. For the evolution of this SD see d35.1, d.37.1 and draft note 25. For the distinctions between ♪ and   33.1-4. I use the more general reference of ♪ regarding the nieces' position on stage as it allows for more flexibility in interpretation. I also use the ♪ reference to Ned's position on stage at 36.1.
The end of  SD beginning at 33.1 is not meaningful as it stands as Ned's thoughts and words are about Auntie's nieces (37, 44), not Mrs. Sedley. This is explained by the original SD (d37.1) and Ned's original line, d38, deleted by Britten in A. Possibly also it was originally intended to have the conversation about Mrs. Sedley's laudanum at this point but it was moved to 146-60. Only ♪ note the entrance of Swallow (37.1).

19

Music indicator  33.5.
Britten originally conceived the 'Good morning sequence' as a sextet: for its evolution see draft note 32. In E the term 'sextet' was deleted following the addition of Swallow in D. But the voices never combine and only five deliver salutations, with Auntie and Ned having their own separate banter (37, 41).

20

SD added in ♪. Swallow's entrance is not indicated in  because the SD in  ( 33.1-4) was not revised when 38 was reallocated (see note 21).

21

Line reallocated originally for the Rector,  d40.1, this reallocation suggested by Britten in D. At the same time 39 was added and 40 revised from its original (C), AUNTIE 'Good day Mr. Adams.'

22

Line rewritten and reallocated by Britten in DE. Originally (C) AUNTIE 'Good day Mr. Adams.'

23

Line rewritten  d32(d40c). Britten's replacing line, 'The law wears a wig but it's pretty girls you follow' has a queried reallocation to Auntie. This would however have diverted Auntie's attack from Ned to Swallow and left her without a response to Ned's 37. Later therefore in D suggested 41 directed at Ned. This was accepted by Crozier in E.

24

SD revised This final version occurs from C. For earlier versions  d40.1.

25

Music indicator shows that Britten had decided to fuse recitative and chorus at this point before setting the music (see Crozier's comment, note 28).
Placing of chorus

I represent the text as experienced through Britten's setting. This chorus (43, 46, 51-2, 54) appears after the 'dialogue' between Ned and Auntie (44, 47-8) and that between Boles and Balstrode (49, 53), though U brackets all this material together to indicate simultaneous presentation. However, show that the chorus is heard first, with 43 delivered before the 'dialogue' appears over it and the dialogue finishes before the chorus ends, leaving it to sing alone, 'impotence of man'. Crozier (Tennyson & Rose 1976) relates how dialogue and chorus were fused here to mask the abstruse, arty sentiments of the verse.

Tiering of entry

Here I represent the emphasis in Britten's setting on key words in the text, achieved by having one chorus part, here sopranos, at 45, altos, sustain part of the text at the same time as the other parts deliver the whole text.

Performance indicator

unusual

In 'pomposo' suggests a playful or mocking element.

SD variation

(55.1)

♪' version emphasizes Peter's disruptive influence from the community's point of view and is a reminder that the chorus's contributions so far are accompaniments to their work. I also include the SD which quickly follows in ♪ (56.1) as it emphasizes the community's antagonism to Peter.

Line reallocated

to Boles in C. For earlier versions

Line revised and queried

This revision occurs in C and is the reverse procedure to that originally d56.1, d57, i.e. Peter now appears to collect a rope rather than hauling one, emphasizing Peter's dependence on others. In D Britten suggests 'fix the rope' but this is deleted by Crozier in E. 'Hi!' was added by Britten from F when he set the music but does not occur in until U.

SD variation

58.1-3. The ♪ version is more expressive of the community's actions. A variety of responses in the draft (d57.2), 'turn .. or slouch' become the double action and uniformity of 'turn ... and slouch'. It ought, however, to be clarified that the rope is made fast to the capstan, as it is in the draft (d58.1), so I have added this information.

Music and performance indicator

The performance indicator in terms of tempi is a more sophisticated version of that in the draft d57.3. Swallow Junior's part was taken over by Keene and May's by Boles.

Line revised

from C. The change from 'take' (d58) to 'give' makes for more immediate clarity.

SD repositioned

editorially. In ♪ from C this occurs at 59.1 but simply repeats the SD at 59, so I have transferred it to 60 which was the original intention, confirmed by the SD at 60.1 and the variant in N.

Line reallocated and rewritten

From C this line once again became Keene's when he took over Swallow Junior's part (see draft note 52) and its rewrite allowed a wry critique of the community in place of the original more abstract, witty philosophizing, 'If all were prudent nothing would get born' (d59).

SD variation

60.1-3. I add 60.2 from F which makes clear that during the 'working quartet' Peter's boat is gradually coming into view before fully on stage at 78.1. I add 60.3 from ♪ as it clarifies the distinction between Balstrode and Keene's action and Auntie and Boles' commentary.
In C these lines appear as revised in B (d66-d9). In D Slater rewrote d62 as 'Publicans should take neither side' but Crozier's simpler change of 'tradeswoman' in B to 'publican' in E became the final version. In C Auntie's lines followed respectively those of Boles (finally d65-d6), Balstrode (d63), Keene (d64) and were in turn followed by Boles again (d69+d73) but were relocated here by Britten in D and Crozier in E. 

Line reallocated and rewritten. From C this line once again became Keene's when he took over Swallow Junior's part (see draft note 54). In C the text is as AB (d62). In DE Slater and Britten settled on the final text. Crozier (Tennyson & Rose 1976) cites the original line as an example of a worrying influence of Auden, 'a literary line evolves in the recesses of a study but makes no sense in a character' adding 'You'd have to say to Montagu, people won't understand. You have to have something more direct, more simple.' Part of Crozier's objection, however, was to some extent misplaced in that the original line was allocated to the lawyer Swallow Junior, for whom its intellectual whimsy would be more suitable than for the apothecary Ned. The rewrite is an improvement as a witty generalisation in place of absolute cleverness.

Lines reallocated, revised and deleted. For the version in B see d57-d60, a revision of A (see draft note 38). In C the lines, revised again, were reallocated to Boles with d66 followed by a revised version of d59-d60, viz. 'Yet finds his level and will take his ease With shipless mates and quacks who drink their fees'.

This couplet with its derisory reference to Ned was cut by Britten in D. 

Variation of text presentation. From here to 78 this is markedly different in ♪ because it is delivered by a quartet of voices. I set it out in the order of ♪ as experienced by the audience. The final order of ♪ is BOLES 65-6, 69, 73, 77 AUNTIE 67, 71, 75 BALSTRODE 68 + 72 + 76 NED 70 + 74 + 78.

Lines revised and relocated. What finally became Boles's lines d69+d73 followed by 77 appeared in C as a couplet following Auntie's lines 61-62 in their original position. From E in ♪ they immediately followed Boles's d65-d6 but I place them as they appear in Britten's setting. In C, as originally at d70, they began 'O let these captains hear, these scholars learn' which was revised by Britten probably to reduce sibilance to the final reading in DE, except the second 'these' was not reduced to 'the' until E.

Line revised. The reading in C, 'these preachers', was changed by Britten in DE to 'the preachers' (cf. note 42).

Line revised as already noted (note 42).

SD variation. "Scene" denote a new phase in the action. Britten's addition hints at his final setting which varies the norm of recitative secco with short passages of recitative arioso (98-101, 119-24) and chorus (126-99).
Peter Grimes

Notes

1.1

47 SD added clarifying that Peter is quietly getting on with his work while the argument develops around him.

Line revised \( \rightarrow \) 80, emphasizing Peter's need for an assistant, avoiding any sexual undertone that the original might have.

49 Line rewritten by Crozier in E. The C reading, ‘You’ve got a boy?’, in DE Britten replaces with ‘Another boy?’. The focus here is that Peter has ignored Swallow's advice in the Prologue (0.10 – 3). Crozier's rewrite casts Balstrode in an unusually censorious light and also obscures that issue.

50 Line revised Two syllables are easier to sing and hear than three.

51 Performance indicator unusually one in English found only ♪.

52 SD extended An example of Slater, in novelist mode, adding a first sentence which neatly sets the SD and surrounding action in context. The purpose is the same as at the rewritten 81: a diversion to explain why Peter ignoring Swallow's advice was not picked up. This SD is not present in ♪.

Britten started to include it in F at 91.1 but modified it thus: ‘<Fishermen and women> [The Crowd] gather [s] around’.

53 SD variation and variant location Another example of Slater adding narrative to SD helping to explain the following action. The opening sentence (\( \u00a7 \) 93.1) which I have added from ♪ clarifies that Ellen hears the salient detail of Boles's critique and necessitates the relocation of the SD to its present position as in ♪ rather than after 96 as in . Ellen's age appears to have been a matter of debate. Originally here it is '50', changed by Slater to '40' in CD but given as '35' in his cast list in C. The intention is to make her a credible partner for a Peter aged about 35.

54 Lines revised 93 – 5 are a somewhat toned down version by Slater in D and Britten in E from the original in BC (d93 – d95) ‘Is this a Christian country when Workhouse children are such slaves Their souls and bodies go for cash?’

55 Line revised The original, ‘Mister, you find some other road’ is found in B (d100) and C, then ‘you’ is deleted in DE. The final version first occurs in J.

56 SP variation I follow Britten's allocation to chorus parts in ♪.

57 Line(s) revised In  + 104 are presented as one line allocated to 'Chorus', 'He's right. Dirty jobs!' This line is a revision first found in D via 'Yes, he's right' deleted and replaced by a queried 'Quite right' followed by 'Dirty jobs'. E has 'Yes, he's right' replaced by 'He's right.' The version in C, 'He's afraid', is a revision of B's allocation of the line to Swallow as 'You're afraid?' (d102) which would have meant the chorus censuring Hobson rather than Peter.

58 Line revised as note 55.

59 Line revised 111. I follow ♪ as Britten truncated the line on its final appearance. This makes the dramatic effect of Ellen's interruption more powerful.

60 Line revised 'What? You'll be Grimes's messenger?' (d105) was modified in CDEHN to 'What? And be Grimes's messenger?' In ♪ the extra sibilance was avoided by the further modification 'Grimes messenger' which appears incorrectly in GJQ as 'Grime's
1.1

messenger’. In U 'You?' was added to 'Grimes' messenger', following Britten in his setting adding this word, now accusingly declaimed as 'You!', at 118.

Text repetition

Except for the first word a repetition of 113 only in ♪.

Performance indicator

Ellen shadows both Hobson's text and the manner of its presentation (c.f. from 97).

Line revised

The original version is correct but the community implies Ellen is a habitual procuress.

Lines added

(128-9) by Britten in D give more justification to the Chorus's berating of Ellen and to Ellen's response.

SD variation

 145.1-2. ♪ make the exit of Ellen and Hobson more explicit and so I have added this to the version in .

 145.3. I combine ♪ and  to provide helpful detail, Mrs. Sedley and Ned talking furtively at the edge of the crowd, but also remove unhelpfully over general detail, such as the opening of , or detail repeated soon in the SDs of 146-7.

Line revised

I follow the revision of 'ma'am' (♪ from M,  from U). It is, however, unfortunate as Ned's original 'mum' made a witty contrast to Hobson's recent more deferential 'ma'am' to Ellen (145).

SD deleted

F at this point has 'The crowd disperses', I at 150.1, KL at 151.1, adding unnecessary action as the crowd is required again from 160.2.

Line revised and unrevised

In D Britten suggested 'Oh dear! O dear!' and it appears as an alternative reading in F, but Britten's suggestion was deleted by Crozier in E, rightly so as it exhibits frailty rather than vexation.

Line revised

The ♪ version ( 154) allows for more flexibility as Slater's original requires Ned to be close to The Boar and gesture towards it.

Lines added

In D after 156 Britten asks 'More?'. 157-60 were added by Crozier in E.

SD variation

 160.1-2. I combine ♪ and  to provide helpful detail. Unusually ♪ are the more literary. From  'off' needs to be retained to clarify Mrs. Sedley's exit.

Lines added

In D after 156 Britten asks 'More?'. 161-2 were added by Slater to D.

Text presentation and allocation

Presentation varies considerably between  and ♪ from this point.  is presented in the crit. app. with the suffix U. What in ♪ with tiering of entries and text repetition amounts to 144 lines (167-311) is represented in  by 30 lines.

Text variation

This contracted version of 164-5 (169U-170U) is only found in ♪.

This chorus repeat of Balstrode's 163 does not occur in  until 237 U.

This is the reading of ♪ on every appearance.  read 'And the sea-horses' (176 U).

This, only found in ♪, is a contracted version of 169U-171U.

SD in one source only in F, but a useful prompt for stage business.
Text variation
The many bare cries of 'Look!' beginning here only appear in ♪.

Line revised
A contraction of 165.

Tiering of entry
The bold text in 197 indicates where it dovetails that in 196.

Line revised
The word 'can' was added to the line by Britten in DE. The C version is as d206.

Partial dovetailing
Boles starts 263 with Balstrode and Ned but finishes a crotchet beat early and therefore can start 264 with the Nieces and Auntie.

Lines variously allocated
The more precise division of ♪.

SP variation
Although in ♪ the soloists and chorus parts are separately specified they double each other and all sing the same text.

Text repetition and revision
Here all repeat Balstrode's words which begun this section of the scene (163 - 6) but with the omission of 'the' in 164 as in Balstrode's repetition at 190.

Lines reallocated
from the draft's inapposite allocation to Peter: see draft note 106.

Performance indicator
A rare example from ♪ in B. In CD Britten adds 'High, rhetorical' but this perhaps unhelpfully suggests Boles does not genuinely believe his ranting. In ♪ Britten uses 'impetuoso' which is closer to Slater's original with the added sense of 'impulsively' or, to follow the online Italian-English Collins Dictionary 'raging'.

Text repetition and revision
This line is a further contracted version (cf. 185) of 169U - 171U.

Line revised
From C 'The high tide' (d225) became 'His high tide'. Identifying the storm as an Act of God is a natural evolution from 291.

Line reallocated
as no note 88.

SP variation
I follow ♪. In ♪ the soloists' and chorus parts are separately laid out but the soloists double the chorus.

SD variation and variant location
I follow the more detailed SD of ♪ from C here but place it, as ♪, covering the text repeat in ♪ (315 - 18). In ♪ it appears at this same point without being followed by repeated text.

Punctuation variation
I have inserted a comma here to mark the 3 beats rest Britten adds in this second repetition of the text.

SD variation
I prefer the version in ♪ because it is a reminder that Peter has not been heard since 58 but has been on stage silent on his boat from 78.1, taking no part in the ensuing hullabaloo. For the version in ♪ it appears at this same point without being followed by repeated text.

Section added
labelled 'Scene', the lines from 319 to the end were added in C, then revised as noted below. They replace the draft ending from d228: though d263 - 4 survive from there, revised in the final version as 429 - 30, in this they refer to Ellen whereas originally Peter was in his imagination addressing his new apprentice.
The final version, apparently by Britten because first found and in all ♪, though more appropriate to the direct speech of a fisherman, is still more stuffy than JQ's beginning 'I'm a native'. Slater's or original found in C-I and its modification in J amount to an admission of guilt by Peter. Britten avoided this from ♪ K with the final version.

Slater's original is more like the language of a fisherman.

'Crowner' is a form the OED (noun 2) terms 'now only dialectal', appropriate to the opera's provincial setting, 'towards 1830' time and also easier to set to music being only two syllables.

Slater's original refers to the three apprentice deaths in Crabbe. Britten's revision takes account of only one apprentice having died at this point in the opera.

Slater's first version (352C-357C, 357aC-360aC, 358C-362C) offers a fair justification for Peter's frustration with his apprentice and resultant lacking of duty of care: thereby 'nursing' (352C) is ironic. It also casts Peter in a humane, vulnerable light, being afraid of another's fear. Britten's revision (352DE-362DE) avoids this detail of Peter's reaction by focussing on the apprentice. The greater specificity of 'silent reproach' (360DE) is, however, an improvement because it hints that Peter's imagination or conscience might be at work. It is therefore appropriate that this is included in the final version (360) which otherwise is a straightforward narrative of the action of and reaction to the storm.

The revision, presumably Britten's because first found in ♪, is clumsy because the verb 'mind' here follows the noun 'mind' in the previous line but is consistent with the removal of 352C-353C and its focus on Peter's fear (see note 101).

Crozier's revision scans better and is easier to set to music but Slater's original makes more sense. If one thinks about Crozier's revision one asks "more grandeur than what?"

Slater's original was the neatest verb to match the action of wind and with the final version again (cf. note 102) there is an awkward repetition of the same word.

Britten was right to delete these lines. The opening couplet of this quatrain is suitably direct, though 'unhandiness' seems an unduly antiquated term and 'penury' is a more general and therefore ambiguous term than the more direct 'starved' of 342. The closing couplet is far too abstrusely poetic. It is difficult to imagine a retired merchant skipper ever speaking like this.

At the original appearance of this line in CD, Britten added the indicator '(enthusiastic)' but in the setting this element was conveyed by the orchestral marking 'Vivace' for the lines beginning here until Peter's closing soliloquy. The initial light and soft delivery, then growing in volume, emphasizes Peter's make-believe and mania.

The repetition in the revision (372-3), which first appears in K, emphasizes Peter's fixation on visions.
1.1

Again the repetition, first in K, 'dreamer' (374), 'dreams' (375), emphasizes both Peter's distinctiveness and its fantasy element while that of 'They' (374-375) stresses Peter's sensitivity to a group of antagonists.

Lines revised  377J-378J. The earlier version makes more explicit Peter's delusion but at the same time has less confidence than the final version which first appears in K.

Lines rewritten Slater's first version ( 372C-379aC) concentrates on action and shows Peter intending to follow the same procedure that proved fatal for the previous apprentice (0.18-25). The focus of the rewrite in its final version first in K is on Peter's knowledge of his own visionary nature, the antagonism this creates from the community but also a confident plan of action in response.

Line revised and restored  380. Slater's original, 'the new prentice' was changed by Britten in DE (+FHJN) to 'your new prentice' but later restored. The revision emphasized Peter's ownership of the apprentice (2.1.128).

Lines revised  383-383C. Appearing early in ♪ (completely by K) but not in  until U, the revision emphasizes Peter's practical response of hard work to achieve money. It appears therefore less of a fantasy than the original ( 383C-3839C).

Line revised  397. The revision makes Peter's response more proud and protesting whereas the original is accepting but resignedly dismissive.

SD and SD location variation  401.1. Placing the SD earlier here is preferable as it explains the switch from alternating recitativo arioso after 393 to a duet of altercation. The ♪ version of the SD is preferable because it shows both men, not just Peter, angry and confrontational.

Lines rewritten or expanded Slater's original lines ( 402C-404C) show Peter with a childlike faith as a response, remote from practical considerations. The final version casts Peter in a more independent light of maintaining principle. But this is in turn challenged by Balstrode's interjection, reproduced as Britten set the lines rather than, as , a comment after Peter's lines. Britten's expanding the interjection, adding a 'you' to Slater's original ( 404C) which remains in all , emphasizes that the obstinacy is personal to Peter.

Line revised  413. A good revision because it avoids Balstrode awkwardly repeating 'Just' from 411.

Contrast of solo and duet My layout clarifies the juxtaposition of solos (e.g. 402), lines in which one voice interrupts another (e.g. 403-404) and lines of simultaneous presentation (e.g. 415-19). The evolution is from solo statements to a duet of altercation as the differing texts interweave. Finally the individuality of Balstrode and Peter's divergent reactions to the storm is emphasized by the simultaneous presentation of 421-24.

SD variation  424.1-3. I have chosen the version first in G as it shows neat revision from Slater's original in . As covers for the windows the shutters would always be outside this reference is otiose. But it is helpful clarification to have Balstrode shaking his head when looking at Peter and to have an exit for Auntie as well as Balstrode.

SD variation This SD, only in ♪, sets in context Peter's closing soliloquy. Strictly speaking it is the main body of the storm approaching as it has been stated (421) the storm has arrived.

Line revised  425. Britten initiated this line but Slater reshaped it to its more satisfyingly and universally reflective final version.
The downbeat revision better suits the immediately preceding discourse.

The final revision which first occurs in J defines Peter's happiness specifically in terms of his relationship with Ellen which fractures at 2.1.188.

Crozier's input is the significant factor in the final revision. It creates a comforting, evocative line but the meaning can only be gleaned in relation to the following lines: Ellen is Peter's safe haven.

I use Britten's early revision. The late, rather impassive reading in PRTUV is inconsistent with the preceding two lines' revisions which spotlight for Peter his relationship with Ellen.

I use Crozier's early revision in which Peter's inability to articulate a future with Ellen is a moving testament to the problem of his relationship with her. It is replaced by a platitude instigated by Slater. Moreover the rising of the wind, charted in the following SD (432), suitably covers a breakdown in language. I in Slater's version in D Peter's focus appears to revert to his antagonists but reference to the C original (425C-432aC) shows it is really on the dead apprentices, two here because this follows an early text, such as the Prologue BC texts (0.104-5) in which one apprentice had already died before William Spode.

Lines rewritten Slater's original lines (425C-432aC) focus on the apprentice and the concept of the stranger, one like Peter outside the Borough community, who has no prejudice against him owing to past events. Yet Peter, haunted, insists on referring to those very events (431C-432C) and, because this is an unrevised text, with earlier deaths.

SD variation I use the edited version of Slater's original as established in ♪ from J. ♪ have no SD here. The additional lines (432.1C, 432.1bC) are not helpful. In Britten's setting the song is marked to be sung louder from 430. It is more effective having Peter stay out in the storm as the curtain falls, as he resolved to in 422+424, than to move off possibly to shelter, as he has clearly remained in the storm until his next entrance (1.2.15.1-3). Before 'The wind rises' Britten in D and Slater in E added 'He stares out as if at the sea - ghosts that haunt him' but the specificity of this is more appropriate to his original lines (see note 128) and the more generalized SD added at 424.5 in ♪ (see note 121) serves the purpose better.
1.2 Notes

1. SD variation

2. Music indicators

Britten's marking in ♪ is 'Recitativo animato (senza misura)', animated recitative without strict time, indicating flexibility with reference to the speech rhythms. The percussion instrument chosen was bass drum, playing a continuous trill pianissimo.

3. Mrs. Sedley's nerves

Though it does not appear as such in ♪, Britten sets 'He' as a stutter: three crotchets on b flat i, the first and second and second and third separated by a crotchet rest. The SD is from M-Goodall. The dovetailing of her entry, spluttered out almost before Auntie has had time to complete her sentence, is another indicator of her distress. For 'half past' I have chosen the OED preferred unhyphenated form (adj. 1c).

4. SD variation

I have preferred 'some fishermen' in some ♪ here to the original parsimony of just one. This is more in keeping with the entry of 'other fishermen and women' with Boles (24.1). The autograph manuscript G offers 'some fishermen' as an added alternative to the original reading. The parenthesis added to CD by Britten explains why the storm motif first heard at the beginning of the storm interlude is delivered legatissimo but also fortissimo by first and second trombones at this point.

5. Sound, not text

Read 'Phew' but all other ♪ have the SD '(whistles)' and indicate the whistle as a descending glissando from e iii.

6. Line revised and unrevised

From DE Britten reverted to Slater's original reading 'that's a bitch' (d13).

7. SD implied

I have taken up M-Goodall's annotation 'asside' (sic), implied by Britten's softening Auntie's recitative here from piano to pianissimo.

8. Line revised

The original line (23 C reading) shows more concern for Auntie's restlessness than the protest given to Balstrode in Britten's revision in D, the emphasis adding insult. The original question neatly allows 'fearful' the double meaning of frightened as well as annoying. Auntie's response also seems a more adequate answer to the original question.

9. SD variation

I give the fuller version of G and the later ♪ which add 'women' (24.2). I give the fuller version of ♪ which explicate stage business. The wind howling is again musically illustrated by the storm motif heard in the orchestra fortissimo.

10. Line revised

The universal applicability of the tale's events and responses is better suggested by a generalized locale, the change by Britten in CDE from 'Lowestoft' to 'Northern'.

11. SD variation

I use ♪: Slater's picturesque expansion in C of d26.

12. Line revised?

M-Goodall deletes this line, replacing it with 'Keep that door shut' but the authority is unclear and the change not found elsewhere.
Musical varieties of scream

I represent the differences in Britten's musical setting of the succession of screams which neither ♀ nor ♪ convey accurately. Auntie's first scream (28) is notated as a falling glissando semibreve from f\textsuperscript{i i}, her second scream (31) as 2 falling glissando minims respectively e\textsuperscript{i i} and c\textsuperscript{i i} ♀ from source C represent Auntie's first scream as 'O-o-o-o-o!' and second scream as 'O-o-o-o-o!', while U standardizes both as 'O-o-o-o-o!', an excessive representation in all cases but ♪ represent all screams as 'Oo!' which inadequately indicates their extent. I reproduce the number of 'O's according to the number and extent of notes in Britten's setting, so Auntie's semibreve glissando (28) appears as 'Oooo!', her two minims' glissando (31) as 'Oo! Oo!' and the Nieces' minim + crotchet glissandi (from 34) as 'Oo!'. The Nieces' scream adds to the variety. They have a falling glissando minim from e\textsuperscript{i i} ending on a crotchet b\textsuperscript{i}. First Niece echoed by Second Niece and then the process repeated (34-7) and later just once more (42-3). ♀ ♪ represent these as 'Oo!' which is inadequate. Britten sets the passage as in CDE, with First Niece beginning and Second Niece copying her, rather than the later ♀ with Nieces not individually distinguished. M-Goodall clarifies the distinction, First Niece being 'more brazen', Second Niece 'weaker, more shy'.

Line revised
Britten's addition of 'old' from DE furthers Balstrode's derogatory treatment of Auntie (see note 8). In the H 'fair copy' of the 'Caste' her age is stated as 50, but Balstrode is simply described as 'retired' and as such older.

Line revised
I use ♀: Slater's version from C, greatly expanded from 'Two nieces run in hysterical' (d33.1) and a perceptive literary analysis indicative of his qualities as a novelist. The original reading, CDE's 'their usual instinct' (33.3-4) more accurately describes their conduct (see in particular 3.1.5 onwards). In ♪ Britten will have none of this detail. His fullest version, G, is 'The two 'Nieces' run down from upstairs in their night clothes.'

Music repetition and representation of the nieces
Slater's description of the nieces (33.1-7) explains why B's allocation of some separate lines for Niece 1 and Niece 2 (d34-7, 39-43, 118-21) is not retained from ♀. Nevertheless in the text there should be separate lines when Britten separates them in ♪. Niece 2 follows and sometimes overlaps Niece 1's lines: in Slater's terms the two halves of the personality are displayed separately before they join, so I reproduce this practice. The SPs I use in these instances without further comment are '1st Niece' and '2nd Niece', as standardized from ♪M.

Line revised
The ♀ text until U was 'Oo! we'll be drowned' with 'We'll all be drowned' an enhanced repeat after the intervening new lines 51 and 55. ♪ continuously repeat 'We'll all be drowned' (46-50).

Balstrode's jocularity
M-Goodall has the note to this line 'laughing', i.e. in a laughing manner, and at its end 'laugh here' which I take up.

Text variation (52-59): early ♀ (B-EH) give Niece 1 and Niece 2 separate lines as at d39-43. The text was shortened when Britten composed the lines as Niece 2 copying Niece 1 in quick succession.

Lines revised
The original opening 'You think' was changed to the final reading from ♀E and ♪G. The original 'Would' opening the following line was changed to 'Should' in ♪ from F but retained in ♀ until U.

Scream parody
Balstrode's imitation of the Nieces' screams was added to the text when Britten set it and does not occur in ♀ until U where it is inadequately represented as 'Oo! Oo!' because Britten sets it as two groups of four descending and softening crotchet
phrases mockery, cibi 
imitando, then the same phrase an octave higher marked falsetto. 
My transcription reflects the extent of these phrases. The playful nature is emphasized by the annotation 'explode' in M-Goodall at 'palpitations' in the previous line.

Music and performance indicator (64.1). Britten modified the ensemble but clarified its ambivalent nature. Lines revised The final text occurs from ♪M but not in  until U. Yet 65 is the same as the original d49 and in 66 the only changes from d50 were 'sort' became 'kind' in M and 'that' became 'who' in E. In D Britten had produced a more than half angry 'Loud man, O never in my time/Will a lout go free who spits in his wine'.

Line revised C has Britten's revision of B, 'And a nice man's thankful for what's been done' (d52). In D Slater first suggested the modification to the opening, 'But nice men are' or 'But a nice man's' but also sketched out the final version after a first attempt which began 'But be polite and say your grace'. In E Crozier confirmed this revision. The expanded line has more of the feel of homily, suavely presented.

Text variation 'For his peace of mind' is the original text found in all  except DN. In D Slater revised it to 'For your peace of mind' here and at 90. The original reading is more abstract and Britten's setting suits this. The Nieces begin 71 - pianissimo after Auntie ends 69 - fortissimo. In Slater's change the Nieces become more involved with Balstrode and Slater kept the change in his own edition N. So either text is possible but what should not be is a mix of the two with 'your' occurring in GIKL, never here but in various strengths from line 90.

Line revised as note 24.

Punctuation variation I follow the inconsistency of ♪ in ending with an exclamation mark here but not at 70. Auntie is still singing fortissimo but the grounds for extra emphasis may be that this second appearance is set a tone higher.

An interrupted tirade C reads: AUNTIE Are you a man that boasts that he flogs his love and his walnut tree? A joke's a joke and fun is fun And a nice man's thankful for what's been done. NIECES For his peace of mind. MRS NABOB This is no place for me. which is a second revision of d60-d65. In D Britten replaces these lines with 'Loud man who boasts that ...'. In E Crozier cuts this further to the final version.

Music indicator changes from the arioso and ensemble mix of the previous section (65-104) to a return to the pacy interchange of vocal solos of the first section (1-64).

SD variation The more generous allocation of both sexes (104.2-3) begins with the earliest ♪ but is not found in  until U. They are needed as bystanders for the confrontation between Boles and Balstrode and then, as Chorus from 133, to comment on it.
Peter Grimes

Notes

1.2

SD variation \( \frac{1}{10^6} \): 'rising unsteadily' best conveys the continuity of the action as the line is delivered, clarified by the melismatic quaver runs on 'drunk'.

Similarly to note 31, 'staggers to one of the nieces' better conveys the action as the line is delivered.

Auntie's pugnacity

Gooodall aptly has Auntie here adopting the same stance to Boles as he had to Peter when criticizing him at 1.1.64.

A pitched whisper

Balstrode's 'Sh-shh!' is pitched by Britten as a crossed headnote at c flat in ♪ except KL where it is pitched at b.

Line revised \( \frac{1}{120} \). A sensible revision because Auntie would know this, but Balstrode is just reminding her that Boles has gone into preaching mode.

Crozier's punctuation

This and 124 are good examples of Crozier tidying up in E the lack of punctuation in earlier sources. In both cases he adds a comma and replaces a full stop by an exclamation mark.

SD variant positioning and form

I follow ♪ for the positioning of the SD in relation to 124. 'Come on, boy!' is Balstrode's statement after he has been hit when he is restraining Boles and should therefore follow the SD though C\(\frac{\pi}{\pi}\) place the SD after 'Come on, boy!' and add 'Mrs. Sedley screams'. In ♪ from G her crossed notehead is a glissando down from a ii flat. The SD finally established in ♪ in MPRT is 'He hits Balstrode, who quickly overpowers him'. GH KL read 'Boles hits Balstrode, who quietly overpowers him' and the description 'quietly' is found in C\(\frac{\pi}{\pi}\) which also, unlike ♪, details the restraint, confirming Boles to a chair. The term 'quietly' would accord with Balstrode's efficiency but he has not hitherto been quiet in this scene and the music setting is loud and fast, with 'Come on, boy!' sung fortissimo, so I prefer 'quickly'.

Line revised to its earliest form, as found in d87, by Britten in ♪ from the autograph manuscript G.

Punctuation and lineation variation

I use ellipses to indicate the placing of crotchet rests in the music and thus pauses in the delivery of the lines (except after 'let live' where all sources indicate the pause by a comma). There is a subtle distinction between Balstrode's first delivery of these lines and their later repetition. First time (125-6) there is no pause after look, so the sense is 'make sure that' (OED 3b) we keep our hands to ourselves, emphasized by the line break after 'let live'. In the repetitions (131-2, 133-4, 139-40) there is a pause after 'look', so the sense is 'direct your eyes on this' (OED 1) we are keeping our hands to ourselves, emphasized by the line break also placed after 'look'. Both statements are ironic. The calm of the Boles and Balstrode no longer fighting comes only as a result of Balstrode overpowering Boles and imprisoning him in a chair: calm as a result of intervention.

SD added

This SD first occurs in CD with a longer tail, 'laying the law down as he sits his man down', the tautology deleted by Britten in E and the shorter version retained in the other \(\frac{\pi}{\pi}\). The SD emphasizes the irony of the situation: Balstrode does not keep his hands to himself with regard to Boles.

Music and performance indicator

(\(c_f\) note 29): a second change, from recitative to the arioso and ensemble mix as in the second section (65-104).
Lin

1.2

298

42

- 20 were added by Slater in C where they were followed by a ‘second refrain’ for Balstrode:

Beer may be spiced as wine by clove
By like or dislike, hate or love.

This couplet was then repeated after 13
8. Both appearances of it were deleted in DE, unsurprisingly given its abstract, philosophic nature.

C

Chorus added
The full chorus repetition of Balstrode’s original refrain is first clarified by Britten in D and Crozier in E.

43

Britten uses the later ‘form of 125, ‘We’ll’. Crozier and subsequent texts use the original ‘We’ (see note 38), as does Britten for 139.

In C it is given as ‘And look we keep our hands to ourselves/We keep our hands to ourselves.’, deleted in D and superseded in E.

44

Punctuation variation
I have followed ♪’s inconsistency here, using an exclamation mark only in the chorus when it immediately repeats Balstrode’s line, presumably to indicate emphatic, albeit ironically emphatic (see note 40), agreement.

45

Balstrode’s jollity which is a little forced, is emphasized by this marking by Britten in M–Goodall and the silly rhyming of 136 and 138 which first appears in C.

46

Line revised
Slater’s opening line was changed to its final form in D by Britten, thus ‘We <drink the merry> [sit & drink the] evening through’.

47

Lines deleted
Slater’s original in C had Balstrode repeating his ‘second refrain’ here. This was replaced in DE by his first refrain (131-2).

When Britten set the text he only had the chorus singing this first refrain here but all ♪ except U still include it for Balstrode.

48

SP variation
This line, not in ♪, is sung by everyone then on stage as I specify and appositely and dramatically interrupted at ‘look’ by the next entrance. At this point then all characters, even Boles who is the receiver of it, conform to the community’s actions.

49

SD variation
I have given the fullest version of this SD from ♪. ♪ only have Ned entering. The additional fishermen indicated in ♪ mean that the later choruses are weightier.

50

Music indicator
marks the second return in the scene to recitative. The parenthesis is Britten’s reminder to himself to preface it with a repeat of the storm music. Here he uses the theme as a at the beginning of Interlude II  marked ‘Presto con fuoco’.

51

Lines revised
‘the cliff is down’ is Crozier’s alteration in E of Slater’s ‘there’s been a break’ (C and d89). Slater had in D suggested ‘the cliff has gone’ and in F Britten has ‘the cliff is gone’. Slater’s ‘Peter Grim-es’s hut’ (CD and d90) was contracted to the more colloquial but also curt ‘Grimes’s hut’ by Crozier in E.

52

Line added
by Crozier in E, a briefly humane moment from Aunt tie.

It  is in all ♪ but not otherwise in ♪ until Q.

53

Line revised
Slater’s original ‘carrier’s’ was changed by Britten in DE to ‘carter’s’ and ‘That’ changed to ‘The’ from G, the opening word less condescending and the second easier to sing.

54

SP revised
♫ have Balstrode but I follow ♪’ Ned. That the interchange stays between Mrs. Sedley and Ned makes for more straightforward recitative. It is also fitting that Ned,
having just entered, has the most up-to-date news. Britten so on adds a line for Balstrode (155) as he acts as a bridge between Ned and the chorus, repeating Ned's 'Mind that door!'

A rhetorical question? I follow F, the only source to use a question rather than exclamation mark because, although this may well be a rhetorical question, Ned answers it as if it were a real one.

Ned's jollity I adapt Britten's annotation 'gay!' in M-Goodall, mirroring that for Balstrode at 135 (see note 45).

Change of tone by Ned quickly (cf. note 56) as marked by Britten in M-Britten. This is the second such change (cf. 135 and 142), reinforced by Britten's added SD for Balstrode in the following line (155).

Line added by Britten in F, set for 'Balstrode & a few fishermen' but Britten then deleted the parts for the fishermen. Similarly the reference to and/or music for fishermen was deleted in GIKL. From M the line is for Balstrode alone.

SP variation In  from D this added line is given to 'ALL', in F to 'EVERYONE', in GIKL to 'OMNES', in L to 'ALL' but Britten sets it and in ♪ from M it appears simply for Chorus.

Line added by Britten in D and Crozier in E.

SD variation The fullest version of this SD is not found until U and even this lacks the final sentence which I have taken from ILMPT. Britten modified the structure of this element of the scene once he began composing the music. B places the chorus 'Talk of the devil and there he is' (d100.2) before the interchange between Ned and Auntie. Its SD, d100.1-2, provides a brief foundation for this final one. It reads 'The door opens again. Mrs N. faints. Peter Grimes has come in. He stands by the door.' In C-E the first and third sentences in B became the first and second sentences with Mrs. Sedley's fainting placed later. Then the final third and fourth sentences, 'Unlike … wild', were added but the SD finished there, followed by two semichoruses in dialogue:

SEMICHORUS Grimes is waiting his apprentice
SEMICHORUS Talk of the devil and there he is
And a devil he is, and a devil he is.

In E the order of these semichoruses was reversed and this became the final version, still headed semichorus in H but set by Britten for full chorus in ♪ and so marked in  from J.

In C-E then comes the SD 'Grimes advances ... falls.' As the final version 156.3-4, this is followed by the interchange between Ned and Auntie. The earliest ♪ version of the SD, F, from the outset concentrates on the action and staging: 'The door opens again. Peter Grimes, looking wild, stands there. Peter advances into the room. Mrs. Sedley faints <and> Ned Keene catches her.' This is the GI version {sv}. In KL the SD is 'The door opens again. Grimes stands there, looking wild.' PT have the later material and add the sentence 'Balstrode and others push the door closed.' Though not in  this is significant: Grimes, unlike everyone else, pays no heed to personal or corporate safety and comfort, so Balstrode and others are left to tidy up after him.

SD variation All  except U have the original SD as d103.1. G has 'As Grimes comes forward, the others move aside.' The final version is found in ♪ from M except that 'Grimes' is used instead of 'Peter', the friendlier forename identification only being found in U.
I have followed Britten's setting in ♪ (160SP). In CDEH these lines are marked for 'Semichorus' intended as two semichoruses in dialogue (see note 61), but ♪ and  from J mark them for full chorus.

64 Line added and repositioned. This line first occurs in C but placed before 160. It is more effectively incriminating in this final position by Crozier in E.

65 Lines revised by Britten from Slater's original (d104-5). From E he added 'as' before 'strong' in 173 and in D changed the original 'Fisherwomen that I know' to the final text of 174 emphasizing Mrs. Sedley's toughness.

66 Lines revised by Britten in D E from Slater's original (d107-11). Britten has the spelling 'Plaiades', Crozier in E writes this out again as 'Pleaides'. The standard spelling is found from J and ♪F. The text becomes more direct as 176 is changed from 'Among the constellations' and 178 from 'Imagined exhalation'. Whereas originally in 178-80 'Imagined exhalation/of human grief/Breathes a solemnity' now it is 'The Great Bear and Pleiades' (176) that are 'Breathing solemnity' (180). Part of The Great Bear is clearly visible in the night sky in the United Kingdom as the Plough. The Pleiades is also conspicuous and known as the Seven Sisters. Although the chorus consider Peter's soliloquy an incoherent ramble it would be normal for a fisherman fishing at night to navigate by prominent stars and know their names.

67 Lines revised first by Britten in D then Crozier in E from Slater's original added to the draft text (d116). 'But if' replaced 'And if' (186). 'Like a school-playground full/of noisy children' became 'Like the quick escaping/of a shoal of herring' (188-9). The final version of 188 occurs from K.

68 Music indicator. The earliest version, CD, clarifies that the recitative at first here is sung by groups of the Borough community in their chorus parts.

69 SP variation. I follow ♪ which specify the chorus parts' entries and therefore show how the se are experienced in clusters and the repetition of the muttering.

70 SP variation. The original line (d119) and this rewrite were allocated to the Second Niece. From DE Britten gave it to both nieces, so that they never had different lines, matching Slater's description of them at 33.5-7.

71 Line rewritten by Slater in C. His original line, 'He's nothing dearie you need fear' (d119) is a less comic but more realistic observation for a prostitute to make, suggesting that Peter, unlike the rest of the male community in the Borough, is not interested in the nieces' services and that, by implication, his interest lies rather in his apprentice.
Line added and reallocated
In C Slater added this line, allocated to 'Another' (i.e. Fishwoman, see note 73). In DE Britten reallocated the line to the chorus.

Line reallocated by Britten. Originally allocated only to the Second Niece (cf. note 70).

Line reallocated and revised by Britten. Originally (d120) assigned to the First Niece and preceding 222. When he set the line he changed the original 'as though' to 'as if'.

SD variant positioning and variation
\( \Rightarrow \) 231.1. I follow the later ♪ (MPRT V) which chart Boles's staggering gradually at an appropriate earlier point before he approaches and speaks directly to Peter at 239. I follow ♪ which in their use of 'Peter' recognize him as an individual rather than the more impersonal 'Grimes' of .

SD often absent
Only present in the later ♪ (MPRT V), it charts Balstrode's continued manhandling of Boles and recalls the irony of such actions at 126.1-2.

Line revised ( 242).
Slater's original, 'Satan's got no grip on me' (d122c) was revised in DE by Britten to 'Satan has no hold on me.' The final version, a blend of its predecessors, first appears in K.

SD added in  from C places in context Peter's aggressive response as justifiable retaliation. ♪, however, are more ambiguous, indicating that the words be shouted, with crossed headnotes pitched at a i.

SD variant positioning and variation
As at 231.1 (see note 78) I follow ♪ in their use of 'Peter' rather than the 'Grimes' of . But I retain 'and turns away' from  as this shows Peter has no wish to prolong the quarrel. When it first appeared in C this SD was placed after 248 before 248.1-3 which renders Boles's actions there a response rather than the additional act of aggression they become as a result of Britten in DE moving this SD to this final, earlier position.

SD variation
Here I blend  and ♪.  are preferable for 248.1 as Boles must pick up a bottle before he can use it as a weapon but, as earlier (see note 78), I prefer ♪ in their use of 'Peter' rather than 'Grimes'. In 248.2 I follow  beginning 'when' rather than 'but' as this makes explicit the moment of the action. But in 248.3 I follow ♪ in omitting 'in fragments' after 'crashes' as this is neither necessary nor safe on stage.

Line revised
I follow the later ♪ (MPRT V) which modify Slater's 'God's sake' to 'God's sake' as this reduces sibilance in singing but will still be heard as 'God's'.
The final text is Round version 5 added by hand by Slater to D.

For its original opening 252°-254°, 256°. The text is thereafter as shown except Slater has 'discretely' in 278. For Peter's original entry 362°, 364°, 366°, 369°, 371°+.

For Round version 1 d162a-d162i. For Round version 2 d122o-w. For Round version 3 469a-h. For Round version 4 469i-ad.

SD added I prefer the use of Keene's full name as found in ♪ where he is identified as the person who begins the round from F. In ♪ he is only identified in N and U. C states very freely 'Somebody starts one'.

Performance indicator This sets the tone of light-hearted animation disrupted by Peter's entry at 362.

Line variant inclusion and positioning I follow ♪. NU place Auntie's line (the only ♪ sources for it) before the round is set out.

Performance indicator All pairs of soloists and all chorus presentations of the round are sung in unison.

Punctuation variation I follow ♪ which use the contracted form 'han'fuls' to rhyme with 'canfuls' and 'panfuls'. Slater's original text, added in D, is 'hanfuls'.

Punctuation variation ♪ and ♪ have no punctuation after 'panfuls', intending the line and thought to run on to 'Bring them in sweetly', but as Britten sets the text in separate blocks necessarily as a round I have added a full point to end the block.

Layout of entries For clarity from here until 355 I depart from my usual practice that shading blocks indicate different texts sung simultaneously but a new block begins when a new sequence starts. Here I begin a new block when groups of characters have 'new' texts. But through the use of arrows I indicate where the new text dovetails the previous text, as first by Ned in 275 dovetailing 274. There is therefore a continuous displacement between the 'Bring them in sweetly' text of the round and the other texts. There is no continuous attempt to indicate how texts within a block are tiered but I chart where entries coincide at the point Peter enters the round at 362 (see note 98).

SD variation 361.1. ♪ have Slater's original from C. I prefer Britten's reading of ♪ from G because in his setting Peter does not make the others stop. The presentation of the round becomes fragmented between the voices (363, 365 etc.) but begins to grow bolder in expression from 373. The text remains intact. However, it is notable that unlike d155-8 where Peter simply adds his verse to those of the others, this is a full scale confrontation.

Performance indicators Here and in the following lines I make explicit Britten's dynamic markings of the music. The contrasts emphasize the variation between Peter and the Borough folk. Peter is loud or very loud. The community is often quiet but periodically marshalls its strength, finally to overcome Peter at 386. Its fluctuation between very quiet, getting louder and loud echoes the pattern of storm waves, for instance suddenly emerging at 373, then gently swelling in the distance at 377.

Tiering of entry I indicate this extensively on the previous page, showing how Peter's entry cuts across the other texts being presented at the same time.
The shading breaks here because, although the chorus follows Peter without a break, for the first time since different texts are not presented simultaneously.

SD variation

have Slater's original from C, referring to Peter's version of the round from as a continuous text preceding the SD.

♫ from G make more explicit that Peter is in the music, by the community's will, overpowered, just as from 123.2 Boles was physically overpowered. In his setting Britten has Peter silent when the round is now resumed in its greatest musical complexity with more individual entries at shorter intervals.

Layout of entries

The increasing simultaneity of different text presentation and number of entries by different characters means it is necessary to present shading blocks line by line, for instance the chorus text is sung at the same time as are being delivered by other specified characters. For clarity I have anchored every block on the chorus line and clarified that by using a bold type but used staggering to indicate where individual characters enter at different points in relation to the previous line.

A unique line (i.e. 427 + 437), added by Britten in G, this line only occurs here and in ♪.

Tiering of entry

Balstrode's 'Oh' of occurs at the minim rest between Bol's 'pletely' and 'pack' of 446.

Elliptical line

The first instance of a line (end of 446 + 453) of which the conclusion previously stated (419) is now omitted as images become increasingly compressed. Another element of this compression is the confusion between the original 'Pull them' (261) and the associated direction 'Pack them' (originally at 277). Further instances of this compression will soon be found, e.g. 456, 457.

Unique lines added by Britten in G, only occur here and in ♪. They continue the process of compression of images (see note 104) and extend it by widening the reference to a universality of those who know.

SD variation

I include the opening, 'At the climax of the round', from omitted in ♪ as this is obvious in the score, but thereafter have followed Britten's revision from G which, while close to Slater's (see crit. app. 469.1-3) is more precise in language and denotation of characters.

Music indicator

clarifies that this is the first reminder of the storm, with the appearance of the storm motif, since 141.3. A continuous line in the right margin until the end of the scene indicates that this storm is from now to be ever a presence, to achieve its fullest force after everyone's closing line (489.1).

Line added in D Britten suggests adding 'We're all so cold'. He was right to judge that would be improved by a preparatory line but the final version, also in D, is Slater's better revision. But Slater forgot this, not including it in HN. Britten added it by hand to H before the SD (472.1-2), a position I follow, albeit in QU it comes after the SD which is not in ♪.

Line revised from C by Slater. When May disappeared and this line (d165) was reallocated to Boles the vestige of sorority at its ending in addressing 'Ellen' by name was changed to the impersonal and disparaging 'woman'.
304
2.1 Notes

Music indicator by Britten links the interlude and opening lines. I add ‘Ellen’s opening song’ for clarification.

SD revised CDE H specify the scene but the time lapse indicator does not occur until J and is only otherwise found in subsequent . The inclusion of standing villagers does not occur until M and is only found in U without ‘in a group’. The idea of the street being deserted till Ellen and John enter occurs in CDE H but their walking in the opposite direction to the villagers and therefore isolated from them does not occur until M. This also prepares physically and psychologically for Ellen and John not going to church.

The SD regarding latecomers (0.7) occurs in C, prefaced by ‘Service is beginning in church, the organ playing a voluntary’, this latter deleted in E, and there are specified additions to the generalized latecomers, ‘May Sanders, Dick and Polly Boles’. But these three were soon removed from the opera and the organ voluntary repositioned. The earliest ♪ (F) has ‘church-goers hurry across the stage into the church porch’ after the SD for Ellen and John’s entrance but the revision from M, concentrating on the movement of the villagers in opposition to Ellen and John rather than the timing, is more meaningful.

Arguably, therefore, this latecomers SD, found in all , is otiose, though its retention emphasizes that Ellen is theorizing about church in her song rather than actively participating. The significant latecomer, Mrs. Sedley, does not appear until 55.1.

Music indicator by Britten. The chorus ‘off’ is the congregation in the church service. Solo (Ellen) and chorus are linked from line 12.

A song rewritten Slater’s original text ( 1a-8a) is a simple aubade whose words are well suited to the contrast of calm following the storm and Ellen speaking to John. Apart from one minor alteration ( 5a) Britten set this text. But it seems that during the rehearsals Britten decided this text was not imposing enough for the ‘bright, florid’ impression he wished to create (0.8) and a revised version appears in J ( 1b-8b), published for the first run of performances in June 1945. The gently cadenced poeticity of its first stanza suggests Slater supplied this revision, as does the more abstruse second stanza, a convoluted way of saying man should give thanks for safety after the storm. It is not surprising, therefore, that this second version was itself revised, one suspects by Britten, to the straightforward final one (1-8), which first appears in K, albeit at the cost of clumsy scansion of 7. Britten adapted his already composed music to fit this new text. Slater uses his original version in his edition (N) with minor changes ( 1a, 4a, 5a, 7a).

In E Britten added here ‘The organ starts a voluntary in church, off.’ I follow the version in ♪ first found in G which more precisely places Ellen’s actions which occur at the end of the preceding SD in . It is more appropriate that she sits down just before she decides not to go to church and that she takes up her knitting, an activity in the earliest  but never specified in ♪. I therefore add this detail here, also her position by a boat, again from the earliest  but not in ♪. As the setting is as in 1.1, there is a boat on stage (see 1.1 note 1).

Line revised Slater’s original in C, ‘Shall we forget this is a Sunday’, was changed by Britten in D to the final form.

Line revised The line originally began ‘And’ which was changed to ‘But’ in M.
SD added by Britten in ♪. I use the final version from G.

SD variation
I prefer the version used by Britten in all ♪. That in  from E, ‘Hymn start starts in church’, does not signal the end of the church bell ringing. Originally (C) the hymn did not start until after Ellen’s 37.

Line revised in DE Britten added ‘the’, as in the hymnal, to Slater’s original line in C.

Alternation of chorus and recitative
I represent this as in ♪ and experienced in the opera, indicating by arrows how the recitative entries dovetail the presentation of the lines of the hymn. Among  U only presents the hymn lines indented. In the earliest sources (CDE) the first hymn was placed after Ellen’s recitative (i.e. after 37) but in setting the music Britten had the hymn at the start.

Line added sketched by Britten in source D, still with the ending ‘John?’, as an alternative to Slater’s original in C, ‘Nothing to say, John?’. In E Britten adopted his sketched line and followed it with the original but omitted the naming of ‘John’.

Lines revised
Slater’s original (C) read ‘Then shall I/Guess what your life was like, and you/Tell me if I go wrong?’. In DE Britten changed ‘I go’ to ‘I’m’ (+H). In F he changed the text after ‘like’ to the somewhat smug ‘you’ll see I’m right!’ (+GI). In J it was toned down to ‘and you/See if I’m right.’ (+QN). The removal of ‘and you’ from this version from L produced the final text.

Lines revised
Slater’s original (C) read ‘I believe/You liked your workhouse and its grave/Empty look’. Britten changed ‘believe’ to ‘think’ from F but the original is found in all  except U. Britten changed ‘and’ to ‘with’ in E though it is not found in ♪ until L.

Lines revised
Slater (+FGHI N) read ‘You liked to be/A lonely fellow in your misery?’. The final text occurs from J.

Lines added
Slater added this chorus stanza (26, 29, 32, 35) in D, Britten in E.

Line revised
C read ‘When I became a school teacher’. In DE Britten deleted ‘school’ (+H). The final text occurs from J. In N Slater has a different revision, ‘I thought of school as bleak and bare’.

Lines revised
Slater’s original (C) of what became 33-34, 36 read ‘Then found it the sort of place/I daresay like your workhouse,/Where the woes ...’ Again the final text occurs from J but in N Slater retains the original with an extra word, ‘your own workhouse’.

Stanza deleted
C has here:

I have good hopes because of that
Of you and Peter, John. I sit
Watching you both in your hut,
Thinking.

These two, apart, have lost
All the meanness of the rest.

The reason for Ellen’s optimism, however, is not well established but the following lines are clearer.

This positive view of Peter with John, as well as critique of the Borough
community, is an apt contrast to the prevailing impression and it is a pity Britten deleted the stanza in DE.

The alternation creates some symbolic juxtapositions, e.g. between 39-40 and 41, emphasized by the SD at 40.1.

The hymn text was originally and incorrectly specified in CD as 'Hymn continues, second verse'. In EJNQ this is corrected to 'Hymn continues, third verse' but Britten only sets the first half of the verse. U has '...' before 'Amen'. I omit this because it suggests part of the hymn has been sung in the meantime, for which insufficient time has elapsed. I correct 38 as in the hymnal: the final word should be 'o'er' to rhyme with 'more' in 41.

This first occurs in L. It is not in JNQ.

The final text first appears in J. I use ♪'s two syllable form of 'Ev'ry' as set by Britten.

I use the fullest version, U. ♪ have no SD here but '(in the Church)' with the SP 'RECTOR'.

Slater's original and all switch from CHORUS to CONGREGATION though the group is the same. I follow the specification of Britten's setting in ♪ that the Rector begins, the congregation repeat 'Almighty' (51), then both Rector and congregation intone the confession.

Slater's C read: Does this sound like interferences? (+HN), a clumsy line. The final text first appears in J, ♪'s K.

Switched from CHORUS to CONGREGATION in ♪'s HN. I use ♪'s two syllable form of 'Ev'ry' as set by Britten.

This SD is only in JNQ. Slater's C read 'prayer' rather than 'church service' and is found in all until U; but this does not account for the Benedicite which begins at 91.
In D Slater added 'Mrs. Sedley arrives very late for church' at approximately 69.
The final version is first found in M but no other  until U. I have placed it as in ♪, allowing for more to be heard by Mrs. Sedley. The SD is necessary as it provides 'the evidence' of which Mrs. Sedley speaks at 495.

Lines added
This part of the confession, in grim alternation with Ellen’s speech, is specified in Britten’s setting in ♪ but omitted from all . I have placed it before the preces (65-8) but I follow ♪ which place it before them.

SD revised and variant positioning
Slater’s SD in C reads ‘She undoes the neck of his shirt’ (+ sv: HJNQ).

A fuller version, ‘Ellen undoes the neck of the boy’s shirt’, first appears in F but not in  until U. All  place the SD after the preces (65-8) but I follow ♪ which place it before them. I add ‘kneels and’ to the SD to balance Ellen’s action with the SD at 90.1 when Ellen rises to do up John's shirt. It is fitting that she kneels, both as a caring, unthreatening action and in juxtaposition to the congregation’s kneeling.

SD and layout of lines revised
Britten’s added SD in CD here was ‘(The Chorus answers)’ with the lines headed ‘In the Church’. Thus the contrast between the church service affirmation and John’s secrecy is pointed. For SP I follow  which set a side the responses as an act by Rector and Choir as distinct from the rest of the service in which the entire congregation is involved, a distinction which Britten for practical purposes ignored as ♪ use the term ‘chorus’ throughout. Britten sets the preces (65-8) in the usual manner with versicle (65, 67) intoned by the priest and response (66, 68) made by the choir. I follow this layout of ♪ rather than U which places versicles and responses together with the SP ‘RECTOR AND CHOIR’.

Lines revised
Slater in C read:
The weal's bad. Has it broken the skin?
No .... Well .... We've begun.

This is derived from d94-d95 which describe the weal as 'ugly' but do not have the qualification 'No'. In D Slater deleted 'The weal's bad', replaced it with 'A bruise ...' and put 'Has ... No' in parenthesis. In E Britten deleted the parenthesis. In D E Britten changed 'We've' to 'It's'.

SPs, layout and extent of lines revised
As in the preces (see note 3), I follow Britten’s alternation of priest and choir at the beginning of the doxology as in his setting in ♪ rather than U which places the lines together under the SP ‘RECTOR AND CHOIR’ while earlier  simply have the SP ‘CHOIR (in church)’. Slater’s original and all  except U supply the entire doxology but Britten’s setting and ♪ finish at ‘now ...’ (74), omitting ‘and ever shal l be world without end. Amen’.

Line revised
Slater’s original reads ‘What the roots’, Britten revised this in D to the final reading but queries this. It is revised without query in E.
Peter Grimes Notes

2.1

Lines revised

Let this day then be to us
Sun and sea and quietness

The final reading is first found in L. Slater's original 84 was 'Glitters like love'
s
Britten marks 'love's' to be set as two syllables, which is why the final text from K, 'love', is set thus.

Lines rewritten

Slater's C is:

Death's tremendous wings are less
Frightening than shapelessness.

Life childishly needs holidays
Like God needs praise.

These lines are derived from d116-d119 and in C were placed after 78 following Ellen's aria opening stanza and are also there in N, which indicates they remained Slater's preference.

The lines were moved by Britten to this point in D. The rewrite is first found in Slater's hand in H, where it replaces his original but with, instead of 88-

Drown them in unfathomed sleep
Like ocean's deep.

In J these have become:

After storm there comes a sleep
Oceans deep.

The final reading is first found in L 41 SD revised K L have 'Ellen does up the boy's shirt again. '

The final version, first in M, indicates Ellen must have stooped or knelt to undo the neck of John's shirt (see note 32).

Lines added and deleted

Slater's original begins with 92. In D E Britten added 91, the opening verse of the Benedicite. After 92 Slater's original has 'O ye Stars of Heaven, bless ye the Lord'. This verse was deleted by Britten in D E and never set by him but remains in HJNQ.

SD variant positioning and form

I follow ♪ for the placing of Peter's entry and accordingly the music indicator ▀ which precedes it. In  the entry is placed after 95.

Slater's original SD in C is simply 'Peter Grimes enters (+H). His excitement is first flagged in F and from where he has come in L. His singing entry coincides with the Choir singing 'Darkness'.

Shading and delivery of text indicates the simultaneous presentation of texts. While there has been dovetailing of text between the church service and Ellen outside from 12, it is only from Peter's entry that the texts appear in more competing fashion at the same time. I present the m as they appear in ♪ and are received in performance.  present the text in blocks of choir and soloist passages.

Line revised

The two sentences of Slater's original in C, 'I need his help. There is a shoal (+H)' were presented in reverse order by Britten from F. The final reading first appeared in reverse order in J but in its final order in M.
Line revised
Slater's original in C and all  except N omit the second 'ye' from this line but Britten's setting from F includes it.

Lines revised
Slater's C (+D -I) read 'I can see/The signs before another eye'. J changes this to 'I can find/The shoals to which the rest are blind' (+NQ). The final version is first found in K and in U.

Lines added
In DE Britten added 112 -21, 124, 126, 128, 131-2, 135-6, 138, 140 (see note 55), 142, 144-5 (without s).

Line revised
Britten's original and all  except U read 'O all ye Children' but the Benedicite text and all ♫ read 'O ye Children'.

Line replaced
Slater's original (C) is 'O ye spirits and souls of the righteous bless ye the Lord', Benedicite verse 30 in the Book of Common Prayer, but Britten changed this in DE to the final reading, verse 29, probably because it was shorter.

Line revised
Slater's original has verse 31 complete, 'O ye holy and humble men of heart, bless ye the Lord' but in DE Britten deleted 'men of heart'.

Line revised
Slater's original has verse 32 complete, 'O Ananias, Azarias and Misael, bless ye the Lord' but in DE Britten deleted the 'O' and in setting the music the 'and'. I follow the text of ♫; all  retain the 'and'.

Lines added
Slater's original and all  in error omit the opening of the doxology, set in ♫.

Line added
as note 53.

Lines revised
This final version of what in  is one line (138 + 140) occurs from J. It is softer than Britten's original added in D-E, 'What boy I have, body & soul—He's mine!' (+HI).

Alternation of choir and recitative
The alternation of 140 and 141 emphasizes Peter's view of John as his property, while that of 138 and 139 + 141 points out that this is no more than established social practice.

Music repetition
 have Britten's added text in D, 'Hush, Peter, Hush!' at 142. I present Britten's layout, incorporating expansion and alternation with the choir, when he set the text.

Music indicator
I restore this from CD-E, though never formally numbered as a section and deleted in DE, as it charts a difference in the intended nature of the music here from the exchange between Peter and Ellen from 99-145, effectively a move from recitative secco to recitative arioso culminating in a brief simultaneous expression, duet, from 175-80. This is the only snatch of duet that Peter and Ellen have after that at the end of the Prologue (0.193-211).

Line revised
Originally 'Peter, your unforgiving work' (C DE +H), changed by Britten in F to 'This unforgiving work'. The final reading first appeared in L but not in  until U.

In the meantime  offer hybrid versions, 'Peter, your unrelenting work' in JQ, 'Peter, this unforgiving work' in N.
What aim, what future does it mark?
What peace will your hard profits buy?

In DE Britte deleted 'does it mark?'

Buy me a home, buy me esteem
Buy me freedom from the ache
Of grinning at a gossip's tale

has Peter toiling only for himself. Britten's change to the final version in D has Pete seeking a future with Ellen. The deletion in DE of 'a' in the third line and change to 'tales' in K was not followed by the change to 'gossips'. This change I have therefore made which is consistent with 'gossips' talk in 182.

In 150 'esteem' was changed to 'respect' from K.

Line rewritten
Slater's original, 'And buy me tolerance for your sake' has Peter shifting focus from the preceding lines to an awareness of the effect of his situation on Ellen. But Britten deleted this in DE replacing it with 'Believe, believe, we'll buy our fate' (+H), which continues the changes to the preceding lines so that the focus is on Peter and Ellen as a couple. In Britten's original version, sketched in F, this line ended 'I'll buy my fate', modified to 'I'll buy our fate' in F (+GI). But Slater's original (+KN), is preferable because it envisages Peter and Ellen acting together. The final, more general and platitudinous version of this line first occurs in J and ♪.

Music indicator by Britten in CD. 'Ostinato' indicates persistent repetition. The one note Britten uses is f (sopranos and altos), f (tenors and basses).

Alternation of choir and recitative
Through his writing of the previous line Britten strikingly points the juxtaposition of two sets of belief here, those of Peter (150-53) and those of the community at worship (154-8). Slater's original has the SD 'In Church the creed' but this is not found after E and not necessary. Slater's text, however, was not that of the Apostles Creed but 'Believe in God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost'. To this in E Britten adds 'and in Jesus Christ his only Son ...', the version also in H. In all ♪ Britten sets the final version which is the opening of the Apostles Creed, U also has this. JNQ have a shortened version, finishing at 'Son'.

SD variant positioning and form
Having made the point Britten soon dispenses with the liturgy. I have placed Slater's SD not at the ellipsis (158) where Slater places it but at the point in ♪ where Britten, instead of SD has 'poco a poco morendo' (little by little dying away).

Line revised
Slater's d171, also in C, 'Young stranger got his bruise & weals', was changed by him in D and by Britten in E to 'The youngster got his weals and bruise'. The final version, limiting the injury to just one bruise which might be accidental, first appears in J.

SD often absent
This SD movingly clarifies a moment of tenderness on Ellen's part even as she begins to articulate her doubts, only to be quickly rebuffed by Peter. As the action is necessary because of 166, it is strange that it does not occur until K and is not in any ♪.

Line revised
Slater's original, 'Peter–we're wrong in all we planned', was modified by Britten in D (+GH) to 'Peter–we're wrong in what we planned to do'. This early
realization by Ellen makes for a barrage of negative statements in the following lines, but better was the revision to the final text from J which fixes this moment when Ellen begins to question and plan and then, after further questioning, to confirm her doubts at 184-5.

SD in one source only in U, probably added to point the contrast of 167's SD, in all ♪ from C but no ♪. The latter make the contrast by having horns and Peter deliver 166 fortissimo, then in 167 horns 'piano ma distinto' (soft but distinct) and Peter 'dolce semplice' (sweetly and simply).

70 SD often absent First in M and not in ♪ until U.

71 Line revised Slater's C, 'We were mistaken' (+H), as originally at 164, was a negative statement, here also revised to the final text from J and continuing Ellen's questioning approach.

72 SD often absent It first appears in M and not in any ♪, yet provides useful preparation for Auntie's entry at 189, otherwise only introduced by the immediately preceding SD.

73 SD variation This SD is present in all ♪. In ♪ there is instead the music indicator 'con forza' (vehemently) which has less of the suggestion of petulance than 'angrily'.

74 Punctuation variation I use exclamation marks as found in ♪ except F. These better express Peter's petulant anger than the milder querying of the question marks of ♪.

75 Source of lines? Slater does not include these in N which suggests the y were added by Britten.

76 Positioning of lines revised Until U ♪ placed these lines after 175-6 which immediately followed 169-70, but the lines are here presented as in all ♪.

77 SD often absent First in K, it provides useful preparation for Ned's entry from 191 and Boles' from 194, otherwise only introduced by the immediately preceding SD.

78 Lines revised Originally 175 read 'We were mistaken' and, as originally at 169, therefore a negative statement, here also revised to the final text from J and continuing Ellen's questioning approach (see note 71), albeit in this case the punctuation closing 176 was not corrected to a question mark until M.

79 Lines revised and punctuation variation Originally 178-80 in C read: The tale's told? But who's guilty That we failed? These were replaced by the final version of 178 by Britten in DE. The final version of 179-80 appears from J except that, as with 84, 177-8 are not in N (cf. note 75). As at note 74 I use exclamation marks as found in ♪ rather than the question marks of ♪.

80 Line revised The original end of the line was 'gossips tale', echoing 152. The final version first appears in L and is not found in ♪ until U. All ♪ incorrectly read 'gossip's'.

81 Line revised Originally 'With all the shoals from all the seas'. Britten changed the ending to 'out the sea' in DE (+ I) but 'shoals' was not changed to 'fish' until M. In the mean time a hybrid reading, 'With all the fish from all the seas' is found in JNQ.
This line is not present in Slater's original, but in DE. Britten added the line 'We were mistaken when we hoped' (+ I), echoing but now decisively reversed from, as revised, the earlier 'Were we mistaken' questions (169, 175). The final version first appears in J but KL offer a hybrid version, 'to have hoped'. The final version echoes 175 and emphasizes a make-believe rather than simply optimistic nature of Peter and Ellen's relationship.

In F Britten changed 'should' to 'must' but in G keeps the original version. The final version first appears in J.

I follow the form and ordering of the SD as in ♪ as it is clearer than . Britten writes Peter's cry into the score, the 'Ah!' as a crossed headnote on gi (fi in GK). The specifying 'work basket' makes the symbolism more apparent: Peter is rejecting Ellen's industry to create a better life. The original version of the SD was 'He cries out as if in agony. Then strikes her. The basket falls. The boy screams.' But from C Britten removed John's scream, thereby not weakening the solitary effect of Peter's cry and of John's scream in 2.2 when he falls to his death.

As earlier at 64, through rewriting of lines Britten strikingly points the juxtaposition of two affirmations: that of the Community at worship (187) and that of Peter (188), 'So be it!' being the English form of 'Amen'. But neither line was in Slater's version in C which has:

```
PETER
Now we'll see, young stranger come
Where the road leads. Young stranger, home.
```

The first line is his original in d190, the second a softening of d191, 'Who holds the whip.' In D Slater suggests:

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I'll find the way alone.
```

```
<Now we'll see The where roads end>
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Now alone for ever
I am alone then
–
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```
I shall succeed alone
Alone I'll find
```

Some anticipation of the distraught rambling of Peter's madness in 3.2 is evident here. In D Britten queried all these lines but added:

```
To Hell then
—
And God have mercy on me!
```

And he adds a note 'Climax of gradual crescendo from 'I believe in God' '. When he came to set the text Britten did not use a crescendo but Peter uses the same one note ostinato, fi, on his 'So be it!' as that of the choir's 'I believe' (154). And there is no doubt that this is the climax, the pivotal point, of the scene. The final version of the text is the revision by Crozier in E and used by Britten in G though he uses his D revision in F. All other ♪ and  have the final version except I which has a unique reading, 'One will against a thousand! (in the BPF copy 2-9500683 but not the British Library copy H2472c). Of  only U has the 'Amen.'
action is implied and Peter driving John before him becomes the action with which he leaves the stage in 2.1 and enters it in 2.2. The division between Peter and Ellen is also highlighted by the wording of this version: Peter feels angry but Ellen is distressed. Their going separate ways is in grim contrast to their going out together at the end of the Prologue.

The SD variation (188.1-2) is more bland though it does have the advantage of showing John inclined to rush off in a panic. ♪GIKL more colourfully read 'The Boy runs out along the cliff. Peter follows grimly' but this is confusing the setting of 2.1 and 2.2. The town beach of 2.1 is not on a cliff.

SD variation (188.3-4). I use the version in the ♪ from M which here takes account of the useful preparation made by the SDs added earlier (see notes 72, 77). The original version is less practical as it requires several neighbours not in church to be seen watching. ♪FGIKL remove these.

Pronunciation indicator Britten set 'squand'ring' as two syllables.

SP variation and the line itself Originally (C-E) for Ned alone. When Britten set the words he had Auntie dovetailing him on his sustained cry 'Grimes'. Similarly at 197 Auntie begins the cry and is then dovetailed by Ned and then Boles. Britten's setting changes the nature of the saying which is the only direct quotation from Crabbe's Peter Grimes story (Borough, Letter XXI, 78). It is no longer something spontaneously invented by Ned but a familiar expression used by the community.

Line revised Originally (C) 'Then your God's a madman's craze', the opening three words changed by Slater in D+E to 'O your creed's' (+H) then in D deleted and the final version there produced by Slater.

Originally (C-E) for Ned alone. In E Britten adds 'with' (i.e. Auntie). When Britten set the words this time he had Auntie beginning with the cry of 'Grimes' which is the signal for Ned and then Boles to join her. Among ♪ only U corrects the SP to 'ALL' while ♪ specify the three characters singing.

SP and line revised Originally, as at notes 89 and 91, for Ned alone, but changed in D+E to the final SP by Britten, even before he set the words. The original line reads 'clerk' instead of 'all', a revision made by Britten in F and thereafter in all ♪ but not found in ♪ until U. A repeat by 'All' of 'Grimes is at his exercise' following this line was deleted by Britten in DE.

SD revised Originally (CE) 'In Church the Benediction. Then congregation emerges.' This was deleted by Britten in D but retained by all ♪ until U. In FGIKL Britten supplies another version placed before 'Doctor' at 207.1, 'In church the voluntary starts - & the congregation gradually emerges.' The final SD first appears in K. It is clear why Britten chose to ignore the formalities at the end of the service. The Benediction, being a blessing, would be said or sung followed by an Amen, said or sung. Britten had already featured an Amen as a dramatic highlight at 187-88 and would not wish to dilute its impact by a weaker repetition.

Tiering of entry I represent the individual entries as in ♪.

SD revised 'coming' was added in U. In D Britten had suggested 'Mrs Nabob comes first' (cf. 225.1) with her 'I've a clue' but this is held back till 495. The SD is not found in any ♪.
Peter Grimes

Notes

2.1

Lines revised

Originally (C) 'I heard loud voices during psalms/Grimes's was one, and one more calm'.

D H begin 231 'One was Grimes's'. Its final, less sibilant, version is first produced by B written in E. The final version of 230 first appears in F.

97 SD deleted Originally ' (to a fisherwoman as she comes out)' and in all  until U but not in any ♪. It seems that Britten decided it was more straightforward for Boles to address Mrs. Sedley.

98 Line added by Britten in F. Its absence from C-EHN confirms that it is not by Slater.

99 Lines added by Slater in D. Here the first line reads 'Grimes, the fisherman, is skilled' and the fourth 'All that slander can invent'. The final version of the first line occurs from K but that of the fourth from F. The latter is not a good revision as it breaks up what was otherwise a succession of iambic tetrameters, but Britten in setting the text to a rising chromatic scale clearly only wanted one syllable here. A garbled reading, 'the slander', occurs in GI K LM. The lines are not present in H.

100 Lines reallocated and music indicator

From G Britten stipulated reduced numbers in 239-41, a direction only found in ♪. I clarify his division of the reduced chorus through the use of voice parts in turn in association with the music repetition not shown in .

102 SP revised

Originally (C) for Boles alone but in DE Britten allocated to Auntie, Boles and Ned. This is consistent with 91 and 92.

103 Music indicators and repetition

I follow ♪ in showing the division of the chorus through the use of different voice parts in turn and the music repetition not shown in . The latter have the chorus lines after the SD at 250-1 but they are better placed before as the SD refers to the 'couplets' from 251. I add the indicators 'whispering' (e.g.  244) to reflect Britten's pianissimo setting of the words and 'boldly' (e.g.  246) to reflect his contrasting forte setting. The whispering activity recalls that of the chorus in the Prologue (0.4 8 2).

This indicator is more accurate than the SD 'CHORUS (over all)' used  {after 273} in  which misleadingly suggests all the chorus lines dominate those of the soloists which they do not when some are delivered pianissimo.

104 SD often absent

This original SD is found in all  but among ♪ only in FG. With an eye to practical stagecraft the F version adds 'of the stage' after 'centre'. It might have been equally practical to have deleted 'the village green' as this requires some set design mid stage right and may explain the absence of the SD from the later ♪. Here 'village' is used in the sense of a self-contained district within a town (OED n.1.e).

105 Music indicator by Britten

In CD exactly describes how he set the lines. I follow ♪ in showing how the chorus ostinato is interspersed among the soloists' comments rather than  which simply give the chorus lines as 'What is it? What do you suppose?/Grimes is at his exercise' in effect before 251 and after 272 and 289.

106 Line rewritten

by Slater in D from his original 'Censoring a private vice' in C. The original is otherwise found in EH and revised in F.

107 Line rewritten

by Slater in D from his original 'Too indulgent privacies' in C. This was his second revision, having first in D made the change to 'Too incautious enterprise'.
The original is only otherwise found in EH and the original is revised to the final reading in F.

SP revised C allocated to 'FISHERMAN', changed to 'FISHERWOMAN' in DE, as is appropriate given the following line. The allocation to 'mezzo soprano' is first specified in E. I have used the form 'A FISHERWOMAN' found in all ♪ from G. An original subheading '(chorus)', signifying '(from the chorus)' (cf. 105), resulted in the incorrect form 'FISHERWOMEN (chorus)' in JNQ.

Line revised by Britten in DE from the original opening 'Fishing is'. Again he ignores Slater's iambic tetrameter as at 99, this time in favour of a more colloquial delivery. Britten's revision is found in all ♪ but is not made in any ♪ after E.

Lines reallocated C was 'If a man's work can't be made/Decent, he should stay ashore.' This was revised by Britten to the final version in DE (+H) but Slater kept the contraction 'can't' in N.

Lines repositioned and SDs deleted I follow the practice of ♪ in not having a SD here. It (277) is only found in ♪. It had purpose in C when Balstrode's remark in the final text at 291 + 294 was followed immediately by Ned's remark which is at 360-61 in the final text, where it was moved in DE.

Lines revised and reallocated C reads MRS. NABOB Souls? – Ah what a weight is this Pastoral authority. RECTOR What subversive faith is this Which gives souls equality!

The final version, suppressing the original rhyme, and reversed allocation of lines was made by Britten in D and Slater in E except that 'oh' replaced 'ah' as it does in all later ♪. But Britten retained 'ah' in ♪ and so I have. Britten set 'dangerous' as two syllables so I have used ♪'s 'dang'rous'. These two pairs of lines originally followed what became finally two pairs by Balstrode (291 + 294) and Ned (relegated to 366-7).

Music repetition 296-299 reverses the practice of 197-200. The repetition is contracted to focus on the one cry 'Grimes' which Britten sets with increasing dynamic intensity which I have conveyed by adding SDs (297-9). This contraction will recur more chillingly at 3.1.345.

Musi

SD variation Slater's SD from C (299.1) is in all ♪, F {sv} and G but not IKL. From M ♪ have the SD (299.2). I have adapted the opening of this to create my text 299.2 as it explains Boles's 'No! I will speak..!'
I use F, the earliest form in ♪, which suggests sections of the chorus in turn, pressing round Boles. "HORUS (crowding round Boles)"

The villagers cluster round Boles.

This line was in C assigned to Balstrode but transferred to Auntie in DE and is also assigned to Auntie in H. It began as Auntie's in F but was changed back to Balstrode where it otherwise remained.

Lines revised and music repetition

C and E's 'O this prentice system/Is uncivilised, unchristian' (+H), was changed to the final version in D.

Performance indicator

intended to take the sting out of what is otherwise a rather callous remark for Balstrode to make. Originally (d237-8) it was assigned to Ned and is a quip more typical of his character; but the chief purpose of the line is to debunk Boles's criticism.

Music repetition and line repositioned

The repetition creates an affirmation of the sense of community to justify the aggression. Slater's full line in C (in effect 312-13) was placed here in DE, having originally been paired with 302.

Line added

This interjection, not found in ♪, was added by Britten when he set the text.

Line revised

C reads 'Is he there or is he not', the reading of all ♪ until U but the final reading is in all ♪.

Line added and repositioned

Britten added this line in E and repositioned it here when he set the text. It is in its original place after 320 in ♪.

Lines revised

The final version is Britten's revision in D. Slater's original in the draft was 'To ignore/Evils growing at your door?/Growing like your fancy flowers' (d265-67). EH do not have 'Your business' in 323 and H does not have 'Evils' in 325 (but cf. 127).

I use Britten's punctuation in ♪ which is more emphatic than that of ♪ (¶ 323-5).

Line added

by Britten in E. H only has 'Evils/Evils!'

SD variation

I use the more detailed ♪. The established ♪' version, MPRT V, placed at 325.1, is 'Ellen comes to collect her things.'

Line readdressed

Slater gave this line in d271 to 'MAY'. In C Slater reallocated it to 'CHORUS' but in D E Britten reallocated it again to 'BOLES AND CHORUS'. When he set the text the line was given just to Boles in ♪, then (331-3) taken up by chorus though ♪, without the music repetitions, mark this line 'BOLES AND CHORUS'. Britten's manner of setting is the same at 334-6. In C 334 is allocated to 'CHORUS'. In D E Britten gives it to 'BOLES AND CHORUS' which is how it is marked in ♪.

Music repetition

The involvement of the Borough community is gradual and tiered, with a crescendo through every cry of 'Ellen Orford', so the effect is that of the community being marshalled to condemn Ellen, an anticipation of their more brutal condemnation and shouts of 'Peter Grimes' at the end of 3.1.
In D & C, Britten added 'chorus' to 'boles' and deleted the Rector's line. After this, Boles's line was transferred in D to 339.

SD variation KMPRTV have the more pragmatic 'going to Ellen'. There is no SD in the earlier ♪.

Line repositioned in D at the same time as Slater's line in C here, given to the Rector, 'Tell us everything you know', was deleted.

Music repetition I add performance indicators to show how Britten varies the dynamic of the chorus here to create the effect of a resonating clamour, ending in whisper.

Music indicator variation 347.1, shows how Britten changed his mind in structuring this section of the scene.

Lines revised Slater's C (348a-353ab) seems unduly defeatist for an Ellen who defended her actions so boldly in 1.1.130-141. The revision in D is both purposeful and humane. 350 originally read 'woman' which was revised to 'friend'.

SD added I adapt Britten's '(Interruption)'. It emphasizes that the community, beginning with the Rector, is eager to cast judgment even before Ellen's defense. I therefore continue adding the SD as the various community members further interrupt.

Lines revised The final version first appears in K, Britten replacing Slater's original: 'We planned this time the boy/Should be cared for;'. Either version implies previous negligence.

Lines added with Ellen's following lines repositioned These are the first of a sequence of lines added by Britten in D which, when set with repetitions, became 358-488. The only lines originally in C were 354-5 and 368-9. Again, this sequence of lines interrupts Ellen's defense and I reproduce this interruption as in Britten's setting though place Ellen's lines (356-7, 360-61, 364-5) together. In U the first appearance of the following ensemble lines are bracketed together to denote simultaneous presentation. The order in which they appear in U is 360-61, 364-5, 358-9, 362-3, 366-7, 370-71, 372-3, 374-5, 384, 368-9, 376 + 385, 445, 433+ 445.

Lines revised This final version first appears in D, replacing C, 'Danger and hardship would be/Softened therefore–', the first line of which appears in D-I as 'So danger and hardship,'. JN read 'To save him from hardship/Too hard to bear'. I have followed Britten's setting of the text which transfers the 'and' after 'sore,' in 361 in ♪, to the beginning of 364 where it cuts across Boles's 'murder' in 363. This 'and' is not present in JNQ.

Lines revised This final version first appears in D, replacing C, 'Having his clothes mended and/Meals regular'. In N Slater has a hybrid version, 'Mending his clothes and giving his/Meals regular.'
I have adopted 'NIECES' as at 70 for the reasons given there although in this case all texts have 'NIECES' except PT which read 'TWO NIECES'.

Lines repeated by Britten when he set the text. This is the first of a sequence of lines in which the words are repeated but the music, though it follows the same broad outline, is not identical. I note no further such repetitions other than by ﯙ.

These particular lines initiate the effect of making Ellen's statement just one voice battling with and disregarded by the many.

Lines contracted on repetition by Britten when he set the text. This is the first of a sequence of lines where in making the repetition Britten slightly contracted or sometimes extended the texts and music to facilitate presentation within an ensemble. In this case the words are repeated from 354-5 except Britten shortens 'worldly-wise' (354) to 'wise'. I note all such revisions.

Line contracted on repetition (cf. 146) repeating 372 with 'just' omitted.

Line added by Britten when he set the text. It is a partial recollection of 376 and an introduction of 'O hard hearts' which returns at 428.

Line contracted on repetition repeating 354 with 'worldly' omitted.

Lines contracted on repetition repeating 374-5, but with only 'this' from 374.

Line extended on repetition repeating 384 but adding an opening 'O'.

Line contracted on repetition repeating 368 with 'sick' omitted.

Line contracted and line replaced on repetition repeating 372 with 'just' omitted and replacing 373 with a new line.

Line contracted on repetition repeating 376 without its opening 'O'.

Line contracted on repetition as 150.

Line extended on repetition repeating 384 but adding an opening 'O'.

Line contracted on repetition repeating the second part of 392.

Line contracted on repetition repeating 401-2 but using only the opening word from 401 to replace that of 402. A revised version of the remainder of 401 follows at 430.

Again (cf. 157) the order of presentation of text phrases is reversed.

Line contracted on repetition repeating the beginning of 354: the whole line is repeated at 427.

Line contracted on repetition repeating only the first phrase of 392.

Line contracted on repetition repeating 395 omitting 'pity'.

Line contracted on repetition repeating the opening 2 words only of 400.

Line contracted and extended on repetition repeating 366 without its opening word, already used at 416 (cf. 158), but adding two repetitions of 'flinty'.

Line contracted on repetition repeating 398-9, omitting 'O' from 398 and 'or his' from 399.
On this usefully introduces 42.

Lines extended on repetition repeating 3, adding 'O' to the beginning of the first line.

Performance indicator applies to the word 'hold' which is to be sustained to the end of the full value of the notes to which it is set or even beyond this.

Line variation The text Britten added in DE, 'O hard, hard hearts!' was misread when the libretto was typeset as 'O Lord, hard hearts!', the reading in all ♪ from H. I present the text as set by Britten.

Line revised on repetition repeating 36 and with 'planned' changed to 'meant', possibly through confusing the line with 37 but more likely creating a hybrid line in association with it as the practice recurs (cf. 171).

Line extended on repetition repeating 44 adding a repeat of 'hard'.

Line revised on repetition repeating 368 with 'planned' changed to 'meant' (cf. 169).

Intensification of tiered entries is indicated by underlining and arrows.

The overall effect is of a community expressing and maintaining variations of principle heedless of other viewpoints and priorities. Having originally and continually been interrupted, Ellen from 442 is in an alliance which itself interrupts.

Lines reordered on repetition repeating 438-9 now with 'call it hardship' followed by 'call it danger', a reversal of the normal order of presentation which has previously occurred at 415 and 425.

Line revised on repetition repeating 441 replacing the first 3 words with 'I'.

Line extended on repetition repeating 448 adding a repeat of 'work his bones'.

Line revised on repetition repeating 449 omitting its opening word and changing its closing word.

Lines extended and reordered on repetition repeating the extended version of 451-2, with a further addition of 'call it' in the second line and reversing of the closing 2 words.

Lines contracted, reordered and extended on repetition repeating 440-41 in reverse order, placing the first word of 440 followed by 441, replacing its first 2 words by 'I' (cf. 177) as the first line and using the remainder of 440 as the second line with the final 3 words repeated.

Line repositioned This is the first time this line, originally at 355 has been attached to the line originally at 369 rather than 354.
When added by Britten in D this line and 478-88 (see 184) were for 'General ensemble'. In E this was changed to 'OMNES (without Ellen, Auntie, Balstrode)', but I follow Britten's setting of the music here and his variation for its repetition in 478-80.

Line added by Britten in D E, as was the entire section text of 477-88. They are ♪ but no ♫.

Punctuation variation
Here and at 487 I follow the ellipsis in ♪ indicating that the singers are dwelling on and considering extending the thought (which they do at 487) but also immediately readily join in the attestation of 'Murder' by the community as a whole.

SD added in MPRT V. I have added 'entrance' to clarify that Auntie and Ellen remain on stage but onlookers of the community action, as stated at 503.2.

Line revised C reads Swallow, shall we go along And interview Grimes in his home? DE have, more straightforwardly, 'Swallow, shall we go and see Grimes in his home?' The final reading, with 'hut' as the last word, appears in all ♪ but not in ♫ until U.

Lines deleted and lines repositioned C has the Rector's lines as d306-d307:
Let us go. Mrs. Sedley might come too.

After which Britten added to the draft Mrs. Sedley's lines I've the evidence. I've a clue.

In DE Britten deleted the Rector's lines, added a line for Mrs. Sedley (494) and moved Mrs. Sedley's lines to 494-5. D has the final version, E has the C version of 495, ending 'I have a clue'.

Line added and revised (497-8) added to D by Slater (but not in H). 498 reads 'your gutter', changed to 'the gutter' by Britten when he set the music and in ♫ from J.
This SD was added by Slater in D and also deleted in D with a query. I restore it because it provides useful stage business in relation to line 49, showing that Mrs. Sedley, for all her presumed authority, is as a woman treated in a fashion similar to the nieces, albeit more courteously. As the final ♪ and  versions stand her position is ambiguous. ♪ rightly remove her from the followers at 503 but imply she might be with the women of the crowd, as she with them sings the chorus from 504.  have her immediately behind Swallow and the Rector, as an honorary man. In F Britten originally set the chorus for 'All the men (except Balst{rode}) but it is set for women too from G.

Line intended for deletion Slater added it and has various versions in D, viz. Only <the> men. The women <stay> <wait> [stay!]

It was marked for deletion at the same time as the SD at 193. But in E Britten adds it with a query and it slipped through thereafter. It is problematic because from the draft (d323-d340) it was always intended to have the contrast of the four individual women characters, i.e. all except Mrs. Sedley, reflecting at the end of the scene on the foolishly impulsive actions of men. That contrast is weakened when the women in the community are as headstrong as the men, e.g. all of them except Ellen and Auntie at 482. While 49 as a line survived it was virtually ignored in Britten's setting because the chorus of 504-16, unlike its continuation in 2.2, includes women's voices. We are therefore expected to imagine that the women follow the individual men characters and men of the Borough only to the edge of the stage and then disperse.

Lines added and revised 500-01 were added to DE by Britten, reading Carter Hobson, sound your drum change d to the final version from  J and ♪ M.

SD variation ([503.1-3]) I use Britten's version of the first sentence from F. That of  (see crit. app.) keeps Mrs. Sedley in the vanguard despite 49 and jumbles the crowd together whereas the SD added at 507 in ♪ separates the women. In the draft (d310.1-2) and CD it is the Rector who leads the procession, just as he is first to enter Peter's hut in 2.2. But from E Swallow takes the lead as befits his recent authoritative statement (500-01). The full SD appears in ♪ from M.

Performance indicator The rhythm shadows the march beat of Hobson's drum. A dotted quaver + semiquaver is its dominant feature, while Hobson's drum simultaneously has a quaver + dotted semiquaver + demisemiquaver.

Originally F, at 504, reads 'They start off up the hill' (i.e. 'All the men (except Balst.)'. At 505 G I have 'The procession starts off up the hill.' while K L have just 'The procession starts up the hill.' From M the SD takes the form 'The ... following' and position here. I add 'Mrs. Sedley and' plus 'to the edge of the stage' to clarify Mrs. Sedley and the women are not part of the posse.

Line and punctuation revised ([508]). Although U has the natural punctuation, Britten in his setting has a pause after the long note on 'for', so the punctuation in the later ♪ reflects this.

508-9 were revised in DE from the C original, 'Liars shiver because now/If ...'.

SD added and deleted I restore this from F because it clarifies the general exit of the women more precisely than 'The crowd has gone' of  after 516. When did they go?

SD added by Britten in G. I use its full form in GIKL which specifies Balstrode's exit. From M 'which he does' is absent. This SD is not in .
2.1

Lines revised

Originally ‘Now the whisperer stands out/To be confronted ...’. The final version first appears in DE.

SD added by Britten in G. In his setting he marks a crescendo on ‘What’s’ and a diminuendo on ‘life’. From 508 this has started to become an offstage chorus and is completely so by 515.

SD revised (516.1). I follow the emphasis of ♪ on the empty stage and the women’s state of mind.

CD read ‘Auntie, the two Nieces and Ellen remain.’ In E Britten deletes ‘the Two Nieces’, replacing them by ‘Balstrode’ and changes the following indicator ‘QUARTET’ to ‘TRIO’, then brackets for revision or cutting the rest of the scene. This intention, not followed up, is the subject of Slater’s letter (see Appendix C).

Lines rewritten and allocation revised

The original text is d323–d324.

AUNTIE

We are women. Why should we
Trouble at their clumsy ways?

The final text first appears in F. The revised opening, ‘From the gutter’, sardonically echoes Boles’s taunt in 498, while the revised ending, ‘ribaldries’, displays a more cultivated and witty facility with language than that of a guttersnipe.

Lines rewritten, allocation changed

The original text is d325–d326.

NIECES

O they always have to be
Pompous when they’re in disgrace.

The final text first appears in F.

Lines rewritten, allocation changed and then a line revised

The new lines (i.e. 526 + 528 + 531) replace d329–d330 which are also in CDE.

AUNTIE

O they always make a noise
NIECES

Babes without a comforter

526 and 531 first appear in F and in 531 I follow ♪ which read ‘smooth’ whereas ♀ from the first appearance in H have ‘soothe’. In H 526 + 531 are deleted and replaced by d329–d330, which suggests the rewrite was not Slater’s.

Lines added

530 and 532 appear from F.

Line revised

The refrain changed at this point in d333 from d327’s ‘Do we smile or do we weep’ to ‘Shall we smile or shall we weep’. This change was also followed in C–FHKQN. The refrain was made consistent from M in ♪ and U in ♀.

Lines revised

The original text is d335–d336.

Men are children when they strive
We are mothers when they weep

This revision occurs in ♪ from G but not in ♀ until Q. F has a partial revision, changing only the first word of d335 to ‘They’.
The change of refrain recurs here and is made for the first time here in ♪ and ♫.
2.2 Notes

1. Time indicator
   occurs only in ♪ where it follows the identification of the origin of Grimes's hut.

2. SD variation
   Only C is more precise about the road door as being 'R. downstage', so it seems better to allow production flexibility.

3. SD variation
   The description 'in a towering rage' was added in ♪ by Britten from G but does not occur in  until U.

4. Performance indicator
   Britten marks the semiquavers' descent from the third note on 'Go' marcato changed to a tenuto ('held') marking over the final two semiquavers on 'Go' and the crotchet on 'there'. The two 'Go there' repeats all have tenuto markings on every note. I describe the combined effect of these markings as 'insistently'.

5. Origin and repetition
   This line was added by Britten in DE. The repetition followed when he set it to music.

6. SD position and variation
   I follow ♪ which split line 2 at 'boots' with the immediate action of the SD.  place the SD after 4. I do not follow ♪ in their more brutal version of the SD, 'He throws the sea boots at the boy' (emphasis mine). The distinction recurs at 8.1 where ♪ read 'He throws the clothes at the boy.'

7. Slater's opening
   In N Peter's speech begins 'Lay off the blubbering. We can be Friends when the town's not standing by. Not happy youngster? O the salt Drowns 'e m all, we'll keep afloat. You're a landlubber this coast Depresses with its muddy ghosts Of withered trees and with the bleak Ugliness in the ebb tide's wake. You'll discover by and by What this leads to is the sea.' followed by the final text lines 2-4. This is probably the opening of Slater's draft text that has not otherwise survived. It begins with Peter more matey with John than hitherto and in a tone akin to draft text 14-23. Slater's description of the coast in its desolation is comparable to the first lines from The Borough seen by Britten (XXII, 181-2, 184-91, see Perspectives on Crabbe §1.1).

8. SD added
   As with '(lightly)' ♪ I have constructed this SD from Pears' annotation in his copy of M ♪ 6.1). The jersey should be singled out because Ellen finds it (3.1.133-6) and has an aria about it (3.1.137-52).

9. Lines revised
   by Britten in DE. Slater's 5 and 7 originally (C) began more directly 'Here's'. Slater's 6 (C), 'Stir your pins and we'll get ready', is in the tone of a comrade rather than a master and his 7, 'Here's the jersey Ellen knitted', names Ellen respectfully. Britten deemed the quarrel in 2.1 ended all respect. In N Slater retains his original texts.
Slater's continuation

In N the SD here is

He gives the boy the jersey.

It has a large red anchor embroidered on the chest.

This is a gentler treatment than other sources and more specific about the jersey. The following speech by Peter is only found in N.

We shall sail. When we cast off,

O we'll gulp the salt of life.

While we round the point you'll shout

To hide the terror in your heart.

When the gunwale dips and waves

Leap upon us from above,

And the lonely seagulls cry

You'll be frightened. So shall I

You'll discover by and by

What this ends in is the sea.

The closing couplet echoes with slight variation that of Peter's previous speech in N 7. This speech displays Peter's affinity with John's fears but at the same time his excitement for the life of the sea. It is followed by a more dramatic SD than in other sources.

The boy's head drops. He is crying again.

Peter shakes his shoulder savagely.

11 SD position and variation

I use ♪ which place John's and Peter's actions after 'I'll tear the collar off your neck' rather than ♫ 'following the SD at 8.1, so that the shaking may be viewed more in the manner of support than aggression as well as less specific than the reading of ♫ 'Peter shakes his shoulder.'

12 Britten added SD in CD. It clarifies that these are words of consolation rather than command.

13 Experimental revised texts

Two later versions of the early discourse of Peter to John (1-10) exist. For clarification I have placed diamonds □ at the end of the changed lines. The first version, in M-Goodall, reads

PETER

Go there! Go there!

Go there!

Telling stories

He throws the sea boots at the boy.

That won't help

To make it easier for me or for you.

Stop your pouting of your suffering.

Stir your pins, we must get ready!

There's the jersey that she knitted,

With the anchor that she patterned.

He throws the clothes at the boy - they fall on the floor around him.

And you must run to her with lies.

□
The boy is crying silently and Peter shakes him.

PETER
Steady! Don't take fright, boy! Stop!

The existence of these revisions suggests they were used at some performances. The second revised version, in M-Britten, reads

PETER
Go there! Go there! Go there!

Telling stories

{or alternatively}
Lies to Ellen

He throws the sea boots at the boy.
That won't help

To make it easier <to go on> for us both.
No good pouting, no good sulking.

Stir your pins, we must get ready!

There's the jersey that she knitted,
With the anchor that she patterned.

He throws the clothes at the boy—they fall on the floor around him.

I'll teach you how to tell the truth!

The boy is crying silently and Peter shakes him.

PETER
Steady! We'll forget it. Stop!

These changes were flagged in M-Britten but were not made in R. This suggests that Britten later decided that the published reading should stand. The revised lines present a Peter more straightforwardly, colloquially remonstrating, less fiercely angry, in particular with the removal of 'I'll tear the collar off your neck' (9). But the early introduction of 'Telling stories' weakens the impact of Peter making that accusation on seeing the mob approaching (62-4). On balance it seems preferable that the revisions were scrapped.

14 SD variation
I follow the version of ♪ which is more precise in terms of stage business to the reading of F and , 'Peter opens the cliff-side door and looks out.'

15 Music indicator
added by Britten in CD. It will also do duty for Britten's performance indicator 'animato' in ♪.

16 Revised line
Slater's C, 'Look. We'll make a record catch.' was changed from J(except N which does not have 11-30) and ♪K. I use the reading of ♪K onwards and U rather than JQ which read 'Look. Now is your chance.'

17 Slater's and Britten's early continuations
C reads
Into the shoal now!
Swamp their market!
And then we'll sail
To Billingsgate
In D Britten recast the lines (confirmed in H)

Out into the shoal!
Swamp their market!
Sell the good catches

In E Britten followed the same procedure except he retained the Copin line.

These versions were followed by 'Get money to choke/Down rumour's throat.' (21-

Slater in C reads
When other's
{sic}
shelter-
Church or bad weather-
We'll sail together

In D Britten deleted Slater's lines and added
We'll ship the painter
The Borough gossips
Listen to rumour
Listen to money
One buys the other
I shall buy rumour
That wealthy merchant
Grimes will set up
You will all see it
House home and shop
I'll marry Ellen

In E Britten deleted Slater's lines and added (confirmed in H)
That wealthy merchant
Grimes will set up
You will all see it
With house & home & shop
I'll marry, I'll marry …

In FG Britten (punctuation below from G) after 'These Boro' gossips/Listen to money'

...
In E-H,K the emphasis is on Peter’s determination is to marry for respectability, the person married immaterial. Only from J and ♪L is Ellen stated as his marriage goal, as in Britten’s first version in D. 

Line added from ♪G, but not in J. The same musical phrase is used as for line 14’s ‘listen to money,’ and also in line 17’s ‘Only to money.’ Thus it becomes a motif indicating Peter’s fixation with material gain.

Lines added 18-20 are added from ♪I and in J QU. JQ read ‘And flood the market.’

Line added and later revised ‘Grimes’, Britten’s original opening when he added the line in D E 17, was changed to ‘I’ from ♪I but not in until U.

Line added and later deleted ‘(You will all see it!)’ (G’s punctuation) was added by Britten in D 16. It also appears in E-J but not thereafter.

Versions of 24-28 were added by Britten from D 16. I use the final revision of ♪ from L. As Peter lapses into fantasy his language breaks up. This recalls 1.1.432 (see 1.1. notes 1 27).

Editor’s emendation There is no previous SD indication that John has sat on the rope coil, accordingly ‘sitting’ is accurate and avoids confusion.

SD variation The earlier versions have Peter stripping John in a manner less brutal than the later. Slate r’s C reads ‘He helps him off with his coat, then his shirt. He picks up the jersey.’ In F Britten changed this to ‘tears off his coat and shirt and puts jersey on him.’ In GILM the rough treatment has increased to ‘tears off his coat and shirt and throws jersey at him.’ In H Slater has as C but then deletes ‘then his shirt’ (+ JQ). KPRTU V retain virtually the earlier ♪ reading with H’s deletion thus, ‘tears off his coat and throws the jersey at him.’

Following the earlier version of 28.2 the early versions (C-GI) begin ‘Shirt off. Jersey on’. ‘Shirt’ is deleted by Slater and replaced by ‘Coat’ in H. C E HJQ continue ‘We’re going into the sea my son.’ Britten emended this in D to ‘We’re going to sea my son’ (+ F). Britten may then have felt ‘son’ suggested Peter saw John as a surrogate son, for from G he prefers ‘We’re goin to sea, my boy!’ The final version, from ♪I but not in ♪ until U, places ‘My boy’ at the end of the previous line.

SD variation This SD of further violence from Peter is only found in ♪ from L and ♪ U. The original (C) is ‘The boy is still weeping.’ N has ‘The Boy sobs convulsively. Peter tries to soothe him.’

This rather neutral SD is Slater’s original. In F Britten has the more intimate ‘Peter tries to comfort him – puts his arm round him’. In GI this is slightly varied as ‘Pete now tries to comfort him, putting his arm round him’ but perhaps this too readily suggested a physical relationship because there is no SD in ♪ from K. ♪ follow the original except Slater in N simply states ‘changes tone’. To convey something of the intention in ♪ I have added ‘sits by the boy’ to Slater’s original, also because sitting is more appropriate to the reverie of Peter’s aria and the SD at 58.1 in U and from ♪K has Peter rising but no earlier SD sitting.

Lines revised The final version of 31 is found from ♪ J and ♪ K. Slater’s C was ‘My thinking builds for us a kindlier home’. In D Britten changed ‘a’ to ‘some’ then deleted this but the reading ‘some’ was retained in E and thereafter. The change in the final version
shifts the focus from Peter discussing a continuing relationship with John to Peter thinking more abstractly about a family life. Originally and in N reads ‘Where there is no more fear and no more storm.’ The use of the present tense is more appropriate to the dream. The use of the future tense, ‘there’ll be’, the hope of a conscious Peter, occurs only in the sources after the first staging, from ♪K and ♪U. HJQ read ‘When there is’ but this would then refer simply to a passive state of calm rather than an active ‘kindlier home’. ♪G alone reads ‘fear or’.

Lines revised
Slater’s C 34-5 are slightly yet significantly different.

And you would soon forget your workhouse ways
Forget the weariness of our labouring days

In D Britten queries a change in 35 to ‘Forget the labour of our weary days’, confirmed in E.

Here and in ♪FGI and ♪H the future Peter imagines with John, without mention of Ellen.

34 is not centred on Ellen until ♪J and ♪K. In ♪J it appears as ‘And she would soon forget her schoolhouse ways’ and this is the reading of Q while N has ‘Where she’. In ♪KLMPRT and ♪U ‘would’ is replaced by ‘will’. Britten’s queried change to 35 stands except ‘our’ is changed to ‘those’ in ♪KPRT and ♪U.

Lines repositioned
Chas 34-7 as stanza 4 of this song but Britten repositioned 34-7 to stanza 2 from D.

Lines revised
Slater’s C 40 was ‘I’ve seen in dreams our life, that it might bear’ but in D he suggests changing ‘dreams’ to ‘stars’, a happy suggestion recalling Peter’s ‘Now the Great Bear and Pleiades’ aria (1.2.176-92). All ♪ read ‘stars’ but ♪ only from J. The final ending, ‘the life that we might share’, including Ellen, occurs from ♪J and ♪K, just as 34 is centred on Ellen.

Lines revised
Britten’s music repetition was applied to the earlier text version, so in ♪FGI 41 reads ‘Seen in stars that life might bear’. The final version occurs from ♪K.

Lines revised
Slater’s C 43 was ‘And whitened doorstep as the mother’s chore.’ In D Slater changed the ending to ‘a as the mother’s care.’ in E to ‘and the mother’s care.’ The final ending, ‘a and a woman’s care’, implying that Peter may not have children with Ellen, is found from ♪J and ♪K but the final beginning of 43, ‘A fair white doorstep’, is not found until ♪R and ♪U.

Lines revised
Slater’s C 45 was ‘But thinking builds what thinking can disown.’ The appropriate replacement of ‘thinking’ by ‘dreaming’ is found from ♪K and ♪Q. Slater’s C 46 was ‘Dead fingers are stretched out to tear it down.’ In F Britten deletes ‘are stretched out’, replacing it with the more active ‘stretch themselves’ and all ♪ have this reading which does not appear in ♪ until U.

Line revised, evocative yet opaque
Slater’s C 47 was ‘I hear my father and the two that drowned’, changed by Slater in D and Britten in E to ‘one that drowned’, a reading also found in ♪FGI (+N) which is a misreading of past events or Crabbe’s original. No apprentice drowns. In Slater’s Prologue Peter’s former apprentice dies (0.27). In Crabbe’s The Borough the first apprentice dies, the second falls from the mast and the third dies. The revised line, ‘I hear those voices that will not be drowned’, is more powerful owing to its wider compass, for its plural presumably refers to the hounding community, from Peter’s point of view, and perhaps also his conscience, as well as recalling the dead apprentice. The revision, probably by Britten, occurs from ♪K and ♪J excepting N, which proves it is not by Slater.
331

Lines revised

Slater's C 48 - 9 were Calling, there is no peace, there is no stone In the earth's thickness to make you a home,

In D Slater revised line 49 to 'In earth's great thickness to make your home' but E J NQ have the C version. The final text is Britten's truncated version found in all ♪

SD variation

I restore the beginning of Slater's original SD in C ( 50.1) but change 'Peter stops' to 'Peter pauses' as he does this while Hobson's drum is heard for 2 bars without a voice over it in Britten's setting. This restoration gives a rare glimpse of John's perspective. The continuation of the SD in C, 'and Peter turns on him suddenly' is in the final version at 60.1. To Slater's SD in C in E Britten added 'Hobson's drum can be heard faintly'. This addition is also in H. 50.2 - 4 originated with F's 'The procession can be heard coming up the hill – Peter doesn't notice'. The final version occurs from ♪G but not in  until U. In C after the equivalent of 57 is the SD 'In the distance can be heard the song of the neighbours coming up the hill.'

Music indicator

Here Britten transfers the horror of the previous SD from John to Peter.

Lines rewritten

Slater's C version of what became 51 - 7 was Sometimes I see three devils in this hut. They're here now by the cramp under my heart – My father and the two I had As prentices till you arrived. They sit h and their faces shine like flesh. Their mouths are open but I close my ears. We're by ourselves young stranger.

Shall we then Make a pact before they come?

Here Slater is following Peter's hallucination in The Borough (XXII, 308 - 75) which features his two previous apprentices and his father, forgetting that in the Prologue of his version there has only been one previous apprentice. In E Britten queries in a marginal note '?Only one ghost (the boy)' and in D he changed 'three' in 51 to 'two', the reading Slater adopts in E N.  Slater in D E changed lines 53 and 54 above to 'My father and the prentice boy before you came'. Metrically this is preferable to the alternative he suggests 'My father and the prentice'. In D Britten also changes 'young stranger' in 57 above to 'young prentice'. The closing conspiratorial lines (57 - 57b) are somewhat opaque: what sort of pact is being suggested and how can it be influenced by the ghosts if Peter ensures he doesn't hear their message? A suicide pact is a possibility. This is given more weight by a different version of this ending Britten has in FG Shall we make a pact on what the stars foretold To make it all come true!

The final text  of 51 - 3 occurs from ♪K and  Q. It is an improvement to remove 55 - 6 above. Though an example of one of Peter's 'Fiery visions' (1.1.73) it is at a more mundane, melodramatic level than 'Now the Great Bear and Pleiades' (1.2.176 - 92). But it is a pity to lose 52 above which emphasizes Peter's sensitivity and vulnerability. J has an intermediate version of 51 - 2:
Sometimes I see a face here in this hut. It's there now, I can see it. It is there followed by the final text specifically referring to the boy, this makes for a clumsy switch from a dismembered androgynous anonymity, however effectively creepy.

There is no SD in U here but a line space denotes the shift from rumination to address and a pause, a brief one as set by Britten of only one and a quarter crotchet beats while Hobson's drum is heard again. The SD 'The drum sounds louder' is in ♪ from K. The SD 'He stares into vacancy', only in ♪, emphasizes the hallucination and that Peter, as at 50.4, continues to be unaware of real activity.

SD added by me because Britten emphasizes the shift from the musing of 31-50 to the address of 54-7 by having the latter spoken 'ad lib.(senza voce). This, prefigured by 52, is the only speaking in the opera until Balstrode's final instructions to Peter (3.2.122-6).

Punctuation variation I use the ellipses in ♪ as these better express Peter's drifting mind. simply use a full point.

Variant reading I use ♪ 'still' as this is always performed.

Lines rewritten The final text of 54-7 occurs from ♪K and ♪ except that ♪JQ have 'boy. What's that? Water?' to end 54 and 'We'll soon' beginning 56.

SD variation This SD is only in ♪ except that F has a version added to the next SD (58.1), 'the voices of the neighbours are heard very distantly'.

SP variation ♪ have 'CHORUS' but Boles and Rector, Swallow and Keene are identified in pairs in ♪ singing simultaneously with the Chorus of Men. Boles and Rector sing the tenor part, Swallow and Keene the bass. Their parts are identical to those of the Chorus but I make it clear here and for the remainder of the scene that this is one of the times when named characters align themselves with the malevolent community. In FG Hobson is also identified as singing here but his principal role is to bang his drum and he is not identified in ♪ except, in error, in M at 84.

Variant punctuation and fragmentary repeat of chorus The word and its repetition are set identically in ♪ so I have used the same punctuation which ♪ use only on its second appearance, with an exclamation mark first time. Slater in C repeats stanzas 1 and 2 of 'Now is gossip put on trial' here (2.1.504-11), sung by Chorus (off). When Britten came to set the words he adopted the more realistic and, for Peter, disturbing effect of only parts of the proclamation being audible as the procession gets closer: stanza 1, beginning of line 1 at 58, lines 3 and 4 at 71-2; stanza 3, beginning of line 1 at 75, line 2 at 78, line 3 at 81, line 4 at 84; stanza 2 line 1 at 89, line 2 at 91, line 3 at 95 and line 4 at 97. That this second presentation of stanzas 2 and 3 is reversed adds to Peter's and our disorientation.

SD revised ♪'Peter goes to the street door and looks out', is in ♪ until U which elaborates the opening: 'Peter rises, goes quickly to'. This elaborated opening is first found in K and thereafter in ♪ as 'Peter rises, and goes quickly to the door.'

SD added I include this from CD because it shows Britten thought Peter should first be disturbed by this sudden knowledge before he becomes bolder and defiant: a crescendo is indicated from his opening words, reaching forte at 'Wait!' (61).

Line revised and repeat of chorus cut C reads 'Parson with Swallow in the rear.' In D E Britten changed this to 'Parson with Swallow coming near.' 'Parson with Swallow' is
found in all ♪ except U but 'Parson and Swallow' is in all ♪. At this point Slater’s original text repeats stanza 3 of ‘Now is gossip put on trial’ (2.1.512-13) with reading ‘Now the whisperers stand out/To be confronted by the fact’.  

SD revised
‘Wrench open the cliff side door’ is Slater’s first SD in C, mistyped as a line of text following 60, which Britten deletes in DE. Slater’s second SD in C, ‘The boy doesn’t move. Peter flings the other door open. Suddenly he turns on the boy’, is found in all ♪ except U. F has just ‘Peter turns on the boy’ and the SD is not present in the later ♪. The cliff side door has, however, already been opened at 10.1.52.

Lines revised
Slater’s original of 61-8 was: ‘Wait. Who have you talked to? You and that bitch reported me? You’d better tell me what you said. The town is climbing up the road. You sent them. You. O I’m not scared I’ll send them off with a flea in their ears. I want to know who is the spy. In F Britten varied and repeated the closing lines thus You told them. You told them. F6 {Wait.}, C61 {Wait.}, C62 You and that bitch reported me? You told them. You told them. F62 {SD} The boy doesn’t {IW ?speak}. F62.1 Oh I’m not scared F66b I’ll send them off with a flea in their ears. F67 {SD} The boy doesn’t {IW ?speak}. F68a ‘I want to know, I want to know, Who is the spy! Who is the spy! F68

The F text also occurs in GI except GI 65 have ‘hill’ rather than ‘road’, GI 68a have ‘s’ rather than ‘!s’. In 67 I has ‘cap’ instead of ‘ears’. The final text occurs from ♪J and ♪K. The revision shifts the blame from Peter, ‘reported me’ to John and Ellen, ‘gossiping’ (63), from their statement to their ‘lies’ (64).

SD added
in PRT V introduces the following Chorus fragment (71-2).

Section revised
Revision here is sufficiently complex to be best considered over a span of lines. Slater’s C of what became 73-101 reads ‘You sit there silently. Your eyes Are like old Ellen’s womanly. You sit there yearning like a girl Whose face has the wrong tale to tell. You sit there. You never speak Till I bring out the nine-tailed cat. He picks up and twirls a rope. The boy cowers away. Peter’s hand drops. No. We’ll take the lesser risk We’ll scramble cliff-wise to the deck. Well? You move? The parson’s brought...
The borough in the tails of his coat. You stand there silent. Will you move if the cat starts making love? Rope in hand he drives the boy towards the cliff door. Step boldly, step. The only foothold is good enough for twenty stone. Wait. I'll pitch the stuff down. Pitches ropes and nets. Now shut your eyes and down you go. At C73 Britten added the SD '(fury)'; at C83 he added '(quick)'. In F after C76 Britten adds the SD 'Peter turns his whip round, twirls a right & drives the boy towards the cliff door'. In D Britten deleted 'old' in C74, a pity because this is a telling reference to Peter's consciousness that Ellen is older, though her age itself was revised (see 1.1. note 53). He also deleted C77 after 'You sit there' and C78, replacing them with Will you move. If the cat starts making love? Step boldly! Yes. We'll take the lesser risk down the cliff-side to the deck. He picks up and twirls a rope. The boy cowers away. Rope in hand he drives the boy towards the cliff door. Come on. I'll pitch the stuff down. At this point Slater in D added Here's the way we go to sea down the cliff to find that shoal that's boiling in the sea careful, or you'll break your neck – down the cliff-side to the deck. followed by C93.1-C95. In E Britten also deleted 'old' in C74, cut C77 after 'You sit there' and C78, making the same initial replacement as in D but varying the following lines: Will you move If the cat starts making love? Step boldly! Down the cliff like fishermen like fishers that we are! Yes. We'll take the lesser risk down the cliff-side to the deck. H has this E version except Slater deleted the typescript E78, replacing it by hand with 'Or shall I make you dance?' Slater's original lines marry erotic references to sadistic ones. Britten's revision links the brutality, eroticism and climactic action more closely. There is also a growing element of caution from the cavalier C88a-b via D79 (or E81) to D85. The final version...
occurs from ♪K but only in U among . In JQ 73 is still 'You sit there silently', 76  is 'Your eyes, like his watching me' and 80  was first changed by Slater in H to 'Or shall I make you dance?', a version, also found in JNQ, which makes Peter more the active participant than the reactive 'must I' found from ♪K and in U. Curiously in 85-6 JQ lack 'Down the cliff' but have the repetition of 'to find that shoal'. N is as C73-4 'You sit there.' Followed by 'Will you move/Or shall I make you dance?' then E81. The caution is emphasized in JQ with 90 beginning 'Be careful'. The final version of the whole section is an improvement in focussing not on sexuality but on John and his predecessor whom Peter blames but who are simply the catalysts of the action. The threat of violence is also more softly stated.

SD added John's dutiful response to Peter's threat only occurs from ♪K and in U.

Partial repeat of chorus The amount of chorus heard is increased as the mob gets nearer: just the beginning of the first line of 2.1's stanza 1 at 58, lines 3 and 4 of stanza 1 at 71-2 and now lines 2 to 4 of stanza 3. To clarify this I have repeated at 78 the ellipsis U has at 71. From 89, then at 92, 96 and 98 the whole of stanza 2 is delivered.

SD variation I do not use Slater's original, 'Rope in hand he drives the boy towards the cliff door', in all , because this show of force is unnecessary after the SD added at 80.1-2 and does not square with the encouraging tone of 82-3, 85-8 and caution of 90-91. The ♪' version, first in I, reads just 88.1. In the full form with 88.2 from M a link is made between John's action and the threat of the mob rather than, with Slater's original, between Peter's bullying and John's action.

Line repositioned In DE Britten added 'Come on' at the beginning of 95 (+HINQ) but it was repositioned here in ♪ and in U it appears at the end of 95.

SD variation This SD exists in  from C but the initial 'He' was only added in U. In F Britten has an incriminating variant, 'Peter opens the cliff door & drives the terrified boy into the boat'. Neither SD is in the other ♪.

SD variation 100.1. I prefer the most precise 'street door'. The knocking is persistent: Britten writes 20 knocks in the score.

SD variant The repetition of 'Now!' at this point, only in ♪, makes a powerful contrast with Peter's 'Now' to John (99). Musically it is a repetition of the first 'Now' cry of the mob in 2.1. Ironically it also charts and arguably influences the moment when John falls to his death.

SD variation 101.2. I prefer the wording of ♪GIL, 'the boy loses his hold outside the cliff door, screams', (101.2-3), i.e. his accident can be in sight of the audience (80.1-2), who also see Peter has no direct connection with it. In C Britten adds beside this SD 'Silence except for knocking and boy's scream' but when composing he added a sustained high trill, piano, on oboes and clarinets. The boy's scream is set as c iii marked portamento lento.

SD variation 101.4-5. I prefer Slater's wording in  which points the irony that Peter, unlike John, heeds his own warning 'Careful' (90).

SD variation I prefer Slater's fuller wording in . In F Britten deleted the SD up to 'the Rector puts' and this is the reading of ♪ but 'door' is then ambiguous.

SD added adapted from M-Goodall which reads 'always call & look round', switching from tragedy to comedy.
Repetition of name in ♪ recalls 'Peter Grimes' summoned thrice at the beginning of the Prologue (0.1).

SD added  carelessly only indicate the entrance of the Rector. I have used the ♪ version from M substituting 'Ned' for 'Keene' for consistency with my practice elsewhere. Britten's original version of this SD in F is 'Next comes Swallow & gradually all the men of the village'. In GI this is modified to 'and more of the crowd follows by degrees', 'more' changed to 'some' in K L. I have placed the SD where it is found in PT, adding to the comic bathos of the Rector's initial solitary snooping.

SD variation  104.1. Slater's original and all  read 'They go and look out. Silence for a moment.' 'They' is only clear from the context of 103–4. When he set the text, instead of absolute silence Britten opted for an spectral backdrop of pianissimo last desk only violas and cellos sustaining high notes marked as harmonics.

SD added again from M–Goodall, with the same purpose as that at 102 65.

Line revised Slater's original depth is 'fifty feet' and  to Q and F have this. Britten decided in ♪ from G that 'forty feet' was enough and U follows this.

Line revised Slater's C reads 'Dangerous to have the open door' which Britten changed in D E to 'door open'. All ♪ read 'leave' while all  except U read 'have'.

Line reallocated Slater's C, Sw allow, was deleted by Britten in D who suggests Keene and confirms this suggestion in E.

Line deleted Slater's C has at this point 'He may be drunk.' In D E Britten deleted this, no doubt as part of transforming Peter from Crabbe's drunkard to the misunderstood outsider.

Line revised C makes a curious, perhaps parson like, particularity between 'Here's order' and 'Here is skill.' This is followed in all  except U which like ♪ uses 'Here's' on both occasions.

Line revised Slater's C, 'And all we find's', a little colloquial for Swallow in pompous vein, is in all  except U which follows the change by Britten in all ♪ to 'But all we find is'.

Line revised Slater's C, 'take the lesson', is lightened by Britten in D E to 'take this'.

Line revised This is Britten's revision in all ♪, also followed in U, of Slater's C, 'Will the last comer please to close the door', found in all other .

Music i ndicator This addition by Britten in CD explains the elaboration of the following SD 79.

SD revised This elaborate SD was created to cover Britten's intention to compose a threnody for John represented by solo viola, as in the interlude preceding t he scene, now backed by spectral celesta. Slater's original was They go out – all save Balstrode who goes to the cliff side door, looks down, then closes it carefully. He follows the others. In E Britten added, after 'Balstrode', 'who has come in late' and replaced the final sentence with 'He goes out that way.' All later  except U follow the first change but cut the final
sentence. The first change accords with Ellen's motioning to Balstrode to follow the procession (2.1.5 11.2).

The second change is an element of Britten's fuller text in D:

They all go out, except Balstrode who looks round the hut, picks up the discarded clothes of the boy, examines them; he then goes to the cliff door, goes right outside & looks over the cliff edge, sees something disturbing & climbs quickly down, the way that Peter & the boy have gone.

Balstrode goes out the way Peter did rather than the mob, aligning himself with him. This also happens in the text of ♪ from G:

They all leave except Balstrode who hesitates, looks round the room, sees the boy's Sunday clothes lying around, examines them, then goes to the cliff door (as if to shut it), goes out and looks over the cliff and hurriedly climbs down the way Peter and the Boy went.

I largely use this text but use the later ♪ from M clarification that Basltrode shuts the path door and omits the business of first considering shutting the cliff door, retain the opening to 'Balstrode' of ♪ and incorporate 'sees something disturbing' from D. Balstrode’s demeanour should indicate this, which explains his different exit to remove some evidence from the immediate scene that might incriminate Peter, maybe the boy’s jersey which Ellen later finds 'by the tide -mark' (3.1.118). I have also changed 'path' to 'street' for clarity and in consistency with my earlier practice (100.1, 101.7). U differs from the ♪ from G in the final sentence, 'He goes up to the cliff-side door'. The ♪ from G version of the latter better conveys Britten’s original (D) 'goes right outside.'

SD revised 'QUICK' was added to ♪ from G but is not found in ♪. There is no SD in JQ.
3.1 Notes

Music indicators

These two lines added by Britten in CD, written in the right margin alongside the opening SD, suggest an original intention to preserve something of the mood of what became Interlude V. Once he had composed the interlude, however, Britten settled for a contrast between its evocation of the natural environment and the community's merrymaking.

SD variation

I combine the most precise elements from ♫ and ♪.

SD variation and the dances ♪

Again I combine elements from ♫ and ♪. Slater's original text is 'we can hear the band playing a polka' but in source C Slater deleted 'a polka' and replaced it with 'several dances' which was Britten's intent. However, this deletion was not made in other sources and so 'a polka' incorrectly survives in the other ♫ except N which after 'we can hear' has 'and the rhythm of the dancers' feet' ♪. In D Britten lists the dances he wanted to set: 'Barn dance, Waltz, Country dance, Gallop, Lancers, Valeta, Sir Roger de Coverley, (Washington Post, (Galop), Paul Jones), Hornpipe'. Of these later SDs only refer specifically to the Waltz and Hornpipe.

SD variation ♪

Again I combine elements from ♫ and ♪. If 'There is a regular passage' ♪ rather than 'There will be' the stage will not necessarily be empty, as ♫ state. I also prefer the specific reference in ♪ to the First Niece.

Music indicators

'Immensely jovial, Belt top notes' come from M - Goodall with the 'BB' suffix denoting these are Britten's indicators, 'almost a parody' is an addition by Goodall which recalls Britten's original description of Swallow in the Prologue, 'One is never quite sure whether he is speaking ironically.' (0.0.9).

Line revised

Slater's 'Both witnessed', found in all ♫ until U, was changed from F by Britten to the more straightforward 'Are witnessed' which points up more Swallow's courteous but also patronising 'your graceful mark', a reference to the First Niece's illiteracy.

SD revised and repositioned

I prefer ♪ from G, introducing the Second Niece more suddenly and surprisingly as a rescue than ♫ indicating her presence in the previous SD (following 0.7). By directing that they be 'arm in arm' Britten reinforces the sense of rescue and physically demonstrates Slater's earlier description of the nieces (1.2.33.5 - 7).

Lines revised

Slater's text (CDEH) is Together we are safe Safety in number lies We find men lighter in the hand When we're in threes In DE Britten added 'For' at the beginning of the second line. When Britten first set the passage in F he repeated the lines thus...
Together we are safe,
For safety in number lies.
We find men are lighter,
Are lighter in the hand
When we're in threes.

Indication of pronunciation
In CDEH Slater includes the note (14).
I separate out the syllables as in ♪.

1 Lines revised Slater's text (CDEH) is
Save us from lonely men
And their intensity
The saddest man is gay
As one of three.

The opening line (21) may be no more than judiciary bragging yet a sinister element is avoided by the neat alteration to the much softer 'I shall take steps to change her mind' which first appears in K. Slater's reading is found in C-JLN. In D Britten suggested reversing the first two words and adopts this procedure in F. The change in 22 from 'You have' to 'She has first option on my love' was queried by Britten in D, adopted in E and the n found in all sources except N, Slater's publication. Clearly Slater preferred his original meaning, a direct statement by Swallow to Niece 1 that he will use his powers, or given the alteration of 3.1.21, persuasion to get rid of the chaperon Niece 2. On once Britten made the lines an aside Swallow's statement became indirect and less clear but, given the original context, means 'I'll try to dissuade Niece 2 from staying with us because I want to spend my time just with you', as he seeks to do (31-2, 35, 40).

23 'If my appeal is ignored' was changed by Britten from DE to 'If my appeal should be ignored', but Britten did not perceive, because Slater did not indicate it, that 'appeal' is intended to be three syllables, mirroring the comic pomposity of the four syllables of 'execution' at 14.

3 Lines revised first appears in G, also adopted in  except read 'conversation' ( 9).
I prefer the livelier, more colloquial, less literary, 'conversation's' of ♪.

9 Indication of pronunciation
In CDEH Slater includes the note (14).
Pairing is all to blame
For all these sighs and tears
Which would be saved if people would
Keep threes and fours.

'O' was added to the opening line (25) by Britten in DE and in E also the contraction
'pairing's' which makes the statement more colloquial. This is then Britten's text in F.

Slater, however, did not agree with this as N retains the original line. The other revisions to
the text first appear in J. The revision is more polished, in the manner, rhyming
scheme and six line structure of the Nieces' previous lines.

Music indicators
As earlier, Britten adds an indication of the character of the music.

When he set the libretto he had a stage band from the beginning of the scene of 2 clarinets,
violin, double bass and percussion which included side drum and bass drum. In PT the
designation 'stage band' is qualified by '(off stage)' suggesting this band is at stage level
but not necessarily visible, while KR state 'Band off stage'.

SD added from L, useful clarification that Swallow's behaviour is growing
increasingly predatory as well as matching the f
ollowing SD of Niece 1's escape

Line revised C began 'Your sister'. Britten deleted 'Your' in DE.

Line revised C began 'Until' and so do ♪ except U ♪ read 'Till'.

SD variation CDEH and all ♪ have Niece 1 going half way up the Moot Hall stairs but
the final version in ♪ from J has Niece 1 joining her sister first, then both proceeding to the
Moot Hall stairs. The early ♪ drafts add 'The other n
iece begins to giggle', while in the
final version both nieces giggle not here but as they later flee from Ned Keene (50).

Line revised ♪ 50.

There is no difference in the sentiment expressed, according to the
Oxford English Dictionary 'Pah' being
an interjection expressing disdain, while 'Bah'
expresses contempt. Britten sets the word as a shouted exclamation, a crossed head note
pitched at bass gi with a crescendo.

SD added by Britten in E. In ♪ this is reworked as
'Applause from the Moot Hall
dance.' followed by 50.1.

SD enhancement ♪ 50.6. I specify the scene as the end of Act One takes place in
"The Boar". In 1.1 one boat is hauled ashore at the outset (0.5), then a
second (0.8), and
later Peter's boat (48ff)
but I modify this in accordance with my suggestion that a second
boat not be hauled up (1.1 notes
1, 11)
.

SD variation ♪ emphasize action rather than character, reading simply
'when Mrs.
Sedley comes down t
he Moot Hall steps and stops him.'

Music indicator added by Britten in E. He had in CD added
'(dance music changes)'
following the SD from 50.1, in D adding but then deleting
'to slow waltz'.♪ from G have
'The dance band starts up again' but Britten
's marks the music '(alla Ländler)', i.e.
in the
style of an Austrian dance much like a slow waltz and one that is fitting for the environment
and historical period, being a peasant dance and one popular in the early 19th
century before
the waltz became fa
shionable.
Line revised by Britten in DE from Slater's 'About Peter Grimes and about that boy'.

Line revised by Britten in DE from Slater's 'Am I to act'.

SD added by Britten from F as 'The nieces trip back  to the Moot Hall' but here given in Britten's final version in ♪ from G (sv).

Lines revised Slater's original version of 60-61 in C is At least you can hear what I've got to tell.

In DE Britten expanded 61 to 'At least you can trouble to hear what' and from F Britten changed 'tell' to 'say'. Slater apparently disliked the revisions for the lines do not appear in the published ♪ until Q.</p>

Music indicator added by Goodall in M. Britten in ♪ has 'senza voce'.

Music indicator and SD variation In CDE the music indicator was followed by the SD 'Dance music louder. Through it Mrs. Nabob sings her song.' But Britten soon realized this was impractical, deleted the SD in CDE and replaced it in CD by 'Dance music stops'. Britten then deleted this added SD in D. He found another way to make space to highlight Mrs. Sedley's soliloquy: by reducing the slow waltz at this point to occasional sustained chords from the stage dance band while a quartet of solo orchestral instruments (double bassoon, muted trumpet, cello and double bass) play Mrs. Sedley's tune.

Music indicator added by Britten in CD. In D he also adds '(Country dance)' but this is superseded by the music al setting which retains the waltz until 96.1.

Line revised Slater's original, 'Has his boat been in?', was changed to the final reading from ♪I but not in ♪ until U.

Line revised Slater's CEH, 'His hit abandoned', was changed by Britten in D to the final version found in all ♪ but not in ♪ until U.

SD variation In E Britten added 'The waltz stops' after Ned's line 95 but ♪ have 'Applause from the dance' at this point at the same time as Ned's line, so I combine the two.
are clearer in stating 'bangs the door after him' where ♪ omit the closing two words. ♪ are clearer in citing 'Ned Keene' rather than 'He', so I blend the two.

SD added. 97.3 appears first in K. Among ♪ this only appears in U. The other ♪ have the original SD, 'Dr. Crabbe and the Rector and other burgesses come down the Mote Hall stairs.' Its original opening words in C were 'Swallow senior', deleted in DE. The extra stage business of 97.4 first appears in K and is not in ♪. In KMPRTUV the original SD, minus the Doctor, is repositioned at 97.7.

SD evolution. The specification of Hornpipe starting was added by Britten in E.

Burgess solos, lines added and expanded. I follow ♪ in having individual contributions by six Burgesses befire they come together in chorus (105–6). ♪ have just BURGESS at 98 and then BURGESSES in a shorter version (100–101, 105–6) of what became 100–106. Lines 98–101, 105–6 were originally added by Britten in E for BURGESSES. The expansion came when the individual contributions were realized by Britten when he set the music.

Lines revised. 98–9 were originally (C) placed after the Rector's song and read Coming inside doctor – (indicates The Boar) We're not wanted there, we oldsters.

In DE Britten changed the opening to 'Come along' and relocated the lines before the song. I follow the revision of ♪ which have no SD and read more broadly and straightforwardly 'here', meaning both the Moot Hall and 'The Boar' and therefore do not require a stage gesture. ♪ keep 'there'.

Music indicator. The original indicator of just 'SONG' in CD is amplified by Britten's parenthesis in CD which I add and occurs in effect at 97.8, followed immediately by the Rector's song (finally 107–111, 114–19). In E Britten changed the indicator to 'SOLO with CHORUS' and brought it forward to after 9.7.2 but this positioning is confusing given the opening Burgess recitative at 9.8 so I place it between the two.

Lines added. Britten added this chorus in its final form in E and also its repeat at 112–13. In Slater's original (C) it appeared after the Rector's song, before the lines finally placed at 98–99, simply as 'Good night.' with the allocation 'Dr. and chorus' but, Doctor Crabbe being a non singing part, he was deleted by Britten in D and the allocation changed by Britten in E to 'Burgesses'.

Lines revised. In DE Britten added 'With' to Slater's original beginning 109 and 'So' beginning 110. All ♪ except U read 'the roses' in 111 but ♪ read 'my roses' as do ♪ when the line is repeated at 119.

Music setting and repetition. Britten set 'company' as two syllables as it should be for the line to scan correctly. So I have used 'comp'ny' as in ♪. The repetition of 117 makes more authentic and distinctive the character of the hornpipe.
3.1

Line revised
Slater's CDE was 'Give my love to the girls, wish good luck to the men'. In D, Britten deleted 'good' (+ H J NQ). The final, more urbane version, made by Britten in F, is found in ♪ and U.

Lines added and music repetition
A s with 105-6 and 112-13. Britten added this chorus in E and in ♪ after E it is expressed simply as 120-21 but when Britten set the lines he introduced repetition, gradually softening so that the voices fade away as the figures leave the stage and as the dance music fades (126.1).

SD added by Britten in E (+ later ♪). Though ♪ have 'The dance band fades out' it is more appropriate to have the end of the dance named as it is at its beginning (976.6).

Music indicator
The heading in CDE is 'Song, contd.' In CD Britten annotated its lines 'as before' because, though the words are different, metrically and in the music setting this is a reprise of 'No. 3 SONG' (76.1), so I head it 'No. 6'. In CD 'No 6 RECIT' is assigned to 98- when, before being relocated in E, the se lines with 120-21 followed the Rector's song, to which Britten adds 'Dance music again', but there is insufficient material for a distinct section.

SD variation
In ♪ 'still in the boat shadow' is inconsistent with 975.5's 'boats', i.e. there are two boats as in 1.1 from 18.1. ♪, while having 'boats', do not signal that Mrs. Sedley has not moved, so I combine the two versions.

Song revised
Slater's C had a closure to the song, 'Crime is my study.' Britten deleted this final line in DE, preferring an ellipsis after 'thoughts' which emphasizes the brooding by the truncation of the expected fourth couplet after the preceding three. The original ending is only otherwise found in N which shows Slater preferred it.

Music indicator
Slater's heading 'RECIT.' in C was deleted by Britten in DE but is appropriate and has been restored.

Line revised
by Britten in E from Slater's CD, 'It's been in long?' In M G Goodall further revised this line to 'So his boat's in?' but this seems a rather casual expression for Ellen and is not found elsewhere.

Line revised
by Britten from Slater's CD, 'Over an hour.' In E he added 'Yes!' The final reading first occurs in F.

Lines deleted and line revised
The SD at 137 was originally preceded (CDEH) by Slater's ELLEN

BALSTRODE

Let me share it.

Britten made two attempts at setting these lines in F but then deleted them. Slater's original 13 reads 'This clue I found'; 'clue' is not found from F. Its inclusion would have pointed a genuine clue in contrast to Mrs. Sedley's fantasy of having a never named clue in 2.1.
and wittering on about unnamed clues at 6 in this scene but the display and then scrutiny (13.1-2) of the jersey on its own is more poignant. Moreover clue is given prime position at the climax of the song's verses (14.6, 15.3, 62).

Music indicator and punctuation
Slater's dispassionate 'meditative' is found in all but I combine it with Britten's more emotive indication in CD of the character of the aria. Its meditative quality is nevertheless reflected and sustained in the ellipses used as punctuation in later ♪ at 14.7, 1.50 and 15.4 and these I have used.

Line revised
Slater's C, 'that gave', is found in all except U but was changed to 'givin' by Britten in ♪ from G.

Music repetition and lines deleted
The repetition of the phrase 'of a silk' in Britten's music setting is a rare occurrence of a repetition within a line. The nine note melisma Britten writes for 'silk' is a graphic illustration of Ellen's meditation which, however, endangers the listener's grasp of the line which a briefly recalled 'of a silk', puts back on track. At this point Slater's original (C) adds

Even a sampler's thick wool Coloured an untragic world.

These lines were deleted by Britten in DE and aptly as they blur the image already created (143-4) and well contrasted by the song's chorus (145-6).

Lines revised
Here and from 153 Britten when he set the words changed the clumsy mid line 'embroidery' to 'broidery' but all except U retain Slater's original text.

Line revised
F has 'dreamt'; G has 'dream'd'; 'only' is Britten's alteration in DE from Slater's 'just' in C.

Lines revised and music repetition
Britten's repetition of the lines here is a master stroke. Having delivered them once Ellen returns as if haunted by them, the two further statements of 'Now my broidery affords' placing the greatest emphasis on 'the clue' (156) which she can barely bring herself to acknowledge. ♪ do not have this repetition and apart from U inconsistently read 'A clue' in 15.3 after 'The clue' in 14.6, as does F.

Music indicators
This section 'RECIT. OVER DANCE MUSIC OFF' was already indicated in C when Britten numbered it as No. 8 but he deleted the entire reference in E. This is partly because when setting the scene he discontinued the dance music from 125 until it resumes at 178.1. Furthermore, in adding 161-7 Britten moved from recitative (i.e. recitativo secco) to arioso (recitativo arioso) which he capped with a duet at 168-74, so the simple indicator 'recitative' was inadequate.

Lines revised and music repetition
Slater's CDEH were

He's walked out of the human world.
We have no way to help him now.

When setting the music Britten deleted the first line, changed 'way' in the second to 'power' and partially repeated that line. In ♪ from I there is an ellipsis after 'power', recalling Ellen's ellipsis after 'affords' at 15.4 and evoking the same sense of helplessness. I therefore use this.

from J omit the first line and only have the first appearance of the revised second.

Lines added and music repetition
161-67 were added by Britten in DE with deletions also made in D to the additions as indicated.
In the black moment
When your friend suffers
Unearthly torment
<o its being there>
We cannot turn our backs
<o - Pharisees to him>
Wherever horror strikes
Those who don't know him
<o be there with him>
We shall be there with him.

In E the final line reads 'We will be there with him' but the D reading 'We shall' was taken up when Britten set the line as a duet for Ellen and Balstrode. When first setting the music of the preceding two lines in F, Britten altered, perhaps mistakenly, 'Wherever' to 'Whenever' and partially repeated the second line, 'who don't know him'. These lines also occur in G but with the final version as an alternative. The original version alone occurs in L. H has the original version deleted and the alternative one replacing it except that in H, as in all the later , the partial repeat in ♪ does not occur.

As a body, the lines themselves are platitudinous but provide the opportunity for an arioso for Balstrode and duet between Ellen and Balstrode which show rare support for Peter in the opera.

Lines added and music repetition
Britten added this duet and its further repetition (169-74) when setting the music. Although this is only represented as one line in duet in , Britten's setting in ♪ has Ellen singing it, echoed by Balstrode on two occasions before it is contracted.

SD variation
The original SD (C), 'They go out together. Dance music returns' was effectively at 178.1. I have followed ♪ from G in placing the SD here with wording of different emphasis, 'They slowly walk out together' rather than  from D which have 'They go out together' at 178.1.

F placed the SD 'Ellen and Balstrode slowly walk out together' at 174.1.

Music repetition
This is a contracted and varied repetition of 168. The original final line for both in FG I KL was 'We shall be there' and in MG Goodall reverts to this, together with the added SD 'Intimate', the latter I adapt.

Lines added, revised and punctuation variation
Britten added 175-8 in D, followed originally by a return to the earlier expression of solidarity, 'But be there with him', but that was also deleted by Britten in D. With regard to the established ending at 'Dissolution' I follow ♪'s use of the ellipsis, this time for Balstrode but like those for Ellen earlier (154, 159) also indicating helplessness. That the ♪ SD at 172.1 has the lines rather thrown away as the couple are leaving furthers this impression.

SD variation
In 178.1 I use the  wording which does not specify the dance but incorporates Britten's addition to E which does. In ♪ Britten marks it 'Allegro molto (alla Galop)'. In 178.2 I use the  wording in preference to the ♪ which, not specific about Mrs. Sedley's careful timing, simply state 'Mrs. Sedley goes to the door of the Boar.'

Performance indicator and SD variation
Britten added the indicator 'Excited' to CD to Slater's original SD 'calling through the door' which is in all . I add the further evocative indicator 'breathlessly', found in all ♪.
what Mrs. Sedley wants. This is stronger than Slater's original SD 'off' found in all ♪. Except U which has 'coming to the door'.

Line added by Britten in E.

Line revised Slater's C, 'Mr. Swallow', was changed by Britten in D to 'The lawyer Swallow' and to the final version in E.

Line revised Slater's C, 'He's engaged', was changed by Britten in DE to 'He's busy'.

Performance indicator added by Britten in CD is evocative of Mrs. Sedley's forceful personality and malice.

Lines revised Slater's C reads 'This is official. I've proved his crime against the criminal.

At the beginning of the first line in DE Britten added 'Fetch him please' and changed the second line to 'Business about the Boro ground', probably feeling Mrs. Sedley's claim was overstated.

Line added by Britten in D and in all ♪ but not found in other ♪ except QU.

Lines added and revised. This heated exchange between Auntie and Mrs. Sedley (i.e. 190-219 except for Swallow's words) was added by Britten in DE. The opening line is constant but was or

From you and from all jumping fleas
They take their drink, they take their ease!

Only the first of these following lines is found in H. In J the following line is 'From you and all such nuisances.' In N it is 'From you and all such nuisances.' The final text is that revised by Britten in G with an interim version in F, And quiet away from you And all such nuisances!

However, 'They take their drink, they take their ease!' survives in the final text (203) after Auntie's reprise of 'My customers come here'.

Lines revised Britten's original lines in DE were 'You will find So long as I'm here I speak my mind.' So they appear in all ♪ except U. I reproduce the final version chosen when Britten came to set the music and found in all ♪. U has a rearrangement of this As long as I am here you'll find That I always speak my mind.

Line revised and variant positioning. Although all ♪ after E repeat this line as at 190, when Britten came to set the music here he shortened it as I reproduce it, found in all ♪. I also place it as found in its first appearance in E and all ♪, before Mrs. Sedley's 'I'll have you know your place' tirade whereas ♪ after E place it and Auntie's other lines after Mrs. Sedley.
Sedley's "They take their drink, they take their ease" is heard as a solo before Mrs. Sedley enters with "I'll have you know your place." I use ♪ version of Swallow's entry derived from Slater's CD, '(comes to the door wiping his mouth)', rather than ♪ from E which have '(coming out)' at his recitative at 205. He witnesses Auntie and Mrs. Sedley's altercation in duet of 194-9, 201-2 before joining in to make a trio at 205.

Lines revised
Slater's line for Swallow in CD is simply 'What is it?' Britten revised this in E to 'What is the matter, whatever is the matter, Hi!' HJ read 'What is the matter.' N more correctly uses a question mark. U has a fuller 'What's the matter?/Tell me what's the matter?' but when Britten set the music all ♪ elaborate this through music repetition and this is the version I use.

Line revised
Originally (C), 'I'm rather short/Sighted', 'rather' deleted in DE by Britten.

Line revised
Slater's C was 'It's Grimes's boat.' Britten in DE added 'back at last' and when he set the line in F began it with a commanding 'Look!' which U places on a separate line. All ♪ have the fullest version of the line which I use; HJ have the original line, 'back at last' is found in HQ but 'Look!' in none.

Line added, revised and repositioned
In 227.1-230 I present text and SD finally set by Britten. In U Hobson says 'Ay, Ay, sir' as he is appearing and this is followed by Mrs. Sedley's comment (228 + 230 + 232 as one line). In CHJNQ Hobson says 'Ay, Ay, sir' 'off', appears just after this and there is no comment by Mrs. Sedley. Q begins similarly but Mrs. Sedley has her comment before Hobson appears. Britten had already added that comment to drafts DE, where its original form (E punctuation cited) is Good, now things are moving! We'll see things start! In F Britten also has this but replaces it with the final version. The added line gives Hobson, who has just appeared on stage, time to approach Swallow.

SD often absent
Because it has no dramatic significance Swallow's exit was forgotten by Slater and is in no ♪. In ♪ it appears from L.

Line revised and unrevised
In D Britten added 'too' at the end of the line but did not do this in later sources, presumably realizing that the Borough is the sum total of the rest and climax of the line.

SD variation and lines added
This original SD by Slater survives in ♪ with the exception of D where Britten deletes "The Boar" and replaces it with 'Dance Hall'. However The Boar is the most likely venue for recruiting a posse, especially given the males' preference for it stated in this scene's opening SD (0.4-5). In F Britten has 'Hobson goes to the Moot Hall & Boar hailing' which is unrealistic in the timescale available. Thereafter there is no SD in ♪. At this point in D Britten queried 'Some lines for Hobson?', then added his lines 247, 250, 252, 255-6, 258 and 260.
3.1

which was deleted by Britten in D. Its inclusion provided a better balanced rhyming pattern to the stanza.

89

SD variation
I use the final version in U, identical to that in ♪ save that the latter have 'dancers and drinkers' rather than 'people'. ♪ do not have the opening line and U does not separate it from the rest, which I have done because the earlier ♣

DE
Hobson comes out with Robert Boles and other fisherman {sic}.

The dance music goes on, but when the news reaches the Mote Hall it stops abruptly and dancers crowd on to the balcony and exterior staircase as the posse goes out in several directions Hobson indicating to each man which way he shall go...

We hear in the distance <several voices shouting> [chorus] {Britten}'Gri–imes' 'Peter Gri–imes' as CURTAIN

F similarly begins 'The dance music ceases' before assuming the SD text of the final version. In E Britten tempers the disruption somewhat, changing the second sentence to

When the news reaches the Mote Hall & Pub the people crowd on to the beach. This is the version of HJNQ which also delete 'Robert' and correct 'fisherman' in the first sentence. When he came to full composition Britten opted for a smoother transition and text to go with it, 'As the dance band fades out, the dancers' (from J more correctly 'dancers and drinkers') and then the final version. In doing so the process has become one more of evolution than revolution: people come out not because of the news of Peter but because the dance has finished. The collective term 'people' for 'dancers and drinkers' is only found in U. The final version of the SD creates an additional design problem, requiring a green, not specifically used in 1.1, as well as beach in the foreground of the set. The idea came about because there is a green in front and to the side of the Moot Hall in Aldeburgh before the beach.

90

Music indicator  261.4. I prefer Britten's final title and number the section in consistency with his treatment of other substantial structural elements.

91

Lines added, revised and music repetition In Slater's original the chorus consisted of just one line, 'Gri–imes' 'Peter Gri–mes'. Preceding this Britten added in D the first part of the final version as in U (i.e. 262, 264, 271-2). There is one significant difference.

271-2 and 344-5 originally read 'Him who despises us/We despise.' Although Britten does indicate this three times in F the change throughout to 'We destroy' was not finally made until G. What are simply 6 different lines with the last lines 284-5 plus 2 repeated lines in ♣ become in ♪ through music repetition 43 lines as I present them (262-305), though some are heard tiered, some simultaneously clustered with others. The effect is that of a mass witness of aggression.

92

SD added This extra stage business first appears in ♪ from K and thereafter from M. It is not in ♣.
SP variation
From 'And cruelty becomes' (284) before U (except N) add an ensemble of individual characters as designated by Britten when he added the text in E, joining the chorus which is the general mob. But when he set the music Britten first featured the ensemble alone in a newly presented text, 'Our curse shall fall on his evil day' (306).

The original SP in E and F included Hobson in the ensemble but from G he was not featured until 'Him who despises us we'll destroy!' (333). I follow ♪ rather than ♫ which all place Hobson in the ensemble from the outset.

Lines added, revised and music repetition
These lines were added by Britten in F.

In J QU 'on' appears as 'upon' but the original reading is in all ♪. Though the lines are presented only once in ♫ (306-7) they are soon repeated by the chorus at the same time as the ensemble repeats the earlier chorus text (308-19), after which ensemble and chorus continue to alternate slightly modified texts (320-32), evolving a statement not in ♫, 'Our curse shall fall on him' (ensemble at 331, chorus at 332).

New lines were first introduced by Britten at this point in DE, quickly moving to the scene's final statement
O we shall blind his bright
Contemptuous eyes
Him who despises us
We despise
Ha ha! What a dance is this {or} we'll lead
Peter Grimes  Peter Grimes

In E this text ends 'We despise!' followed simply by 'Peter Grimes! Grimes!' These lines in DE were not set by Britten but were the basis for his setting in F.

Original added text
by Britten here, in F based on his drafting in DE, is more savage. The chorus sings (equivalent to 306-7)
O we shall blind, we shall blind, shall blind
Blind his bright contemptuous eyes
To which the ensemble repeats
O we shall blind, we shall blind his eyes
O we shall blind, shall blind,
Shall blind his eyes.

and the chorus interjects (289-93)
O we shall blind his eyes
O we shall blind, shall blind,
Shall blind his eyes

While Britten's limitation to a mass curse (306-7), the final version which first appears in G, is quite horrific, it is tamer than this predecessor.
When Britten set the text he took up his own drafting in D of a concluding chorus with a 'Ha, ha' element, ignored the rest of its text but expanded the 'Ha, ha's as a dance. They first feature fully in G and never appear in F.

These lines were added by Britten in F. In F they only appear in QU in contracted form, 'We'll make the murderer pay for his crime.' Here I follow ♪ to show the emphatic mid line expansion and repetition in their delivery and that 'murder' is set as two syllables.

Music repetition have just 385 + 396. By following ♪ I show the variety and extent of the summons (385-94), all delivered fortissimo but first delivered separately by the various factions (385-7), then with entries tiered as in the fugue (388-93) before culminating in all together raising three sustained cries (394-6).

This SD was added by Britten in E (+ later ♪), replacing C's 'We hear in the distance several voices shouting 'Grimes,' 'Peter Grim' as Chorus' and Britten's relocation in CD of 'chorus' instead of 'several voices'.

As the crowd hurry off to the hunt in all directions, quick CURTAIN' e xcept F which lacks 'in all directions'. 
3.2 Notes

1. SD variation

Sentences 1 and 2 are from Slater's original SD, sentences 3 and 4 from ♪ written by Britten probably assisted by Crozier. The latter concentrate on the setting both visually and aurally, fog and fog horn being the distinctive features, and dispense with Slater's more narrative and poetic manner (draft text 0.5-7). Peter's boat is not even present, doubtless obscured by fog, though it will be needed at 126.1. The final sentence comes from a revision by Britten in E (see draft notes 1).

2. Music indicator

♫0.7, Britten's extended version.

3. SP variation

I have followed Slater and ♪ in the use of VOICES, denoting the disembodied nature of the unseen and, because of the fog, unseeable posse. ♪ more prosaically and practically term these 'CHORUS (off)'. I add VOICES to my use of ♪' specification of voice parts. In line 1 I follow ♪ in having two calls of 'G rimes!' though U has just one.

4. Lines revised replacing Slater's draft text 3.2.2-7. Line 2 here is the same as Britten's revision in D (draft notes 6) except he has changed the first word to 'Steady', as drafted by Duncan. Lines 3-4 were Duncan's adaptation (they are present in his working papers). Line 5 is as Britten's revision in D except 'Waters' has become 'Water'. Line 6 was supplied by Duncan except Britten has added 'will'.

5. Quotation of Swallow's verdict at the Prologue's inquest (0.105).

6. Punctuation reflecting the music setting

An example of the need to follow ♪ in order to obtain punctuation that creates pauses where rests have been observed in the vocal music. The U reading, 'his sorrows—my sorrows—dry' suggests there are pauses after both 'sorrows' but no pause after 'dry' whereas ♪ indicate there are pauses only after the first 'sorrows' but also after 'dry'.

7. Lines revised replacing Slater's draft text 3.2.8-13. Line 8 repeats Britten's line 2, line 14 repeats Duncan's line 6. Lines 9-13 are Britten's adaptation of the following lines drafted by Duncan

One and one <make> are two and 2 & 1 <make> are three
The first died, he just died.
The <next> second slipped just slipped
But the 3<rd> Made his own accidental circumstan<ces>
Water will drink his sorrow dry

Britten noted the difference now in Duncan's repeat of line 5, 'his sorrow', and made it explicit by extending line 13, suggesting a bond in death between Peter and his apprentices. Accordingly 'the third' refers not to an apprentice to come but Peter himself. These Duncan/Britten lines focus on apprentices rather than Slater's on Peter's father. Line 12 is the first example of Britten taking up Duncan's suggestion of recalling phrases and music from earlier in the opera, in this case Swallow's verdict in the Prologue.

8. Lines revised replacing Slater's draft text 3.2.15-18. They are derived from the following lines drafted by Duncan

Here <they come> you are. Here I am. But hurry
Here you are, Here I am. Hurry.
Bring up your harpooning eyes
And tongues like nets & lies
And let the whole fleet of <Borough gossipers/And watch>
Borough gossipers compete
<To catch the Great bear &>
To make fate, late;
<To catch me <a> as a herring>
or <{iw ?}
Come on land me or hold the Gt bear
'As it turns the skies back & begins again'

Britten uses only some of the material (3.2.17 - 18, 22 - 23) and thereby tones down the frenzy and in doing so makes the onlooker more sympathetic to Peter. Britten again takes Duncan's cue to recall earlier material and inserts quotations from the advancing mob in lines 19 (2.1.504) and 20 - 21 (2.1.514 - 15) as well as Duncan's closing allusion to the end of Peter's 'Now the Great Bear and Pleiades arioso. Neither Duncan nor Britten quote this verbatim, 'Who can turn skies back and begin again?' (1.2.191 - 2). Duncan appropriately used quotation marks for his allusion but Britten did not. Practice with regard to quotations or partial quotations throughout this scene is similarly inconsistent. I have supplied single quotation marks throughout.

Lines added and quotations
These do not appear in Slater's draft but are another example of Duncan's enthusiasm for recalling earlier text and music. Duncan's working papers specifically flag them but in variant form:

Young Pete has gone fishing
Old Joe's gone fishing
Your Joe's gone fishing
And you'll know who's gone fishing
When you land the next shoal

Britten preferred to make the text closer to the original (1.2.252 - 4, 256). The opening two lines are the same but the differences in the next two give this new text an ominous tone.

You Know has gone fishing and
Found them a shoal.

has become
You'll know who's gone fishing when
You land the
next shoal.

Lines revised and quotations
While 'Take away your hand!' is a direct quotation (2.1.166) the rest is a confused recollection indicative of Peter's state of mind. The origin of 'My hope is held by you' is 'My only hope depends on you' (2.1.167). The original version of line 32, found in all sources until PTU, 'If you take it away, if you', is close to 'I - take it away - what's left?' (2.1.168).

Quotation?
I restore the original reading, a direct quotation (2.1.188) in consistency with the other quotations in this scene. Through it Peter turns back to himself and his own fate. The final version is arguably unduly influenced by Peter's anger in his address to the voices.

SD variation
I use the fuller ♪' version which first appears in G, except for its 'now', first added in I after 'distinct', placed in its final position from L.
Line revised
The original line in F was 'The waves echo the answer' but the final version is written there above it.

Its reference to Davy Jones recalls Peter's naming of him in his version of the round (1.2.369).

SD variation
I use the longer version.

Music repetition
Peter's response to the shouters is not two self affirmations as in ♪ but fourteen in ♪.

SD variation
I prefer the ♪ which clarify that Ellen and Balstrode are waiting for Peter's fury to burn itself out.

Line revised
and lines rewritten
Line 84 originally read (F): 'Peter! We've come to help you home' but in F Britten deleted 'help' and replaced it with 'take'. Line 85-6 originally read 'Where you'll find calmness and rest.' Britten added in F the final version and rewrote the music for it.

Line revised
This originally read (F): 'See, here's Balstrode. He's come with me to help' but in F below this Britten added another version, 'I've brought Balstrode. Peter can't you see me.' The supposition Peter is deaf rather than blind first occurs in H. An extra line is found at this point only in H, 'We'll help you, we'll take care of you.'

SD variation
I prefer the fuller version which originates in Slater's draft. There is no SD in F but in the other ♪ it is summarized as 'Peter does not notice her. The voices are now very distant.'

Line revised
Britten's original version (F) is 'What harbour for my peace' as it was in F when first sung in 1.1. The final version does not occur until L.

Quotation or line variation?
In consistency with the other quotations in this scene I use the reading of ♪ from G onwards which repeat exactly 1.1.431, except L which more primly reads 'Her heart' and Peter Pears' copy of K which has as an alternative text 'A harbour evermore', the final reading. There is a case for restoring the original (F), 'Her breast was harbour too', which finds Peter sadly recalling past contentment or at least the hope of it. It is particularly poignant that Peter declares his love here in Ellen's presence, unaware that she is there.

Quotation of 1.1.432, continuing the recall.
I follow my practice there (1.1. note 12).

Slater's original (C) is as 3.2d46-d53.
For the final repetition at 132 I use ellipses for consistency. H here F has 'where –we', G 'where —we … –', I 'where —we ….', and K 'where —we—'.

Speech indicator
I use Britten's version from C. The softness of the delivery matches the recent softening of the music, its stipulated quickness adds furtiveness to the proceedings.

SD variation
I follow U which is derived from JQ, 'Goes up to Peter' with the added clarification from the earliest ♪F that this is spoken dialogue, as first specified in Slater's draft. ♪ from I have 'Crossing to lift Peter up' but there is no SD to indicate that he has slumped down.

Ellen's changing involvement
This brief protest or rejection by Ellen to Balstrode's purposive management of Peter's suicide first appears in J. It is not in Slater's draft but is in N. It absolves Ellen from collusion with Balstrode in the directed suicide as occurs in Slater's draft (3.2d.42-5).
Lines revised are a heavily abbreviated version of Slater's draft: lines 65, part of 58 and 72, with an added brief new text, 'D'you hear?', a recall of Peter's supposed deafness as a cause of his failure to communicate with Ellen and Balstrode. Originally (F) Britten intended to retain all Slater's draft. In G he left a blank page for 'Dialogue' but this was never added. There is no speech in H. I. The version in L is the briefest: 'Take her out and sink her./You know what to do, Peter/Goodbye.' But in all other texts except U the Moot Hall is specified as a landmark. I have therefore retained this version rather than the more general U (+O), 'Sail out till you lose sight of land'.

SD variation I retain Slater's draft text which is found in all. F also has this text except for 'waves goodbye'. G, I, L do not have this SD but a more restrained version without focus on Ellen's emotions first appears in K and thereafter except L: 'There is a crunch of shingle as Balstrode leads Peter down to his boat, and helps him push it out. After a short pause, he returns, takes Ellen by the arm, and leads her away.'

SD variation Slater's draft version is 'The scrunch of keel on shingle has been the cue for the orchestra to return.' Britten changed the opening in E to 'The men pushing the boat out' and this revised version is thereafter found in all except U which appropriately tidies up the ending to 'the orchestra to start playing again'.

SD variation The original SD is found in Slater's draft (3.2d.77.6, 8 - 22) and thereafter in all. I prefer Britten's terser version because its later elements are gradually introduced in relation to the text. It first appears in complete form in G.

Music indicator I use Britten's revised version.

Tiering of chorus introduction and quotation This gradual increase of voices, realized by Britten when he first fully set the music in G and thereafter in all is linked to the SDs which bring more of the Borough folk on stage until the entire community is there except the departed Peter.

For the quotations after Crabbe of 138 - 42 and 148 - 51 see Introduction to 3.2 §1.

SD variation A final example of the practical orientation of ♪' SDs. Among only N has, after 162, 'By now the morning life of the Borough is in full flood.'

SD variant positioning I have followed ♪ which start the slow curtain here rather than H, J, QU which place it at the end.

Music repetition and quotation I follow ♪' haunting repetition of the closing words, finishing with the male voices only, soloists and chorus, in lower register. For the quotation from Crabbe of 155 - 62, see Introduction to 3.2 §1.
Appendix A:
Scenarios:
Introduction

I have individually designated the scenarios (A-E). The order I have given follows that of their presentation in Banks 2000: 174-5. Dating and order of composition are unclear. Scenarios AB remained in America when Britten and Pears sailed back to England on 16 March 1942 and Scenarios CDE were probably composed during the voyage, Scenarios DE being written on the headed paper of the Johnson Line of Sweden. Scenarios CDE may, therefore, have been necessary reconstructions given that Scenarios AB were no longer available to their authors. But equally they present an exchange of and throwing of ideas into a melting pot as a suggested structure for the formulation of a libretto.

Scenario D has on the recto of its leaf a complete scenario by Britten in two versions set out in two columns (1-25, 26-34). On the verso of the leaf is an incomplete scenario by Pears (35-40) which has been deleted and the beginning of a scenario by Britten (41-42) which has not been deleted. However, the use of a dash at the end of 42 suggests even its single entry for 1.1 was not completed.

I have attempted to present the original layout in general terms but have tidied spelling and punctuation and occasionally interpolated text to facilitate reading. All emendations are recorded in the crit. app.

While Crabbe’s poem was the initial inspiration and provided the basic story, the scenarios are working documents that chart Britten and Pears’s developing
thoughts about how the story should be structured as an opera and also present ideas for the content of scenes. They never seem to have been co-ordinated or worked into a definitive document. This may be a strength, for they gave Slater, and it is reasonable to assume they were shown to Slater, a fair flexibility of operation within generally defined parameters. They are therefore significant as sources, in particular for Slater’s drafts. Thereafter Slater’s Peter gradually developed distinctly from Crabbe’s (see Perspectives on Crabbe, especially §3).

They are of interest in what they do and do not contain. They do contain an emphasis on community response and therefore choruses. They do contain a principal female role, that of Ellen, to balance the principal male, Peter. They also have a secondary male role, that of the Landlord, but no secondary female role. Slater supplied the latter in Auntie, when Landlord became Landlady and created a secondary male role in Balstrode. He also created other secondary roles which do not figure in the scenarios but are drawn from Crabbe (see Perspectives on Crabbe §2.3): Boles, Swallow (only briefly noted as ‘Magistrate’ in Scenario D, line 2), Ned, Mrs. Sedley, the Nieces. To these he added Hobson, not in Crabbe.

**Scenario A (Britten)**

Britten immediately creates a visual setting. Act 1 Scene 1 begins with everyday work soon made more dramatic by the tension of an imminent storm (announced in 1.1 at Grimes 1979: 7, line 10 in the final version). But its weakness is that Peter does not appear; he is only discussed. In the final version he calls offstage for help (Grimes 1979: 8, line 7) and is then discussed. Peter in this early version is Crabbe’s
drunkard yet he is defended by Ellen who asserts his innocence. More powerfully in the final version’s Prologue (Grimes 1979: 4, lines 27-34) Peter himself asserts this.

In this scenario Britten indicates another seam of dramatization: the conflicting views of the men and women in the community. This resulted in some separate choruses which became less distinct in revision. It was, however, the germ of a distinction which found its full expression finally in the women’s quartet ending 2.1 (Grimes 1979: 29, lines 1-20). At this stage Britten favours the direct drama of a shipwreck and also exploits the unease associated with the strange and foreign. In the final version the strange and foreign element for the community in 1.1 is Peter and potentially Ellen (Grimes 1979: 9, lines 30-33).

In setting and opening Act 1 Scene 2 here is close to the final version, except that Peter is not present at the start but makes a dramatic entry (Grimes 1979: 17, SD after line 25) after the turmoil of the storm has increased with successive arrivals. Peter is not drunk in this final version but his version of the song (Grimes 1979: 19, lines 11 to 18) causes a temporary disruption before the more arresting arrival of Ellen and the new apprentice, a more human dramatic development and more pertinent to the progression of the plot than this earliest version’s momentary featuring of rocket and wreck.

**Scenario B (Pears)**

While Britten in Scenario A first creates a visual setting, Pears maps out the work conceptually in terms of the conflict of natural forces, the sea and the land and their personification in Peter and Ellen, with the boy the tension point of the conflict. The Landlord is also seen as being at the centre point and in the final text Auntie does
fulfil this position, avowing both her neutrality (Grimes 1979: 8, line 15) and empathy (Grimes 1979: 29, lines 7-8). More extreme than in the final text, however, is the contrast of Peter aligned with smugglers and Ellen with churchgoers. Unlike Crabbe’s Grimes there is no suggestion that Britten’s Peter is involved in this or comparable criminal activity like poaching. Ellen, on the other hand, decides at the last minute not to go to church (Grimes 1979: 20, line 12) and her arioso with the apprentice alternates with the chorus of churchgoers.

Two features stand out in this scenario. The first is Pears’s emotive focus on Ellen, beyond even her strong representation in 1.1 of Britten’s Scenario A. Her maternal instincts are emphasized (Scenario B, 25, 40-42) and she appeals to the Landlord for help when she perceives the apprentice in danger but, having realized her appeal is to an inappropriate person, does not pursue it but falls back on trust in God. When in Britten’s revision the Landlord became landlady the potential influence on Peter that Ellen hoped might result no longer existed, but then neither did Peter’s drinking problem. In this scenario Ellen appears as isolated as Grimes. To her it is the villagers that are ‘evil’ (70) whereas to them it is Peter who is ‘The Evil’ (75): an interesting choice of term, however, as it suggests a force operating within Peter independent of his wishes or a force imagined operating. Nevertheless a Peter who voluntarily commits suicide, as here, is less of a tragic figure than one who in the final version is ordered to commit suicide (Grimes 1979: 42, lines 32-3).

The second outstanding feature is Pears’s emotive focus on Peter. His failed relationship with his father lies at the root of his actions (Scenario B, 22, 58-9). Pears’s scenario, unlike Britten’s, which keeps to the narrative, drifts from time to time into libretto, for instance Ellen to the Landlord (50-53) and the extraordinary
outburst of Peter to his apprentice (59-62), which is the attempt to crystallize Peter’s feelings and explain his violent behaviour. It is powerful and moving but it also casts some light on the sexual connotations of the relationship between Peter and his apprentice, an area Britten would wish to avoid. That Peter (26) and the Landlord (45-9) might consider the apprentice ‘prey’ was a concept faithful to Crabbe’s Peter but not Britten’s as he evolved. In the development in the final text of Peter as a victim, not only were all suggestions of any criminal activity on his part removed, so were all references to his father. What does remain is no longer a ‘Ghosts scene’ as here (72), directly derived from Crabbe, but shadowy references to the ghosts (Grimes 1979: 31, lines 16-27; 41, lines 9-10).

The tendency of Pears to slip into speech finds its logical conclusion in his draft of a libretto for part of Act 1 Scene 1 at the end of this scenario. Did Britten ask him to do this, or was it his own initiative? Whatever the case, it was an exercise not repeated. The conversation (Scenario B, 78-96) is too refined and polite for the characters intended to be depicted and thus lacks realism. It improves with Ellen’s feisty defence of Peter, that of a woman to be reckoned with, unafraid to take on the community (97-104), as she does in the final text in offering to help collect Peter’s new apprentice (Grimes 1979: 9, lines 19, 21-28). This scenario also provides the earliest instance of the chorus as the antagonistic force of the community.

**Scenario C (Pears)**

Unlike Pears’s Scenario B, this is in terse, strict scenario narrative, probably because of its structuring by numbered musical items, a practice also undertaken in the
*Grimes* texts CD through additions by Britten. This suggests the structure was requested by Britten and it is notable that within it for the first time are placed the entr’actes which were later, more correctly, called interludes as they appear more frequently than between acts. The first (8) is already entitled ‘The Sea’: in text C Britten called it ‘*Everyday*, grey seascape’ (1.1 crit. app. INTERLUDE). The second, ‘Beginning of Storm’ (16) was not finally set but the third, ‘Storm increases’ (19) is the Storm Interlude between 1.1 and 1.2. This is because only in Scenario C is there an extra scene in Act 1 featuring Peter alone, with a possible appearance of his father’s ghost mooted (18). Once it was decided not to include Peter’s father, an apostrophe of the sea as a separate entity probably appeared otiose. The underlying concept, however, that Grimes should humbly address a force of nature survives powerfully in his ‘Great Bear’ aria in 1.2 (*Grimes* 1979: 17, lines 32-3; 18, lines 1-13).

Act 2 follows the pattern of Scenario B, being in three scenes. The first two scenes were later merged, so the fourth entr’acte (Scenario C, 33), while here between the scenes, corresponds to Interlude 3 in the final text beginning Act 2. The fifth entr’acte (40) equates with the passacaglia which is Interlude 4 in the final text, between 2.1 and 2.2. The sixth entr’acte (46) is placed between 3.1 and 3.2 as is Interlude 6 in the final text. It is interesting that 6 entr’actes are planned in this scenario. In the final text there are also 6 interludes, for while there is one less in Act 1 because ‘Beginning of Storm’ was not set, Britten added one (Interlude 5) at the beginning of Act 3. This is the first scenario to include a Prologue, though its content did not survive: Old Grimes never appeared. The only feature to remain in the final text was a duet by Peter and Ellen (*Grimes* 1979: 5, lines 1-30).
Scenario D (Britten, Pears)

This is the only scenario to feature the Prologue (2-4) in its final form (cf. Scenario C). Its second version, however, delays a court scene to Act 3 (29-32). The inclusion of Prologue is preferable as it gives an official (Coroner) and unofficial (Chorus) frame to the ensuing drama as well conveniently introducing its elements. In Act 2 there are 3 scenes, as in Scenarios BC, but only in this one is it made explicit that 2.1 is in Peter’s hut and Ellen is directing the action in wishing to remove the apprentice to safety (church) rather than, as in Scenarios BC and the final text, Peter directing the action in removing him from safety. In 3.1 Britten emphasizes the fury of the community (21) in contrast to Pears’s ‘Chorus of Horror’ in Scenario C (45). Ellen’s lament is now in this scene rather than 3.2 (Scenario C 50) which is closest to the final text in which the ‘embroidery aria’ on finding the boy’s jersey is her lament (Grimes 1979: 38, lines 5-18). In the second version there is no lament. 3.1 is restricted to an official verdict on Peter.

The attitude to Peter at this stage reflects Crabbe’s presentation. Britten assumes that Peter has killed his former apprentice (Scenario D, 3) and murders his replacement (18). Pears notes Peter’s satisfaction at being acquitted in the Prologue (39). Britten’s focus in the closing scene is on Peter’s madness (24, 34) though he also makes explicit only here that the opera is to end with the chorus of 1.1 (25), a ‘Chorus working’ (6-7).
Scenario E (Pears)

Pears returns to the narrative manner of Scenario B rather than the terse listing of Scenario C. It provides a modified version of Acts 2 and 3. Here Ellen rather tamely lets Peter have the apprentice for work on Sunday without demur and 2.2 is simply concerned with speculation about Peter, not the final 2.1 text’s dwelling on his conduct towards the boy and striking Ellen. In 2.3 in this scenario Peter’s anger and his intimidating practices are explained. It is also clear that it is the boy who finally panics as a result.

Scenario C’s 3.1 and 3.2 are here taken together. Here is the first indication that Peter’s final appearance takes place in a fog. In the final text this allows the dramatic device of a nearby hunting community nevertheless unable to reach Peter. As in Scenario B and Crabbe’s poem Peter’s mad scene includes the hallucination of the ghosts of his father and dead apprentices. But also as in Scenario B, a Peter who in a mad frenzy commits suicide is a less tragic figure than the one in the final text who obeys Balstrode’s order to commit suicide.

Again as in Scenario B, Pears has an emotive focus on Ellen. Her lament for Peter is included. The lament that survives in the final text, the ‘embroidery aria’, is not for Peter but the apprentice. It is unclear but a fascinating area for dramatic development why Ellen might blame herself (35) for Peter’s ruin. In the final text in 2.1 (Grimes 1979: 23, from line 35) rather does she analyze where they both went wrong, which leads to Peter striking her. This scenario, with Ellen submitting herself to God’s will (35), is in the saintly manner of Crabbe’s Ellen, as is immediately going back to normal routine (36-8). But that Ellen, of all people, might do this and
in effect expunge the memory of Peter, does not happen in the opera’s final text. Balstrode leads her sobbing home to lament in private. ‘He was very weak not bad’ (36) is a flimsy attempt at analyzing Peter. Crabbe’s Peter is both weak and bad. Slater’s Peter is stubborn and obtuse but not weak, severe in his treatment of his apprentice but not gratuitously so.
Appendix A:
Scenarios:
Texts

SCENARIO A

Act I Scene I

Aldeburgh

Sea shore, fisherman’s hut left. Sea diagonally centre back to right curtain breakwater.

Fishing boat is hauled in by men’s chorus. Women comment anxiously. Storm is brewing. Enter – character with story of rising tide & damage from North. Ellen enters; song, about Grimes. He is drinking & not working, no apprentice since last one died. Chorus suggests suicide; Ellen denies it (Probably fell off mast). Asserts Grimes was innocent; misunderstood. Blames sea as origin of all disaster – women agree. Men disagree. Climax. Enter a man hurriedly – strange foreign boat sighted in difficulties off Southwold. Man jumps to roof of hut & sights ship.

Scene II


1 * Act. I/Sc. I  3 left. Sea … right * 1. sea … r.  5 <B> Fishing  9 was <IW> innocent
10 Climax. *  ~  13 * Sc. II.  14 <Pub> Height night, * ~.  16 <Landlord.> Boarding
20 and <IW> X quarrel<s>  21 rocket … nearby, everyone * rocheat … nearbye. <People>
Everyone 22 Grimes, *  ~

1 Underlining  2 Sketch
**SCENARIO B**

The Sea v The Earth

(The Incalculable – (Secure – Unchanging)

Uncontrolled) cf. War Peace

Violence etc.

Peter Grimes v Ellen Orford 5

The boy

Smugglers  Landlord  Churchgoers

Act I

Scene I – The sea (still calmish) & the people (neutral) – 

Song about the sea & it’s effect on life.

Enter Ellen: tell people Grimes needs new apprentice – 
Scepticism on part of people – She reassures, only trouble no child.
She has control now. Enter Landlord, asks Ellen where Peter is – must see him.
She upbraids him with heady religiosity.

The storm begins.

They pull in the boats.

Scene II


Peter drinking in corner – Other cronies – Maids – Travellers entering, reporting 

on state of coast & sea – Enter Landlord, tells Peter there is a ship due tonight 

full of cargo for them – He must be on lookout. Starts a song to cheer everyone – 

Various verses – Peter sings his about his father (?) & his resentment – 

Rocket fired at height of song – Exit everyone except Peter, who goes on singing

& flops drunkenly – Reenter everyone, Ellen leading boy unconscious – 

Effect on Grimes. (Landlord curses loss of cargo) Ellen acclaims boy as her child, 

Grimes (aside) as his apprentice (prey?) – Chorus sing extraordinary happening – 

rescue of child –
Act II
Scene I  Ellen with boy – singing to him old stories – (Boy is dumb – learnt for 1st time). She pities him for not being able to speak – Wants to take him to church – Enter Peter – asks Ellen why boy is dressed so – E says she is taking him to C. Peter mocks her with her “flopping whiskies” says he needs boy for work. She accuses him of being godless & says he will come to bad end not like his good old father – (Accuses him of unkindness to the boy, rescued from the sea, who has found happiness on land) – Peter refuses to let boy go, gets violent – finally threatens Ellen with violence, who is amazed & says I never saw you so save once with another apprentice. Grimes curses her & tells her to go. Ellen goes & says she will.

Scene II  Outside the church – The service is going on off °°. Enter Ellen, breathless. She has run so far, & yet she is late – What will she do? She cannot stop the service – but must help the boy – She feels he is in danger – She loves the boy – she has never had a child of her own, & to her he is everything – God must help her – She prays – Enter Landlord – gaily taking his Sunday walk – Ellen sees him & asks his help to stop Grimes drinking & deteriorating – Landlord is gay & cynical – “In this world fools are preyed on; wise men get along as best they can, & if they occasionally prey, what harm? Fools deserve to be preyed on – You cannot get on with good words – Grimes is alright. 1 drop of drink doesn’t do any harm. A boy always gets better. Leave things as they are – Don’t worry – Take it easy – ”

Ellen: “You are faithless – loose & you are clever – but ordinary mortals need a saviour, need a help – Discipline must be found – One must choose one’s own – I have chosen God – My trust is in him – ” (The People in the church are singing God moves in a mysterious way) “Do you hear?”, she cries. – Landlord says: “I do not believe you, but I will go & see Grimes & what he is up to.” Exeunt together.
Scene III  Grimes & the boy –

P’s monologue to boy – admits his youth hurts him, his innocence galls him, his uselessness maddens him. He had no father to love him, why should he? His father only beat him, why should not he? “Prove yourself some use, not only pretty – work – not only be innocent. – work, do not stare; would you rather I loved you? You are sweet, holy etc. – but you must love me, why do you not love me? Love me damn you.”

Grimes short monologue to himself, goes to door & calls boy out.

Accidental murder – Knocking – Enter Landlord – Grimes’ remorse but terrified, recalls other apprentice, he will be lynched, dashes off.

Ellen & landlord see Grimes dashing off as they find body of boy – Ellen is overwhelmed – Landlord shocked but intelligent about how he could have died.

Act III Scene I  Local scene – Women collecting sticks or such, or Chorus of fishers or both. Enter Ellen in despair, looking for Grimes – she has seen landlord & wants to go to Grimes before the village is roused: villagers evil.

Gradual effect on chorus, they decide to help in chase.

Sun sets Empty stage. Enter Grimes – near crazy – Ghosts scene –

Grimes monologue. The Sea calls him. Just as he is about to leap in – Enter Ellen, ahead of crowd – She calls to him. Too late – he runs, & jumps in –

Enter crowd, bent on destruction.

That is impossible for The Evil has destroyed itself. Curtain.
Act I Scene I

ELLEN  How d’ye, Mary? Good afternoon, Sarah. Can you help me? Tell me, have you seen Grimes? I have had no sign of him all day.

MARY  Grimes has not been here, Ellen. Maybe he’s up at the market.

ELLEN  I was there. They had not seen him – Ah well! never mind – He is looking for a new apprentice – I hope he may find one.

CHORUS (1)  And that he’ll be luckier than the last.

CHORUS (2)  Luckier! You say – The boy was fortunate. He chose the easier way.

ELLEN  What do you mean?

CHORUS (1)  Why Ellen that man is not good for you. He is cruel and unkind to his boys. People say the boy was glad to die – Grimes made his life such a misery –

ELLEN  It is not true, and I will swear it. I know my Peter is a hasty man, And likes apprentices who know what hard work is.

And if they are lazy, why his hand is heavy –

But that he is bad at heart I do deny – If he has sinned, his bad companions made him do it. And as for that lad, God rest him, He was no saint, a trial to any master.
SCENARIO C

PETER GRIMES

Prologue
No. 1\(^{10}\) Ellen & Old Grimes waiting.
No. 2 Enter Peter, drunk, is rude to Grimes, rebuked by Ellen, Old Grimes asks for silence.
No. 3 Grimes’ last speech & death.
No. 4 Duet (Peter maudlin, Ellen strong & loving).

No. 5 Entr’acte. (The Sea).

Act I Scene I
No. 6 Chorus of Fishermen pulling in boats.
No. 7 Appearance of Grimes. His tale of the boy’s death.
No. 8 Reaction of chorus. Ellen defends Grimes strongly & promises will not recur.
No. 9 Entrance of A\(^{11}\) announcing high tide. Immediate resumption of work chorus. Exeunt – Grimes, Ellen.
No. 10 Entr’acte – Beginning of Storm.

Act I Scene II
No. 11 Grimes’ Apostrophe of Sea. (appearance of Old Grimes ghost?)
No. 12 Entr’acte – Storm increases.

Act I Scene III
No. 13 Chorus of confused servants, dwellers, travellers etc. Storm raging.
No. 14 Landlord starts drinking song.
No. 15 Entrance Grimes. He sings.
No. 16 Rocket. Exeunt all. Grimes alone. Return of all with boy.
No. 17 Ellen explains she will take boy & look after him.
No. 18 Final chorus & ensemble.

\(^{10}\) Numbering and punctuation  \(^{11}\) Awaiting designation
### Peter Grimes

#### Act II Scene I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Scenario</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Ellen’s Song (to Boy).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Enter Grimes drunk slightly &amp; refuses to let boy go.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Duet. &amp; Exit of Ellen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Grimes &amp; the Boy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Entr’acte.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Act II Scene II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Scenario</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Villagers going to church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Trio of gossips overheard by Ellen as she enters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Ellen’s aria. Entrance of Pubkeeper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Pubkeeper’s Song.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Duet &amp; Exeunt (Chorus off).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Entr’acte –</td>
</tr>
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#### Act II Scene III

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Scenario</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Grimes with the boy. Murder.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Act III Scene I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Scenario</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Stick-pickers chorus. Enter Ellen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Ellen’s Jacket Song.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Chorus of Horror. Ellen’s strength.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Entr’acte.</td>
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#### Act III Scene II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Scenario</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Grimes’ Mad scene.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Ellen’s Entrance, finds Grimes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Ellen’s lament.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Fishermen’s Song.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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33, 40, 46 Entr’acte. * Entracte. {40 ~ –}  
34 Act II Scene II * Act II Scene II  
41 Act II Scene III * Act II Scene 3  
43 Act III Scene I * Act III Scene 1  
[Enter Ellen.] 47 Act III Scene II *  
Scene II {placed before 46 with no line spacing between 46 and 48}  
48 Grimes’ * Grimes  
51 Fishermen’s * Fisherman’s

12 Word interpolated  
13 Presumed repeat

---

370
SCENARIO D

Version I

**Prologue** Magistrate <court> scene.
P.G. having done away with boy, <forbid> is let off with a warning.

*Act I. Sc. I.*14 Seashore.

Hauling in of boats. Working.

Storm Rising. P.G. has monologue about <sea> everything.

*Sc. II. Pub scene.*

Storm, arrival of Ellen & Boy

*Act II. Sc. I.* P.G.’s Hut.

Ellen comes for boy. P.G. refuses to let him go.

*Sc. II. Church scene.*

Ellen disturbed. Seeks advice from Villagers (Rumour chorus?).

*Sc. III.* P.G.’s Hut. Murder.

*Act III.*{Sc. I.} Beach.
Finding of Boy’s coat. 20
Fury of Villagers.
Ellen’s Lament.

*Act III.* Terrific court scene.
P.G. forbidden ever to have boy again.
P.G. is dismissed in disgrace.

{Sc. II.} Night
P.G.’s mad scene & death.
Chorus as Act I. Sc. I.

Epilogue. P.G. on marshes, goes mad & dies.

1-34 {Britten}

14 Designation of acts and scenes
< Act I Scene I – Seashore. – Men pulling in nets. – Grimes enters without boy –
    Explanations, indignations.
Grimes must come before magistrates.

<Act I Scene 2> [Prologue] Before the magistrate. –
    Grimes acquitted & exultant. >

< Act II The pub scene. The >

Act I. {Sc.}1. Seashore. nets. Boat being
    hauled in. Storm approaching –

35-40 {Pears} 41-2 {Britten}
SCENARIO E

Act II Scene I
Ellen & the boy. Grimes enters: he must have the boy for fishing – (News of a shoal). Ellen lets him have him – says as he will be out all day she will go over to friends at Snape (?)

Act II Scene II
Outside the Church: with the pub opposite. The church service is just coming to an end, but there’s just time for the landlord to emerge in front of his pub & have an aria, before the last hymn starts. The people come out & start talking to one another, Ellen among them. The three gossips talk about Grimes. Ellen overhears and when they go asks landlord about these rumours, has an aria about her doubts of Grimes, & her determination to win. The landlord comes out & is sceptical, & advises her to leave Grimes to himself: he’s not worth the trouble. She curses him slightly & once more determines to go & help G. The landlord shrugs and says he will help if he can and as some men come in to drink he welcomes them. Exit Ellen.

Act II Scene III
The hut, empty. Grimes & the boy come back from fishing, Grimes is furious; through the stupidity and carelessness of the boy nets have been lost & fish gone. He blames & his anger grows (as he drinks). He finally drives the boy back to the door over the cliff & in terror the boy opens it & dashes out – onto the rocks.

Act III Scene I
By the sea. The women are picking up sticks, & combing the beach after the storm. Ellen is there, mourning; the chorus stops, and she sings her song over the little cap or coat. Enter the landlord who goes up to Ellen and tells her he has done what she asked him to. He has seen Grimes, but Grimes refused to come with him, he was very afraid of the village & in a bad state (I would say, Ellen, he was nearly crazy) – but he wanted to see you & would meet you by the shore here before dawn tomorrow morning. He said – ”It was an accident Ellen, I did not kill him.” Ellen is thankful, promises to meet Grimes & exits – the chorus slowly go off and night falls – the fog comes up – at last enter Grimes, worn out, half mad, falls down. Slowly wakes up & has his mad scene – hallucinations – ghosts of the two boys & father – calls for Ellen – completely crazy – and as dawn breaks he staggers up & throws himself off headwater into the sea, as Ellen enters. She dashes up but too late – She weeps over him, has her lament, blaming herself & submitting to God’s will, asks God to let his soul rest in peace. He was very weak not bad. As she ceases, the fisher’s chorus can be heard slowly coming to work, & when they enter, she joins them to help with the boats.

1 Act II Scene I/Ellen * Act 2 Scene 1 Ellen 2 enters: * ~. 3 shoal. ~ 3-4 [says ... Snape(?)]
5 * Act 2 Scene 2 7 [service] 10-11 [asks ... rumours] 12 <comes out &>
13-14 <She … G.> 14-15 [and … can] 15 [Exit Ellen.] 16 Act II* Act 2 22
[she] 25 He * he 29 [is thankful] 35 him, * ~ 36 [very]

15 Text deleted 16 Text deleted
Appendix B: Drafts (Prologue)

Prologue

Interior of the Moot House, arranged as for Coroner’s Inquest.
Coroner, Mr Swallow, senior, at table on dais\(^\circ\), clerk at table below.
In the body of the room Ned Keene, Captain Balstrode, May Sanders, Dick Sanders,
James Hart\(^1\), Mr Horace Adams, the vicar of the parish, Ellen Orford,
Peter Grimes, and, standing with Peter Mr Swallow junior.

The Inquest is already in progress. Ned Keene is being sworn.

RECITATIVE\(^2\)

SWALLOW (senior) Say this after me. “I swear by Almighty God” –
NED KEENE “I swear by Almighty God” –
SWALLOW “That the evidence I shall give”
NED KEENE “That the evidence I shall give”
SWALLOW (senr) “Shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.”\(^3\)
SWALLOW You are an apothecary?
NED KEENE Some say a quack. 

(Ned is the kind of quack who takes the stuffing out of abuse by boasting of it – much as he displays his flowered waistcoat)

SWALLOW \(\checkmark\) On the night of the 14th inst\(^\circ\circ\) you were called to Peter Grimes’s hut to see the boy William Spode. When you arrived he was dead.

Ned nods his affirmative to each statement.

\(^{\circ}\)dais [a raised table] \(^{\circ\circ}\) inst [abbreviation of instant: of the current month]

\(^{0.4}\) Rev [Mr] [Slater] \(^{0.7}\) vicar [Slater] \(^{d0.7}\) Sentence theme \(^{d6}\) RECITATIVE [Britten] \(^{d8}\) Some people [SD] [reading from deposition] [Slater]

\(^{1}\) Original name \(^{2}\) Music indicator extended \(^{3}\) Line added
You had not attended the boy before though Ellen Orford had asked you to give him some medicine as he was ailing. You did not do so.

_Ned shakes his head_

**SWALLOW** Why?

**NED** Because I don’t work for nothing.

**SWALLOW** Thankyou. Stand down. Call Cap’n Balstrode.

_Balstrode goes into the witness box_

**SWALLOW (reads)** Cap’n Balstrode. You are a retired merchant seaman. [On the evening of the 12th instant you looked through your glass and saw the fishing boat “Billy Boy” putting out to sea.] [You saw Peter Grimes and William Strode on deck.] [You have heard Peter Grimes declare that he attempted to sail to London to sell his fish there: that his water-kegs were dry and the boy died on the way.] Is this consistent with what you saw?

**BALSTRODE** It is.

**SWALLOW** Call May Sanders.

_May Sanders enters the box_

**SWALLOW (reads)** May Sanders, you are the wife of Dick Sanders, a fisherman. You formed the opinion that the boy William Spode was being ill-treated by Peter Grimes. You spoke to Grimes and he answered you roughly.

**MAY (timidly)** Yes.

**SWALLOW (looks up)** What did you do then?

---

^ glass (spy-glass)

---

4 Line contracted  5 Layout of statement  6 Name reversed  7 Misnomer
I spoke to my husband.

Call Richard Sanders.

Richard Sanders. You have heard what your wife said. Have you anything to tell the court.

Peter Grimes works his boat with an apprentice. Always has.

You thought it was none of your business to meddle with the way another man ran his boat. You had heard complaints from many other people as well as your wife about Peter Grimes’s treatment of his apprentices. You are aware that one of Peter Grimes’s apprentices was killed falling from the mast-head.

May I put a question to the witness .... You thought it was the part of a sensible man to ignore the gossip of the Borough. You told your wife to hold her tongue.

I did.

Thank you.

Call James Hart.

James Hart. You are the landlord of the Green Man. You remember a quarrel between Grimes and some of your customers. You understood the cause of the dispute was Grimes’s treatment of his apprentices. What did you do?

Restored the peace.

As a respectable tradesman you consider it your duty to keep your nose out of matters that do not concern you.
JAMES ®
That is so. Will you write down that it is not by any wish of mine that I appear in this court. ®

SWALLOW (senior)
Call Peter Grimes

SWALLOW (junior)
I respectfully beg leave that we shall first hear the two witnesses I have called.

SWALLOW (senior)
Who are they?

SWALLOW (junior)
Mr Horace Adams ✓15, ✓16

Vicar enters box

SWALLOW (junior)
Mr Horace Adams, you are the vicar of this parish. You have more than once been asked by your parishioners to speak to Peter Grimes on this subject, and you have not done so.

ADAMS
I do not wish any conclusions to be drawn from this. ®

SWALLOW (junior)
Not even that you chose to ignore gossip? ✓18

ADAMS
I have not enough facts before me to form any® opinion.

SWALLOW (junior)
I submit that we are not here to speak of opinions ....
You did nothing.

ADAMS
I did nothing.

SWALLOW (senior)19 You did not consider any action necessary?

ADAMS ✓
I did nothing. ✓20

SWALLOW (junior) Ellen Orford. ✓21
Ellen Orford, you are a widow. You keep a school. As a
neighbour of Peter Grimes you have always befriended
him. You have had a hard life and you understood his
difficulties. You kept a friendly eye on his apprentices.
Including this one. When you last saw the boy you thought
he was run down and suggested a cordial. Have you
anything else to tell the court?

ELLEN

Peter Grimes was very fond of the boy. x

SWALLOW (junior)

Is it true that he named his boat “Boy Billy” after him?

ELLEN

He told me so and the boy was pleased.

SWALLOW (junior)

Peter Grimes. Will you go into the box.

SWALLOW (junior)

Tell the court the story in your own words.

Peter is silent

SWALLOW (junior)

Why did you sail for London?

PETER

The catch was too big to sell here.

SWALLOW (senior)

Did you know the water keg was almost empty when you sailed?

Peter is silent

SWALLOW (senior)

Tell us what happened, Grimes.

PETER

The fish died – and the boy.

SWALLOW (senior)

What did you do?

PETER

Threw the ® overboard and sailed back ® home.

SWALLOW (junior)

You mean threw the fish overboard.

Peter is silent

SWALLOW (junior)

The boy was accustomed only to river sailing. He had
not taken any long trips at sea and when the weather
turned ® rough he was frightened, was he not.

PETER (after a long pause)

He was frightened.

__________________________

x Line contracted  

y SP ambiguous  

z Lines added
SWALLOW (senior) That will do. Your witness may stand down.

SWALLOW (senior) As Coroner of this Borough I find that the death of William Spode was due to natural causes. Don’t go away yet, I have something else to say.

Peter Grimes, I will recommend you, for your own good not to employ another apprentice. If you take my advice you will obtain the assistance of another fisherman – one who can stand up for himself. We are not making any further investigation into this business: but take care in future.

He rises

CLERK (cries) The Court is rising.

Everyone stands. Swallow (senior) bobs jerkily in the general direction of his fellow-citizens and goes out by his private door. The people begin to go out of the court.

CURTAIN
{Draft: Act 1 Scene 1}

Scene One

Street by the sea: Moot Hall exterior with its outside staircase, next door to which is “The Green Man”. Ned Keen’s shop is at the street corner. On the other side breakwaters run down to the sea.

It is morning, before high tide, several days later.

Two fishermen are turning the capstan hauling in their boat. Prolonged cries as the boat is hauled ashore. Women come from mending nets to take the fish baskets from other fishermen who now disembark.  

A second boat is next hauled in.

CHORUS OF FISHERMEN AND WOMEN

HALF CHORUS

Oh, hang at open doors the net and cork,
While squalid sea-dames at their mending work
Welcome the hour when fishing through the tide
The weary husband throws his freight aside.

FISHERMEN

O, cold and wet and driven with the tide
Beat your tired arms against your tarry side.
Find rest in public bars. Diluted gin
Will aid the warmth that languishes within.

Two or three fishermen cross to “The Green Man” where James stands at the door.

FISHERMAN

James

JAMES

Morning ●

{SD} ×

---

1 Unusual spelling  
2 SD extended  
3 Suggested division of chorus  
4 After Crabbe  
5 SD discarded
Fisherman Robert Boles shouts from the boat

BOLES The gin’s poisoned ●

FISHERMAN Boles has gone Methody°

JAMES A man’s religion is his private life. ● ✓ @ 6

CHORUS Dabbling on shore half-naked sea-boys crowd 
Swim round a ship, or swing upon the shroud; 
Or in a boat purloined with paddles play 
And grow familiar with the watery way. 7

While the second boat is being hauled in, boys are scrambling over the first ✓ 8

The doctor goes down the street and into “The Green Man”.

FISHERMEN ✓ 9 Morning Mr Crabbe. ®

BOLES Doctor likes his drink. ● 10

CHORUS We have our ship-builders and our dry docks 
Launch the high sea-farer from the stocks. 
See the long keel which soon the waves must hide 
See the strong ribs which form the roomy side. ✗ 11, 12, 13

FISHERWOMAN 14 Storm?

2ND FISHERW Storm? d25

° Methody [Methodist (colloquial and regional)]
BALSTRODE
A long way out. Sea horses.
Of the springtides this is the highest
The wind is light but is against it.
Watch for your lives if the wind changes @15

CHORUS
And if the spring tide eats the land again ®
Till even the cottages and cobbled walks of the fishermen
Are billets for thievish waves which take
As if in sleep, thievish for thievings sake - - -

Rector comes down the street.16

RECTOR ®
Near high tide?

BALSTRODE
Safe if it turns.17

Mrs. Sedley comes down street, Ned Keens18 comes out of his shop.

KEENE
Wherever goes Rector the widow’s astern. ®19

20MAY SANDERS
Weekday prayers! ®21

BOLES
Yet hell shall burn. ●22

Rector and Mrs. Sedley pass towards church ®

CHORUS
Because that tide which no walls can withstand
Laughs at the claims of reason and of land
And the more anger rises, waves the more calm
Soak both the alarmist and the cause of his alarm ®x23

15 An evolving text 16 An evolving SD 17 An evolving line 18 Unusual spelling 19 Line revised
20 Entrance unspecified 21 Line revised 22 The ‘Good morning’ sequence evolution 23 Lines revised and deleted

382
Two fishermen come out of “The Boar”. Auntie follows and leans against the doorpost. ®

NED I’m coming tonight to see your nieces. ®

AUNTIE “The Boar” is at its patron’s service. ●

Swallow Junior comes down street. ®

NED That Swallow has a fish to fry. ®

AUNTIE No fish of mine. ×

CHORUS ® For us sea-dwellers, this sea-birth can be Death to our gardens of fertility. Yet only such contemptuous springtide can Tickle the virile impotence of man.

PETER GRIMES calls (off) Hi. ® Give us a hand.

Chorus stops.

PETER Haul the boat. ®

MAY (shouts back) Haul it yourself Grimes. ®

Peter appears hauling on rope ®

PETER Somebody take a hand. ®

Nobody does. ® The fishermen and women turn their backs on him or slouch away awkwardly.
(QUARTET)\textsuperscript{33}

Balstrode

I’ll take a hand, the tide is near the turn. \textsuperscript{34}
d55

Makes rope fast to capstan. \textsuperscript{35}

Swallow (turning capstan)\textsuperscript{36}

If all were prudent nothing would get born.

Grimes goes back to the boat. \textsuperscript{37}

May Sanders \textsuperscript{(who stands with arms akimbo watching)}

I notice if this fisherman’s to be
Kept from respectable society
He’ll find his level and he’ll take his ease
With shipless mates and lawyers without fees. \textsuperscript{38} d60

Balstrode

O haul away. The tide is near the turn.

Swallow\textsuperscript{\downarrow}

Clocks have a moral sense but tides have none.

Auntie \textsuperscript{(at the door of “The Boar”) \textsuperscript{39}}

Parsons may moralise and fools decide
But a good tradeswoman takes neither side
And if a man drinks quiet and can pay
No decent landlady turns trade away. \textsuperscript{40} d65

May

O let these captains hear, these scholars learn.
Their levity brings down the people’s scorn.

Auntie

I have my business. Let these scholars learn
Hell may be fiery but the pub won’t burn. \textsuperscript{41} d70

Balstrode &

The tide that floods will ebb. The tide, the tide will turn.

Swallow\textsuperscript{\downarrow}

\textsuperscript{33} Music and performance indicator  \textsuperscript{34} Line revised  \textsuperscript{35} SD later deleted  \textsuperscript{36} SP revised and SD added  \textsuperscript{37} SD revised  \textsuperscript{38} Lines rewritten and reallocated  \textsuperscript{39} Lines revised  \textsuperscript{40} Lines heavily revised  \textsuperscript{41} SP revised
The boat is hauled up. Grimes appears.  

SWALLOW Grimes. You won’t need help from now. I’ve got a boy for you. ®

KEENE You’ve got a boy? ®

SWALLOW I called at the workhouse yesterday. All you do now is fetch the boy. We’ll send the carrier with a note. He’ll bring your bargain on his cart. (shouts) Jim Hobson. We’ve a job for you.

CARRIER (enters) Cart’s full sir. More than I can do.

SWALLOW Listen Jim. You’ll go to the workhouse and ask for Mr Swallow’s purchase. Bring him back to Grimes.

CARRIER I’ve got no room.

SWALLOW Hobson. You’ll do what there is to be done. 

Fishermen and women gather round.

1st FISHERMAN Grimes has got another boy.

2nd FISHERMAN What did the Coroner have to say?

1st FISHERMAN Young Swallow’s done the deal for him.

2nd Crowner will draw his fee again. ×

MAY SANDERS Is this a Christian country when Workhouse children are such slaves Their souls and bodies go for cash?

GRIMES Hobson. Will you do your job?

Ellen Orford has come in.

CARRIER I have to go from pub to pub Picking up parcels. I have to wait.

---

*d71.1 A [added by hand to B by Slater]  d73 <a boy for you> [you a boy.] [Slater]
d74 <You’ve got a boy?> [Another boy?] [Slater]  d86-9 {deleted by Britten}
d93 <GRIMES> [SWALLOW] [Britten]

42 Source A ceases  43 Line revised  44 Lines deleted  45 SP revised
My journey back is late at night.
Mister, you find some other road
To bring your boy back

You’re afraid?

Mister. You find some other road.

Carter, I’ll mind your passenger.

What? You’ll be Grimes’s messenger?

I shall go with you.

You, a schoolmam
Setting yourself to help condemn
The workhouse soul with Peter Grimes!

Whatever you say I’m not ashamed.

The carter goes from pub to pub,
Picking up parcels. I shall wait.
The child needs comfort late at night,
He needs a welcome on the road
To a strange place. He’ll be afraid.

Mrs. Orford is talking sense.
MAY S\(^{53}\)

Ellen, you’re leading us a dance,
Fetching a boy for Peter Grimes.\(^{54,55,56}\)

ELLEN

Let her among you that is without fault ®
Cast the first stone
And let the Pharisees and the Sadducees ®
Give way to none.

But anyone who has ever felt his pride ®\(^{57}\)
Humbled so deep
There was no corner he could hide ®\(^{58}\)
Even in sleep.

Will have no trouble to discover how
A schoolteacher
Widowed and lonely finds delight
Even in a chore.

You ask me why I pity: you well know
Pity has never moved a woman far.
You ask me why I go: then you can say
Better to give and go than to withhold and stay. \(^{59}\)

\((as \ she \ moves \ up \ the \ street)\)

Mr Hobson, shall I sit in front? ●

CARRIER

You’ll take whichever seat you want. ●\(^{60}\)

\textit{Dr. Crabbe comes out of “The Boar”}.

\begin{tabular}{l}
\textbf{MAY (jeers)} & Had a good wet sir? \\
\end{tabular}

\begin{tabular}{l}
\textbf{d114} <MAY S > [CHORUS] {Britten} \\
\textbf{d115a-e} [Slater] \(^{7}\) & \textbf{CHORUS} & On the road to Market Town & See the well-dressed buyers come & Proud and pursy, broad-cloth-clad & Planning bargains to be had & In the nightmare Market Town. & d115a \\

d115f & [MAY I’ll go fetch Swallow sen>] {Britten} & [MAY I’ll fetch the crowner. He’ll see Grimes.] & [Slater, deleted by Britten] & d115g {ELLEN Whatever you say I’m not ashamed} & [Britten] & d116 <that is> without {Britten} & d118 <the> Sadducees {Britten} & d120 <anyone who has ever felt> [whosoever feels] {Britten} & d122 <was> no corner he <could> [is] no corner he [can] {Britten} & d128-31 {deleted by Slater} & d132 <shall I sit in front?> [where’s your cart? I’m ready.] {Slater} & d133 <You’ll take whichever seat you want.> [Up there. I can wait.] {Slater} B \\
\end{tabular}

\(^{53}\) SP revised \(^{54}\) Chorus inserted \(^{55}\) Line added, revised and deleted \(^{56}\) Line added \\
\(^{57,58}\) Line revised \(^{59}\) Lines deleted \(^{60}\) Line rewritten
POLLY BOLES
Morning doctor. d135

ROBT BOLES
Hell fire will make your dry throat hotter. 61

Dr. Crabbe touches his hat politely and goes up the street passing Grimes who is watching Ellen get on to the carrier’s cart. Mrs. (Nabob) Sedley appears. x 62

Mrs. S (whispers)  Mr. Keene.
NED  At your service.
Mrs. S (whispers)  Mr. Keene
Have you my pills? I mustn’t be seen By the dear rector.
NED  I’m sorry mum - x 63
Mrs. S (whispers)  My sleeping draught -
NED  The laudanum
Is out of stock and being brought By Mr. Carrier Hobson’s cart. He’s back tonight.
Mrs. S (stamps)  x 65  Good lord, good lord.
NED (leisurely)  x 66  Meet us both at this pub, the Boar. Auntie’s we call it. It’s quite safe. d150
Mrs. Sedley  I’ve never been in a pub in my life.
NED  At half past ten.
Mrs. S (changing tone as rector appears)
The dear rector!
NED  He’s the true quack, I the true doctor. x 67

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61 Text relocation suggested  62 SDs and lines later deleted  63 Lines largely deleted
64 Performance indicator added  65, 66 Performance indicator later deleted  67 Lines deleted
QUINTET (gay)\textsuperscript{68}

RECTOR Good morning, good morning. d155

NIECES (at the pub door) Good morning dear rector. ®\textsuperscript{69}

NED Had auntie no nieces we’d never respect her.

RECTOR Good morning, good morning.

AUNTIE\textsuperscript{70} Good morning Mr Adams. ®\textsuperscript{71}

NED If you have a spare rib you’ll find that it’s madam’s.\textsuperscript{72} d160

Vicar and Mrs. S pass along street. Auntie and nieces go inside. °\textsuperscript{73}

BALSTRODE Tide’s past the turn. ®

GRIMES Still rising.

BALSTRODE Ay.

A weight of water is thrust heavily

Into the Channel from the North Sea. ×\textsuperscript{74} d165

Swallow Senior comes out of the Boar wiping his mouth.

May Saunders and Robert Boles go to him.

MAY You should be told sir. Peter Grimes

Has a new boy for his cruel games.

Carrier’s fetching him with Ellen Orford.

BOLES We warn you in the name of the Lord

SWALLOW What do you warn me of? d170

MAY This Grimes

Has a new boy for his cruel games.

\textsuperscript{68} Music and performance indicator \textsuperscript{69} Line revised and line added \textsuperscript{70} Position unspecified \textsuperscript{71} Line revised \textsuperscript{72} Lines relocated \textsuperscript{73} SD relocated \textsuperscript{74} Lines later deleted
SWALLOW (calls) Mr Grimes

SWALLOW JUNIOR (comes up) Good morning father.

SWALLOW SENR Are you in this? d175

SWALLOW JUNR I act for Peter. ❇️

SWALLOW SENIOR Peter Grimes. It is on record
On the 12th instant, in my court
You did appear as witness called
To view the body of William Strode ❇️
At the inquiry aforesaid
Do you remember what the court said?

GRIMES Are you talking to me?

SWALLOW (angry) Yes.

PETER Are you sure? d185

SWALLOW Of course.

PETER I don’t know who you are.

SWALLOW Look here sir – ❇️

PETER I’ve my work to do.
If you ❇️ don’t mind I’ll say good day.

He leaves both Swallows high and dry. ❇️

BALSTRODE (leaves his seat on the breakwater to point seaward with his glass)
An hour ago the tide was due
To turn. The tide is rising now. ❇️

BOLES Look out for squalls.

BALSTRODE Make your boat fast.

MAY Shutter the windows. d195

DICK SAUNDERS Bring home the nets

---

75 SD and lines deleted 76 A repeated misnomer 77 Lines deleted 78 Lines revised
A high tide coming

Will eat the land

A tide no breakwaters withstand.

Turn to the watery world. But who to thee

(A wonder yet unviewed) shall paint the sea?

Various and vast, sublime in all its forms,
When lulled by breezes or when roused by storms

Its colours changing, when from clouds and sun
Shade after shade upon the surface run,
Embrowned and horrid ® now, and now serene
In limpid blue and ever-changing green

Turn from the tide the tide that overflows
Wind-laden, first with gentle swell that blows
Presently to a storm which calendars
Will mark and marvel in the coming years. ×✓

Chorus goes off gradually till only Peter, Swallows, Boles and Balstrode remain. 80

Fasten your boats, the spring tide’s here:
With a gale behind!

Is there much to fear?

O in this spring-tide you would say the sun
had been drowned also, and that one by one
the waves wash over it, and the waves shout
with the diffused glory as they toss about.

Turn from the tide, the tide that overflows
wind-laden, for its murmuring power will blow
tonight into a storm that calendars
will boast and marvel at in coming years.

Chorus goes off gradually till only Peter, Swallows, Boles and Balstrode remain. 80

Fasten your boats, the spring tide’s here:
With a gale behind!

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with the diffused glory as they toss about.

Turn from the tide, the tide that overflows
wind-laden, for its murmuring power will blow
tonight into a storm that calendars
will boast and marvel at in coming years.

80 SD variation 81 Reallocation suggested
PETER\textsuperscript{82} Only for the goods you’re rich in.  
It won’t drown your conscience, it might flood your kitchen.

BOLES (\textit{passionately}) \textsuperscript{83} The high tide swallows up the shores,  
Repent!  
\textit{(He goes)}

PETER\textsuperscript{84} And keep your wife upstairs.  

SWALLOW SENIOR (\textit{goes to Peter})  
You do not hurry like the rest  
To mind your house, make your boat fast.

PETER My house is sleep: my boat is toil.

SWALLOW JUN A man of sense ignores a gale.

SWALLOW SENR Let’s gossip while the tide floods in.  

PETER You should address me through your son. \textsuperscript{x85}

SWALLOW S May I speak as a friend?

PETER Not being one.

SWALLOW S Why trouble to defy opinion?  
Consider. Are you being wise? \textsuperscript{86}

PETER In what?

SWALLOW S In buying a new apprentice. \textsuperscript{x87}

PETER I have no choice.\textsuperscript{88}

SWALLOW S The will is free.

PETER I have no choice.  

\textit{Again he walks away}\textsuperscript{89}

\textsuperscript{82} Reallocation suggested  \textsuperscript{83} Line added  \textsuperscript{84} Reallocation suggested  \textsuperscript{85} Lines deleted  \textsuperscript{86} Lines revised  \textsuperscript{87} Lines deleted  \textsuperscript{88} A position of principle  \textsuperscript{89} SD precision
BALSTRODE
The German Sea
Piles up these waters which will flood
Everything east® of Yarmouth roads.\(^90\)

SWALLOW S
My boy, remember what I say.

They go out

BALSTRODE
Mind your boat. That’s a better way. \(^\text{Balstrode goes}^91\)

PETER (alone)
These mice are frightened, frightened. They
Who sleep at night are numb by day.
We know no land unless we plumb the sea.

Young stranger, \(^92\) we do well to be
Outside the painted doors that they
Bolt on the spring tide and our gaiety.

Our fishing hut is bare. At least
No father rules its empty feast.
Young stranger. Shall we sail till we are lost?

I have a father in the sea
Scolding from tides, and it was he
Who made the laws that we shall disobey.

Young stranger, shall we sail beyond
The borough streets, the timid land
And drown in our own sea the daily round?

This time there’ll be no quarrels, this
Time our wills not cross.
Stranger, we’ll find out what the others missed. \(^\circ\)^93

Two others sailed the boat with me.
We shared luck. It was all unlucky.
Young Stranger, we’ll sail far out, but they --- but they…. \(^\circ\)^94

CURTAIN

\(^{90}\) Line revised \(^{91}\) Lines and SDs deleted \(^{92}\) The concept of the stranger \(^{93, 94}\) Line revised
Interior of “The Boar”. Auntie and Mrs (Nabob) Sedley at the door. Auntie is holding the door with difficulty against the wind. 

AUNTIE Past closing time. ® 
MRS N He said half past ten. 
AUNTIE Who? 
MRS N Mr Keene. 
AUNTIE Him and his women. d5 
MRS N Referring to me? 
AUNTIE Not at all, not at all. What do you want? 
MRS N Rest from the storm. ² 
AUNTIE This is the sort of petty kindness That makes a publican lose her license. Keep in the corner out of sight. ³

Dick Sanders and another fisherman enter. ®⁴ They struggle with the door.

DICK Phew, that’s a bitch of a gale allright. ®⁵
AUNTIE (nods her head towards Mrs Nabob) Sh-h-h.
DICK Sorry. I didn’t see you, miss. d15 That’s a regular caution that is ®⁶
AUNTIE
She’s meeting Ned Keene. ®

DICK
What Ned? ®

AUNTIE
He’s looking after her heart attack. d20

DICK
Bring us a pint.

AUNTIE
Past closing time.

DICK
You fearful old female. What’s on your mind? 8

AUNTIE
The storm.

Robert Boles and other fishermen enter. The wind howls through the door and again there is difficulty in closing it.

BOLES
Did you hear the tide Has broken across the Lowestoft road? d25

He leaves the door open too long so the shutters blow open and a window blows out 9

DICK (shouts)
Get those shutters

AUNTIE (screams as they jump to it) Ow!

DICK
You fearful female why do you Leave your windows naked? d30

AUNTIE
Ow!

DICK
Better strip a niece or two And clamp your shutters. Two nieces run in hysterical. 10

NIECE 1
Oo! Oo!

NIECE 2
Oo! d35

7 Line not reallocated 8 Line reallocated : a more considerate approach 9 Bare SD 10 Bare SD
{NIECE 2} It’s blown our bedroom windows in.

NIECE 1 Oo we’ll be drowned.

DICK Perhaps in gin.

NIECE 2 I wouldn’t mind if it didn’t howl.
It gets on my nerves.

NIECE 1 We’ll all be drowned.

NIECE 2 I wouldn’t mind if it didn’t howl.
Stop that howling.

DICK You think we
Would stop our storm for such as ee?
I always knew how it would be.
Nieces all over palpitations.
Auntie, where d’you get your relations? ®

AUNTIE Loud man I never did have time
For the sort of creature that spits in his wine.
A joke’s a joke and fun is fun
And a nice man’s thankful for what’s done ®

NIECES For his peace of mind. ✓

AUNTIE Loud man, you’re glad enough to be
Playing your cards in our company.
A joke’s a joke and fun is fun
And a nice man’s thankful for what’s done ®

NIECES For his peace of mind.

MRS NABOB This is no place for me.

AUNTIE Loud man, are you the kind that beats
His wife for love on Saturday nights? ®
A joke’s a joke and fun is fun
And a nice man’s thankful for what’s done.

---

*d38 <DICK> [BALST.] [Britten] d45 as <ee> [you] [Britten] d46-8 <I always knew how it would be./Nieces all over palpitations./Auntie where d’you get your relations?> [Coming all over palpitations!/Auntie, get some new relations.] [Britten] d52 what’s [been] [Britten] d53 {a} [MRS NABOB This is no place for me] [Britten] d57 what’s [been] [Britten] d60-61 <Loud ... nights?> [Are you the man that boasts that he/Flogs his love & his nutmeg tree.] [Britten] d63 what’s [been] [Britten]*

^11 Lines not reallocated but revised  ^12 Line revised: Auntie’s response  ^13 Line added  ^14 Lines revised and later deleted
NIECES  For his peace of mind

MRS NABOB  This is no place for me.

✓ Boles rises unsteadily

DICK  Serve us the drinks. Give us a round. ®×\(^{15}\)

BOLES  I’m drunk. Drunk.

DICK  You’re a Methody scoundrel.®\(^{16}\)

BOLES (staggers to one of the nieces)  Is this a niece of yours?

AUNTIE  That’s so  d\(^{70}\)

BOLES  Who’s her father?

AUNTIE  Who wants to know?

May Sanders comes in.
There is the usual struggle with the door ®‡\(^{17}\)

MAY  There’s been a landslide up the coast ‡\(^{18}\)

BOLES  Make way, woman, I want your niece.×\(^{19}\)

I want to pay my best respects
to the beauty and misery of her sex.

DICK\(^{20}\)  Old Methody, you’d better tune
your piety to another hymn.

BOLES  I want her

DICK  Sh-h-h-h.

AUNTIE (cold)  Turn that man out.

\(^{15}\) Line revised and later deleted  \(^{16}\) Line reallocated and revised  \(^{17}\) SD revised and relocated  \(^{18}\) Line reallocated and relocated  \(^{19}\) Line deleted  \(^{20}\) Line reallocated
DICK
Auntie, he’s a local preacher
He’s lost the way of carrying liquor.
He means no harm.

BOLES
No. I mean love. d85

DICK
Come on boy.

**Boles hits him. Mrs Nabob screams**
**Dick quietly overpowers Boles and sits him in a chair**

DICK
We live and let live.
And look - we keep our hands to ourselves. ²¹

*Door opens. The struggle is worse than before as Ned Keene gets through* ²²
**Cap’n Balstrode follows him**

NED
Have you heard there’s been a break
Up by Peter Grimes’s hut? d90

MRS NABOB
Thank God you’ve come

NED
You won’t blow away.

MRS NAB
That carrier’s over half an hour late.

BALSTRODE
He’ll be later still: the road’s under flood.

MRS N
I can’t stay longer. I refuse. d95

NED
You’ll have to stay if you want your pills.

MRS N
With drunken females and in brawls.

NED
They’re auntie’s nieces, that’s what they are,
And better than you for kissing ma.
Mind that door. d100

*The door opens again. Mrs. N. faints.*
**Peter Grimes has come in. He stands by the door.** ²³, ²⁴

---
²¹ Sentiments later elaborated ²² SD revised ²³ SD revised and later extended ²⁴ Lines added and later relocated
NED (attending to Mrs Nabob) Get the brandy, aunty.®

AUNTIE Who’ll pay?

NED Her. I’ll charge her for it.

Peter sits down. The others move away from that side of the table. Peter is without oilskins and soaking. He looks wild.

NED This widow’s strong as any two Fisherwomen that I know.
Everybody’s very quiet.

They don’t answer him.
Silence is broken by Peter, as if thinking aloud -

PETER Among the constellations where earth moves
Imagined exhalation
of human grief
Breathes a solemnity in the deep night.

Who can decipher
in storm or starlight
The written character
of a friendly fate –

As the sky turns, the world for us to change? 

MAY He’s mad or drunk.

FIRST NIECE Why’s that man here?

Silence again. Then muttering in undertones

2ND NIECE He’s nothing dearie you need fear.

1ST He looks as though he’s nearly drowned.

2ND I wouldn’t mind if he didn’t howl.

---

Line revised
An unusually prescriptive SD
SD later relocated
Layout of soliloquy
Lines added and later revised
Lines later reallocated
Line later rewritten and allocation revised
Lines, with allocation revised, as part of an extended ensemble section
AUNTIE

Can anybody sing a round? ×³³, ³⁴

_Balstrode begins the round._ ³⁵

BALSTRODE

Here the wind blows every day
Wind and master steal our pay
Our bones ache our friends say nay.  
Loneliness is one.  d₁₂₅

DICK ³⁶

Here the wind blows every day
Wind and master steal our pay
Our bones ache our friends say nay:
Two and it is gone.  d₁₃₀

AUNTIE

Here the wind blows every day
Wind and master steal our pay
Our bones ache our friends say nay:
Three the rival’s come.

---

\[Grimes strikes him. Dick intervenes.\] ³⁹

AUNTIE

For God’s sake help me keep the peace
D’you want me up at the next Assize?  d₁₂₆

DICK

Can’t anybody sing a round?²⁴⁰] ³⁴³ [Slater]  d₁₂₂

---

³³ Line later deleted ³⁴ Interpolated texts ³⁵ A stymied SD ³⁶ Line not reallocated ³⁷ Lines later revised ³⁸ Line not reallocated ³⁹ SD revised ⁴⁰ Line reallocated and revised
NIECES

Here the wind blows every day
Wind and master steal our pay
Our bones ache our friends say nay:
Four, the game’s begun.

BOLES

Here the wind blows every day
Wind and master steal our pay
Our bones ache our friends say nay.
Five is flesh and bone.

MAY

Here the wind blows every day
Wind and master steal our pay
Our bones ache our friends say nay:
Six o’clock it’s born.

NED

Here the wind blows every day
Wind and master steal our pay
Our bones ache our friends say nay:
Seven, Creation’s done.

FISHERMEN CHORUS

Here the wind blows every day
Wind and master steal our pay
Our bones ache our friends say nay:
Eight is bells of doom.

GRIMES

Here the wind blows every day
Wind and master steal our pay
Our bones ache our friends say nay:
Nine and you are down.

FISHERMEN

Here the wind blows every day
Wind and master steal our pay
Our bones ache our friends say nay:
Ten you’re carried home.
At the climax of the round the door opens to admit Ellen Orford, the boy and the carrier. All three are wet, muddy, bedraggled.

CARRIER
   The bridge is down. We half swam over.

NED
   And your cart? Is it seaworthy?

   The women go to Ellen and the boy. Auntie fusses over them. May reproaches

MAY
   Serves you right Ellen. d165

AUNTIE
   My dear, There’s brandy and some hot water to spare.

NIECES
   Let’s look at the boy.

ELLEN (rising)
   Let him be. Let them warm up They’ve been half drowned.

ELLEN (she protects him from them)
   Not for such as you. 50

NIECES (admiring)
   Nice sweet thing. d170

PETER
   Let’s go. You ready?

AUNTIE
   Let them warm up
   They’ve been half drowned.

PETER
   Time to get off. d175

AUNTIE
   Your hut’s washed away.

PETER
   Only the cliff.
   Young stranger. Come. 51

   The boy hesitates. Then goes to him.

ELLEN
   Wait.

PETER
   Young stranger. Come. 52 d180

   They go out. There is a moment’s silence.
   Then

CURTAIN

49, 50 Britten marginal note 51 The early concept of the stranger 52 Line revised
{Draft: Act 2 Scene 1}
Act Two. Scene One

{ELLEN} Where your worries are not like people
But like things: things you can grapple.
I’ve got good hopes because of that
Of you and Peter, John. I sit
Watching you both in your hut.
I’ve done it this three weeks. I think
They’re not with people: they’re with Things.

JOHN When are you going to marry Peter Grimes? ●× 2, 3

Bell music\(^4\)

ELLEN Morning Dick. Good morning May

May and Dick Saunders enter in their Sunday clothes

MAY Are you going to waste this Sunday
Shelling peas when this young boy
Should be shown the better way. ②

ELLEN He’ll have his Sunday morning sleep
Here in his Sunday suit. The sea
Will calm him more than morning prayer.

MAY You’re wicked Ellen.

ELLEN You’re a pair
Of clattering churchbells. When we see
You start the rest are on their way.

May and Dick go towards church

{ELLEN} What did you say John? There is May
Always takes the political view.
She’d make a parliament debate
If only she knew how to start
On selling orphan boys like you
To any bidder that can buy.
We know better you and me.

\(^1\) Lines lost  \(^2\) Line rewritten  \(^3\) Lines deleted  \(^4\) SD added
{ELLEN} We’ll say our prayers to the salt old sea
And make our dinner, shall we John?
You’re very quiet. But you could have gone ®
If you’d asked? Would you like to? d30

He doesn’t answer

{ELLEN} Well? Yes or No? ®

JOHN Tell me what I asked just now.

Others are going to church

ELLEN Here they all come. Here’s Polly Boles
Risking a row, for Robert will
Curse when he finds out where she’s been ®
Look there’s Swallow and Mr his father, ®
The smart one and the grave old lawyer –
They were a partnership until
The too smart junior partner fell ®
Into the money-making trick.
So now he teaches father. Look
Here’s doctor Crabbe, they say he writes
Verses about us and our lives.
Casually, the rector strolls
Mrs Nabob at his heels. d45

All go inside church

JOHN Now they’ve all gone in at last
Please tell me Ellen what I asked. ®

In church hymn-singing has begun

Hymn off

{CHORUS} Now that daylight fills the sky
We lift our hearts to God on high

______________________________
{very} quiet {Slater}  d31  {Well? Yes or} No? {Slater}  d33 {all} come
d34-35 [Dressed up in her Sunday clothes/Spiting Robert’s Methody groans] {Slater}
d36 {Mr} his {father} [senior] {Slater}  d39 {The ...fell} [The junior broke away and fell]
{Slater}  d46 {JOHN Now ... last}  {ELLEN Now they’re all inside at last.} [placed before d45.1]
d49 [That he in all we do or say/Would keep us free from harm today.]{Britten}

5 An improved revision  6 An arty revision  7 A weaker revision?
ELLEN  John. You know what an inquest is. You must have heard some of the stories Of the trouble Peter had before

Hymn off

{CHORUS}  That he in all we do or say Would keep us free from harm today. × 8

ELLEN  When I knew you were coming, I Said, this is where we start to try To take things in hand. Does this Sound like interferences?

Morning Prayer is beginning. We hear the Rector’s voice

{RECTOR}  Wherefore I pray and beseech you, as many as are here present, to accompany me with a pure heart and humble voice, saying after me ...

and the Congregation

{CHORUS}  Almighty and most merciful father, we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep.

ELLEN  (the prayer continues through Ellen’s song)

A friend in season Saved one from prison Bystanders grumbled × 9

Ellen is in a brown study°

JOHN  Have you forgotten that I’m here?

ELLEN  Have I forgotten No. And yet That is my longing To forget.

Have I forgotten No. Yet all Loving’s aim is @ 10 To ignore

°brown study [a state of mental abstraction]

8 Lines deleted and lines added 9 A weaker revision? 10 An improved revision
{ELLEN} Have I forgotten
Yes. Both you
And others to
Remember who!

And all who are
Remembered not
All murdered by
My hidden thought or
Your jealousy
is the invader
that makes love
resemble murder\textsuperscript{11}

JOHN Ellen, d’you want me to go away? \textsuperscript{12}

ELLEN There’s a tear in your coat. Was that done
Before you came? \textsuperscript{13}

JOHN Yes\textsuperscript{14}

ELLEN That was done yesterday.
Come here. Take your hand away
Your neck’s bruised

(Undoes his short collar)

Why
Do you try to hide?
The weal’s ugly. Has it broken the skin?
Well .... we’ve begun.
Peter leathered\textsuperscript{9} you!

JOHN Don’t tell him!

ELLEN I’ve
Ointment at home that will soothe.
We’ll go soon.

JOHN Don’t tell him. \textsuperscript{15}

In Church

{CHORUS} O Lord open thou our lips
And our mouth shall shew forth thy praise
O God make speed to save us
O Lord make haste to help us.

\textsuperscript{9}leathered [thrashed with a leather thong]
\textsuperscript{11}A problem song and alternative lines
\textsuperscript{12}Music indicator
\textsuperscript{13}Interpolated text
\textsuperscript{14}A weaker revision?
\textsuperscript{15}Lines deleted
{CHORUS} Glory be to the Father & to the Son & to the Holy Ghost
As it was in the beginning is now & ever shall be
World without end. Amen
Praise ye the Lord
The Lord’s name be praised
d110

JOHN (Don’t tell him Ellen)³⁶

ELLEN Shall we make a bargain John
On your and my curriculum? ¹⁷
Sure you’re not too young to know
What the roots of sorrow are.
Death’s tremendous wings are less
Frightening than shapelessness.
Life still needs its holidays
(As God is childish and wants praise).

Peter Grimes has made a bargain
d120
Sunday is your and my demesne⁶.
We’ll govern like a famous king
Whose lands bring tourists globe-trotting
Relaxed, to watch his discipline.

Perhaps I’m sounding like a school mam
Maxims her aged soul to damn. ²⁰
And yet the gossips know that I
Have watched a bankrupt husband die
Suffering daughters’ shrill defiance ²®
At half-wit mother’s usual preference ²®
For sons who soon found that a reason
For cursing mother’s love in prison. ²® ²⁹

So we’ll still make a bargain John
On your and my curriculum.
Sunday always special dinner,
Special clothes and special manners
Set aside for both of us
Since life needs its holidays
Like God who’s childish and wants praise

°demesne [domain]

³⁶Line and comment added
¹⁷Music indicator
¹⁸Lines revised
¹⁹Lines deleted
Hush Peter hush.  

The schoolmistress –  
I’m too plain-spoken – is distressed.  

Peter, I’ve held your life up for you  
When everything else gave way.  

And who  

Petitions for your charity?  
Do I?  Do I?  Do I?  Do I?  

I have not asked for thanks, nor asked  
To be asked if it gave you rest.  
I gave my freedom for this boy  
Meaning to help, and I was wrong maybe.  
The crazy structure of your life  
Finds its own level easily enough  
With no wind blowing. The worst  
Answer is to let things take their course.  

They take what course I want. For I  
Desire – and there are you  
Granting. And this of course you’ll say  
Is the impossible. But shall we try?  
You’ll find of Peter Grimes that he’s  
Most comfortable in sordidness,  
Contented in disharmony  
Hilarious in misery.  
But then your kitchen mind will say  
‘This is no recipe’ but shall we try?  
You’ll find in sordidness I’m blind  
Drunk, and when I’m gay I fight:  
Happiest in ruin, I  
Challenge your smugness, shall we try?  

Peter tell me one thing, where  
Young stranger got his bruise and weals.  

Out of my true affection.  

So  

There is no hope then any more.

---

20 Lines lost  21 Music indicator  22 Line revised  23 Lines deleted
{ELLEN} While you are drinking I shall go. O all these things that you are pleased To mock as kitchen recipes Are ordinary life and love. The simple answer is to remove Both. If ruin’s what you want Ruin is also what you get: A universe where nothing dare Resist your will for nothing’s there. Peter, this is all you have, All your life and all your love, A world where wills all break and die. The worst is, you shall have your way.

PETER Are you trying to quarrel with me? 24

ELLEN I’ve finished. You shall have your way.

She goes out leaving her basket. Peter kicks it away savagely

PETER (turns on the boy who cringes)

Now we’ll see – young stranger, come –

Who holds the whip:

JOHN (half rises and screams) No Peter.

PETER (furious, hand raised) Home!

JOHN runs away screaming Ellen! Ellen!

Peter follows

MRS. SEDLEY 25 I heard loud voices during psalms: Grimes’ was one, & one more calm.

BOLES (to Polly Boles as she comes out)26 While you worshipped idols there The Devil had his Sabbath here.
POLLY® What is it?

BOLES What do you suppose d200
Grimes is at his exercise.

As people come out two by two they circulate the village green singing their couplets as they reach the centre.

SWALLOW JUNIOR® Dullards build their self-esteem
Censoring a private vice.

SWALLOW SENR® Even so, the law restrains
Too indulgent privacies.

DICK SAUNDERS® Fishing is a lonely trade
Single men have much to bear.

MAY® If a man’s work can’t be made
Decent, he should stay ashore.

NIECE 1 Men are queer I always say,
Moody creatures, things of chance.

NIECE 2 To convince them they must pay
Is a sobering influence.

Balstrode pauses by Ned as he walks round

BALSTRODE When the borough gossip starts
Somebody must suffer for it.

NED Thanks to flinty human hearts
Even quacks can make a profit.

---

27 SP revised 28 SD extended 29 SP revised 30 Chorus added 31-33 SP revised
Finally Mrs Nabob and vicar

MRS N
Sons! Ah what a weight is this Pastoral authority.

RECTOR
What subversive faith is this Which gives souls equality?  

Gossip dissolves in general rumour chorus (same as in prologue)

{CHORUS}
When women gossip the result Is someone doesn’t sleep at night And if the parson preaches on it He has no right to fix the guilt. 
Women, when they gossip, boast Not of their fears but of their hopes And if the crowner sits upon it Has he the right to fix the guilt Has he the right to fix the guilt Has he the right to fix the guilt?  

During the hubbub May Saunders climbs a little way up the steps of the Moot Hall.  

MAY®  
(?? Should this be spoken?)×  
People ... No I shall speak ... People This thing here concerns you all.

NED
Tub-thumping.

MAY
Oh, this prentice system Is uncivilised, unchristian.

NED
Something of the sort befits Brats conceived outside the sheets

MAY
These are not only foundlings, they Are children torn away from play, Parents herded in the workhouse, Broken, ruined families, Men from women separated, Driven like cattle to the market And their children bought like slaves Whipped and driven to their deaths.

---

34 Lines reallocated 35 Returning and modified lines 36 SD revised 37 SP revised
38 Query deleted
{MAY}  
Oh, I plead with you today
End this evil at your door.
Here, this whipped and tortured boy
Utters an earth-shaking cry.
Wrong, and wrong and wrong is this
Buying of apprentices.
Pain and pain and pain it brings.
Like a millstone, O it hangs
Round our necks. Oh cut the cord
End this evil.\(^{39}\)

ROBT BOLES  
I thank God
Somebody has dared to speak.\(^{\times}\)
Where’s the parson in his black.
Is he here or is he not
To guide a sinful straying flock?
Or tend his canterbury bells
And let his people go to hell? \(^{\odot}\)\(^{40}\)

RECTOR  
Is it my business?

MAY\(^{41}\)  
To ignore
Evils growing at your door?

ROBT  
Growing like your fancy flowers.

RECTOR  
Calm now. Tell me what it is.

---

Ellen comes in. She is met by Auntie who has picked up Ellen’s abandoned basket and its contents.

AUNTIE  
Ellen dear, see I have gathered
All your things. Come rest inside.

MAY\(^{42}\) (shouts)  
She can tell you, Ellen Orford!

BOLES  
Speak out in the name of the Lord.

RECTOR (to ELLEN)  
We’re talking of the case of Grimes.

MAY\(^{43}\)  
She helped him in his cruel games.
RECTOR

(holding his hand up for silence)
Ellen please.

ELLEN

What am I to do?

RECTOR

Speak the truth.

ELLEN

Truth is hard for you?
You’re {a} shy person. You’re afraid
Of people and their shameful ways.
And now you blink and disapprove
Because you dare not trust yourself. ×
You’re not alone. The whole town too
Flinches and then turns away.
You find one different from the rest,
Grimes, you keep him in his place,
And when his will begins to give
Way under this lonely life
You become smug and moralise.

RECTOR

What’s to be done?

ELLEN

Nothing

RECTOR

What’s wrong with Grimes?

ELLEN

A thing

Beyond your knowing. ✓

RECTOR

That’s to be seen.

ELLEN

You fear our main weaknesses, and when
Self-pity takes us, O you’re stern.×
It’s all so easy. Now you’ll call
The pack of gossips to your heel
And dig the victim from his hole....
O you’ll be masters of the town....
Too late. There’s nothing to be done.×

RECTOR

Swallow, shall we go along
And interview Grimes in his home?

SWALLOW (SENIOR)×

Popular feeling’s rising.

RECTOR

Let us go

---

44 Lines deleted  45 Line added  46 Lines deleted  47 Lines queried  48 SD unrevised
Mrs. Sedley might come too. Mrs Nabob hinnies° and jumps to it.

Now we shall find out the worst.

He speaks last who should have spoken first.

Mr Swallow come along. He leads the way. Mrs Nabob and Swallow senior follow, then Swallow junior and the rest of the crowd at a slight distance. Auntie, the two Nieces and Ellen remain.

We are women. Why should we Trouble at their clumsy ways?

O they always have to be Pompous when they’re in disgrace.

Do we smile or do we weep Or wait quietly till they sleep?

° hinnies° {neighs like a horse}

Now is gossip put on trial
Now the rumours either fail
Or are shouted in the wind
To sweep furious through the land.

Liars are shivering because now
If they’ve cheated we shall know;
We shall strike & strike in anger
At the sinner or the slander.

Now the whisperer stands out
To be examined by the fact;
Bring the branding iron, the knife.
What’s done now is done for life.°

°}
AUNTIE  O they always make a noise

NIECES  Babes without a comforter  d330

ELLEN  On the manly calendar
We only mark heroic days.

QUARTET  Shall we smile or shall we weep
Or wait quietly till they sleep?

ELLEN  Men are children when they strive
We are mothers when they weep
Schooling our own hearts to keep

ALL®56  The bitter treasure of their love.

Shall we smile or shall we weep
Or wait quietly till they sleep?  d340

CURTAIN

56 SP revised


{Draft Fragments: Act 2 Scene 2}

**Act Two Scene Two**

PETER

All the sins she had to know
To make ® her sons the birthright of
Men to hate: women to love.

Fight her man, or she will be
The inner whisper that you hear
Reproving till your very self
Becomes a hunchback or a dwarf.×¹

*The boy doesn’t move. Peter suddenly loses his temper.*

He takes a short length of rope and whirls it round

My God I’ll beat it out of you.

*The boy is used to this. He gets behind the rope ®, whimpering:* chased from there he dodges behind a barrel

No prentice of mine but comes out when he’s told;
He climbs up the mast, breaks his neck or back; d10
Jumps to it, ‘Ay ay sir’ like a good naval jack
Caught by the press gang and flogged in the hold.×²√³

*During the patter° lines he chases the boy round the hut slashing with his rope*

° [rapidly delivered, usually for comic effect]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>d1</th>
<th>SP *</th>
<th>d2</th>
<th>&lt;make&gt; [give] [Slater]</th>
<th>d8.1</th>
<th>&lt;rope&gt; [coil] [Slater]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>d12a-d12j</td>
<td>[Lines on insert A ?replacing d8-d12]</td>
<td>{Slater}</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By God I’ll beat it out of you. d12a
Stand up. *(lash)* Straighter. *(lash)* I’ll count two
And then you’ll jump to it. One . . .
Well? Two.

*(The boy doesn’t move. Then Peter lashes hard, twice. He runs. Peter follows)*

Your soul is mine d12e
Your body is the cat o’ nine
Tails’ mincemeat, O! a pretty dish
Smooth-skinned & young as she could wish.
Come cat .. ! Up whiplash! Jump my son
Jump *(lash)* jump *(lash)* jump, the dance is on.√³ d12j

¹,² Lines deleted ³ Lines added
The boy screams and falls. Peter picks him up and puts the jersey on his back. He tries to soothe him⁴

We’re seamen, rough, with little talk.
Fists and whipknots do the work.
O you’ll cry I beat you till Body loses grip on soul.
That’s the sea, man, that’s our life.
When blood rises to your eyes Throbbing, red and blinding, when
The whole world is your broken flesh... Leave clinging. Put your hand down. I Have no desire to beat you now.

÷ ÷ ÷

Swallow Junior draws the moral

SWALLOW JUNIOR

The whole affair gives borough talk its - well - I’ll say quietus⁵. Here we come pell-mell⁶ Expecting to find out we know not what And what we find’s a neat and empty hut.
Gentlemen. Take the lesson to your wives: - Less interference in our private lives.

RECTOR

There’s no point certainly in staying here.
Will somebody please close the cliff-side door. ©⁶ d30

They close the cliff side door, and go closing the road door behind them.
The stage is empty.
The thunderstorm begins in earnest as ×√⁷

CURTAIN

⁴Britten query ⁵Second fragment with revised allocation ⁶Line revised ⁷SD revised and deleted, SD added

417
Act Three
Scene Two

1 Scene as in Scene One.
Some hours later.

The dance is over, the borough is asleep. ³²
Peter alone by his boat in the changeful light of a cloud-swept moon.

As before we can hear shouting, now in the far distance:

Peter Gri - mes - - Peter Gri - mes.³

No. I SCENE ®³

PETER (Demented – hysterical, comforting himself)

Quietly. Here you are. You’re home.
This breakwater, with splinters torn
By winds, is where your father took
You by the hand to this same boat
Leaving your home for the same sea
Where he died and you’re going to die.⁶

Quietly. Here you are. You’re home.
You’re not to blame that he went down.
It was his weakness that let go.
He was too weak. Were you to know?
He was too weak and so the sea
Engulfed him, and you’re going to die.

VOICES (louder)

Peter Grimes⁷

PETER

You shouters there – I’ve made it right.
It was my conscience, my fate
Got rid of him. If you who call
Don’t understand, old Swallow will. ⁸
Ellen comes in. Stepping from behind his boat he startles her.9

ELLEN

Peter!

PETER

Was it you who called? I’m alone now as you foretold. I am alone. The argument is finished and the money spent.10 The drinking’s over, wild oats sown. You hear them shouting? I’m alone. d25

ELLEN

Peter!

PETER

You hear my name? The sky hears it. So do the stars, the sea.11

ELLEN

The cries you hear are in your mind – Hallucination.12 d30

VOICE (very near and loud)

Peter Grimes.

PETER

You hear it?

ELLEN

No.

PETER

Will you also take away my touch and smell and taste? You hear them call my name. The sky hears it, so do the stars, the sea.

ELLEN (seizing his arm)

Peter, Peter13

PETER (shouting as if in reply to the voices)14 Peter Grimes! Peter Grimes.15

VOICE (distantly)16

Peter Grimes. d40

PETER (roaring)17

Peter Grimes.18
ELLEN (soothes and calms him)

Your spasm’s over now. The cool
Sea will rise to calm your soul.\(^{19}\)
Peter. I’m going to fetch Balstrode
He’ll help you to prepare your boat.\(^{20}\) d45

\(\text{Peter left alone sings in a tone almost like prolonged sobbing.}\)\(^{21}\)
The voices shouting ‘Peter Grimes’ can still be heard but more distantly and more sweetly.

PETER

Stranger forgive. I did not mean
That your need should give way to mine.
Young stranger come
Young stranger home.

Young stranger if your candle flame
Of little life dies in the dawn
Young stranger come
Young stranger home.\(^{22}\) d50

Balstrode comes in quietly followed by Ellen who stands apart.\(^{23}\)

\(\square\) No. 2 RECITATIVE (spoken – quietly, & quickly)\(^{24}\)

BALSTRODE

I’ll help you with the boat now.\(^{25}\)
PETER

Why?\(^{26}\) d55
BALSTRODE

You can put quietly out to sea.
Make seawards, out of sight of the town,
Then sink your boat and both go down.\(^{27}\)
PETER

You mean?
BALSTRODE

Go down with the boat. It’s the best thing you can do.\(^{28}\) d60

\[53.2\square\] {Recitative...quickly]) CD [except D] \[RECITATIVE spoken quietly & quickly] [Britten]
{E has RECITATIVE (spoken) at 58.1}
Balstrode is in the boat, testing ropes and sails.
He tests the plug, removes it and beckons Peter.29

BALSTRODE
The plug moves easily. You know what to do.30

He replaces the plug.31

PETER
What – do you want of me?32

BALSTRODE
We’ll launch you now. There is no need to go far.
Sail out till you lose sight of the Mote Hall.33
Then you can’t be seen from the shore, and you
know what to do.34

Balstrode gets out of the boat.35

BALSTRODE
She’s a good boat and she’s yours. You wouldn’t
want to leave her for another man to sail. Sail
her out. Then say goodbye to your boat, and goodbye to the Borough, and say your prayers.
Grips his hand Goodbye Peter.

PETER
This is too early.36

BALSTRODE
No.37 The searchers will be turning home soon.
Better not to meet them here. Once at sea, and Alone, you’ll know what to do. You understand?
Not till the Mote Hall is out of sight.38

Together they push the boat down the slope of the shore.
Balstrode comes back and waves goodbye.
He takes Ellen who is sobbing quietly,
calms her and leads her carefully down the main street home.

The scrunch of keel on shingle has been the cue for the orchestra to return.39
Now dawn begins.
Gradually the music of Act I Scene I (beginning) – ‘everyday’, salty sea - starts.40

77.7  [Gradually ... starts.] CD{except D} [of the beginning of Act ... starts.]{Britten}
Dawn comes to the Borough by a gentle sequence of sights and sounds. 
A candle is lighted and shines through a bare window. 
A shutter is drawn back.

Hobson and his posse meet severally on the green by the Mote Hall. 
They gossip together, shake their heads, indicate the hopelessness of the search, 
extinguish their lanterns, and while some turn home, others go to the boats.

Nets are brought down from the houses by fisherwives. 
Cleaners open the front door of the Inn and begin to scrub the step.

Dr. Crabbe comes from a confinement case with his black bag. 
He yawns and stretches. Nods at the cleaners.41

The church bell rings.42
The rector comes to early morning prayer. 
Mrs. Nabob follows.

Ned Keene draws the shutters of his shop.

Mr. Swallow comes out and speaks to the fishermen.43

No. 3 RECITATIVE AND FINAL CHORUS 44

SWALLOW There’s a boat sinking out at sea, 
Coastguard reports.

FISHERMAN Within reach? d80

SWALLOW No. ✓45

Fishermen go with Swallow to the beach and look out. One of them has a glass.

FISHERMAN What is it?

HE WITH THE GLASS Nothing I can spy.46

FISHERMAN One of these rumours.

---

[Annotations and revisions]

41 SD revised in N 
42 SD deleted in DE, absent from N 
43 SD revised in N 
44 Music indicator and placing of Chorus revised in E, both absent from N 
45 Line added in DE, absent from N 
46-7 Line reallocated in E (+N) 
47 Line later revised 
48 Line reallocated in E (+N)
Nieces emerge and begin to polish the brasses outside “The Boar.”

CHORUS (As at beginning of Act I Sc. I)⁵⁰
To those who pass, the Borough’s bells betrays⁵¹ the cold beginning of another day,
And houses sleeping by the waterside
Wake to the measured ripple of the tide:⁵²

Or measured cadence of the lads who tow
Some entered hoy to fix her in her row,
Or hollow sound that from the passing bell
To some departed spirit bids farewell.⁵³

In ceaseless motion comes and goes the tide
Flowing it fills the channel vast and wide
Then back to sea with strong majestic sweep
It tolls in ebb yet terrible and deep.⁵⁴

During the Chorus the curtain slowly falls.

(quiet end)⁵⁵

CURTAIN

⁵⁰ Music indicator added in CD, absent from N
⁵¹ Text revised in DE (+N)
⁵²-³ Quatrain relocated in E but not N
⁵³ SD added in N
⁵⁴ Music indicator added in CD, absent from N
⁵⁵ [As ... I] (Britten) 96.2 [(quiet end)] CD[Britten]
Appendix C: Slater’s letter to Britten

Berryfield Cottage, Princes Risborough, Bucks, 3 Dec {1944}

Dear Ben,  How’s this for the patter song?

Together we are safe
As any wedded wife:
For safety in numbers lies.
A man is always lighter
His conversation’s brighter
Provided that the tête-à-tête’s in threes

(or Provided that you tête-à-tête in threes.)

Save us from lonely men –
They’re like a broody hen
With habits but with no ideas:
But in the choice of pleasures
They show their coloured feathers
Provided that the tête-à-tête’s in threes.

Pairing is all to blame
For awkwardness and shame
And all these sighs and tears:
Which wouldn’t be expended
If people condescended
Always to have their tête-à-têtes in threes.

Does this meet your needs for the patter in the last line? If you like it can be lengthened – for example ‘Whene’er the tête-à-têtes in threes’ for the first two stanzas, and ‘To have their tête-à-têtes in threes’ in the third.

For the vengeance song how about this instead of ‘O we shall blind his bright, contemptuous eyes’

Our curse shall fall upon
His evil day.
Him who despises us
We destroy.

---

5 * [For] Safety {Slater}  8, 15 * <When we’re in threes.> [Provided that the tête à tête’s in threes.] {Slater}  9 [(or ... threes)] {Slater}  13 <give them> [in the] {Britten, cf. →3.1.18}
17 <For sacrifice of charm> [For ... shame] {Slater}  21 <To keep in threes.> [Always ... threes.] {Slater}
If I remember right the repetition will then be ‘Our curse shall fall shall fall &c’ which seems all right to me. If you should want to lengthen the second line it can become

Our curse shall fall upon
His work, his evil day
He who despises us
We destroy.

I’ve been thinking a good deal about the new phrase to take the place of ‘Now we shall see where roads end’. The best I’ve got so far is ‘One will can beat a thousand’, which is probably singable and fits (I think).

Now I’m going to be a nuisance. This quartet. I’ve done a lot of thinking about it and still find a strong internal resistance to the fundamental change (which I must admit I agreed to at Yarner’s°).

What I’m afraid of is that in building up Balstrode we may be endangering the main structure. The Yarner’s scheme (let’s call it that) must mean in practice, whatever else we think, that at this crucial moment the highlight is on Balstrode, or if you like on Ellen and Balstrode as a pair. Obviously we don’t want the latter. Their conjunction is accidental and shouldn’t be stressed. The other danger is that in high-lighting the fact that Balstrode is persuaded with difficulty to go up to Peter’s hut we seem to be saying that his going to the hut and what he is going to see there is critical: whereas in fact it isn’t. He’s not going to find the clue of clues when he looks out of the cliff-side door. As things are there’s a risk we may be underlining it too much though I don’t think so. If we make a fuss in the earlier scene about Balstrode’s going there and actually bring down the curtain in the crucial scene on the fact that Balstrode – Balstrode the man himself, is going to take a hand in the deputation’s visit to Peter – then we are misleading the audience into supposing that this is a really important point in the story. The audience is going to be correspondingly disappointed when they find out that it has no particular significance.

What I’m saying is that we’ve built Balstrode up enough and if we try and build him up further we may put the story out of joint. I believe we’ve moved from the point where we under-emphasised B to the point where we’re in danger of over-emphasising him. Essentially his function in the drama is a very ordinary traditional one. The old stock companies used to have a name for it. They called him Charles’s friend. Read Peter – Ellen’s. In Hamlet he’s Horatio.

°Yarner’s {a coffee house in Regent Street, London}
His job is that he is the receiver of confidences, the giver of good advice and the bloke who stands by at the climax. You’ll find that it’s quite normal for him to fade out in the second act (as Horatio does in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th). There’s a reason. He’s necessary in the first act as the person to whom the hero explains himself. But in the middle act where there’s action to do he fades out. We’ve got beyond the point of explanation and advice — and when there’s action to do Charles does it, not his friend.

However we finally work it out I’m convinced that the point of the curtain of Act 2 Scene 1 must be as it is now: Ellen’s feeling about it all. At Yarner’s I regretted losing Ellen’s quatrain but maybe one ought to lose one’s purple patches. If it is a purple patch I agree one ought to lose it. But the more I think about it the more I’m convinced that it is simply the clue to Ellen’s whole outlook and character and it should at all costs be the curtain line of that scene.

Men are children when they strive
We are mothers when they weep
Schooling our own hearts to keep
The bitter treasure of their love

[became in 2.1, Grimes 1979: 29, lines 15-18]

is Ellen’s own summary of her own life and character. The crisis of the quarrel wrings it out of her. The whole point of the opera at that moment is to say this about Ellen, to have her see herself and her life with this sort of clarity. I’m willing to discuss to any extent how we should lead up to this point, though I’m still convinced it should be led up to quite simply with no extraneous action by or about Balstrode or anyone else. The easy and natural way is to have her say it to other women. It isn’t accidental that the quartet was of women. The other point I have made all along that there is some significance in the fact that Ellen opens her heart and gets comfort from the disreputable women of the Borough is useful but not all that weighty. Eric was objecting to this at Yarner’s on the grounds that I don’t develop it later on in the opera. At the moment I don’t see why one should. All one is saying is that it’s a common observation that when you’re really in trouble you find sinners are often more sympathetic than saints. We don’t need to go any farther than that.

I have the feeling that Eric objects to the quartet as it stands for some reason that he hasn’t stated yet. Maybe he simply dislikes the verse and its feeling. I admit that both are fairly commonplace (up to Ellen’s last two lines which I believe are good) but at the moment I feel that’s how they ought to be. I’m only too glad to discuss any sort of rewrite provided we can keep the essential feeling. I’ll willingly come up and spend a day with you all this week and go into it thoroughly if that’ll help.
My dear Ben I’m sorry to be so difficult and argumentative but I think it’s worth any amount of trouble to get this right.

How was the ballet at Bristol? I hope as good as it ought to be.

I’ve finished the first draft of the play (Century for George, published 1946), starting a revise tomorrow and back to the Min° a week tomorrow. But I can come up any day this week. Love from Enid (wife) and Carol (daughter).

(by hand) Yrs ever

Montagu

Min {Ministry of Information where Slater was Head of Scripts in the Film Division}
Appendix D: Dearmer’s report

STAGE PLAY SUBMITTED FOR LICENCE

Title: “PETER GRIMES”
No. of Scenes or Acts: 3 acts
Place of Production: Sadler’s Wells
Date of Production: 7th June

LORD CHAMBERLAIN’S OFFICE
ST JAMES’S PALACE, S.W.1

READER’S REPORT

10th May 1945.

An opera on the poem “Peter Grimes” in “The Borough” by Crabbe.

Peter Grimes was a fisherman who lived a villainous life, murdered more than one apprentice and died in a madhouse. The libretto of this Opera seems to follow the plot of the poem, though here he goes down with his boat and commits suicide.

It is all very wafty and nebulous and I dont {sic} pretend I can make sense of the plot from the verses, but there is no offence in them or in the production. Perhaps Benjamin Britten’s music will carry it through.

Recommended for Licence

(sd.) G. Dearmer

[approval countersigned 12 May, counterstamped 13 May, date of licence on script 16 May]
Appendix E: Figures

Figure 1: Prologue original set (© ENO, photographer unknown)
Figure 2: 1.2 original set (© ENO, photographer unknown, stamped ‘Behr’ and ‘return to A.Curthoys’)
Figure 3: 2.1 original set (© ENO, photographer unknown, annotated ‘? for Teachers World’ {sic})
Figure 4: 2.2 original set (© ENO, photographer unknown, stamped ‘Behr’)

Peter Grimes
Figure 5: Scenario A leaf recto (lines 1-12) (© The Trustees of the Britten-Pears Foundation)
Underlining is here used to separate distinct units within notes, akin to paragraphs in prose. A representation of this is made.

Sketch scanned from the original document (q.v. Appendix E fig. 2).

Text interpolated Pears wrote ‘I never saw you so save once other apprentice’. Hastily written, this may be taken to mean ‘save once with another apprentice’, the text I have chosen, or ‘save once with one other apprentice’. At this stage in the work’s development the number of apprentices Peter had was not fixed. In Crabbe’s original it is three. In this scenario by Pears it seems to be two except the chorus speaks of Peter ‘cruel and unkind to his boys’ (94) before the inferred second.

Text repositioned 57-62 originally followed 38. Pears bracketed them, marked them ‘Scene III’ in the left margin, with an arrow forwarding them to a space after 56.

Crabbe used to extend Peter’s character Here Pears has used Crabbe’s portrait of the efficient tradesman Walter who, though he has no feeling for others and keeps them in fear of him, including his family, craves affection. He demands of one child ‘Vow that you love me’ (Borough, viii, 188) and states ‘I require/Love (ibid., 189-90).

Text repositioned 63 was originally added in the left margin where Pears had indicated material to transfer to ‘Scene III’ but is best placed just before the boy’s accident.

Inappropriate terminology The strict definition of murder is ‘unlawful killing of a human being with malice aforethought’(OED) so murder can never be accidental. Peter’s monologue to the boy here (57-62) cannot be represented as malice aforethought, nor does he, in the final text of 2.2 (Grimes 1979: 32, SD after line 30) have any physical contact with the boy as he falls to his death. ‘Fatal accident’ would therefore be the correct description. In using the term ‘murder’ Pears is echoing the perception of the community and the judgement of Forster (Brett 1983: 4) in the essay he and Britten read. Crabbe is careful to leave the matter open.

Text interpolated Pears seems to have deleted material which he wished to retain in hastily compiling this scenario. After ‘Grime’s remorse’ he crossed out ‘Landlord tells Grimes to find Ellen & tell her, but Grimes terrified, recalls other apprentice’ followed by illegible words crossed out before the text ‘he will be lynched’. The restoration of significant portions of this deleted text brings to the fore Peter’s state of mind and haunted recollection.

Text interpolated Pears wrote ‘Enter crowd. That is impossible for’, then crossed out two illegible words before ‘The Evil has destroyed itself.’ Pears’s thoughts seem to have been faster than his writing but the meaning is clear enough, that the crowd desire to destroy the evil. Interestingly Slater later made the same journey, with the chorus avowing a wish to destroy, rather than in his original version, merely despise Peter (Grimes 1979: 40, lines 21-2).
10 **Numbering and punctuation**  Pears usually, but not uniformly, has a full point after ‘No’ and the number itself. I have, as in my numbering of sections in the *Grimes* texts, placed a full point only after ‘No’. I have also silently added full points at the end of sentences where Pears sometimes does not.

11 **Awaiting designation**  Pears may have intended to write ‘A fisherman’ but ‘A’ is more likely to be a stopgap indicator until a specific character was chosen.

12 **Word interpolated**  ‘strength’ is my interpretation of an illegible word.

13 **Presumed repeat**  of opening chorus (10), hence my emendation (→51).

14 **Designation of acts and scenes**  In Scenario D I have retained the practice of Britten (1-32, 39-40) and Pears (33-38), to avoid cluttering the crit. app. and to demonstrate their inconsistency. I have in the text flagged editorial additions within ‘{}’ for clarification.

15 **Text deleted**  I have restored this original text because it suggests that the landlord here takes centre stage alongside Ellen and it is a while since he has been seen standing in front of his pub (8).

16 **Text deleted**  I have restored this original text because it is preferable, and in character, to have a feisty response from Ellen to the landlord’s statement (13-14) which both accounts for his shrugging (14) and is an example of her ‘determination’ (12) in practice.
Prologue Draft: Notes

1 Original name → d0.4. As in Scenarios A-C, the pub was originally run by a landlord here named. The change to a landlady, first made by Slater at d50, came with a name, ‘Mrs Puttock’, which was not ideal, ‘puttock’ being an English regional term for bird of prey (OED1) and then a derogatory term (OED2) for a greedy person. At d50.1 Britten opted for the homelier, albeit satirical, Auntie (see final text 1.1, Grimes 1979: 7, SD after line 18; 1.2, Grimes 1979: 15, SD after line 9). Three of the opera’s five female characters are thus unnamed.

2 Music indicator extended → d0.7, the theme being that termed ‘Court theme’ in the heading following the scene title in my edition (see 0 notes 1).

3 Line added Britten indicates Ned’s repetition of the oath (d5-d6), correcting Slater’s omission.

4 Line contracted → d17, by Slater, making Swallow’s manner more peremptory.

5 Layout of statement → d18-d21 is the original, which I cannot display, as I normally would, in the main text as it is incomplete. Slater added to his typescript in ink a series of square brackets around the text which I have represented in bold type (d18-d21, d21-d22, d22-d25). These seem to define pauses during which Balstrode responds non verbally. It would therefore be appropriate to add ‘Balstrode nods his affirmative to each statement’ as for Ned at d11.1.

6 Name reversed by Britten, probably not wanting confusion with the traditional folksong.

7 Misnomer of ‘Spode’ (d10, d29, d105).

8 Chorus added → d48{a}-d48{b}. In Slater’s original the townspeople were silent onlookers at the inquest.

9 SD added → d49, indicating that the townspeople’s contribution to the inquest is to be disruptive.

10 Line extended → d49, emphasizing the formality of court proceedings (cf. 12).

11 Line added → d50{a}, introduces the process of repeated naming by the Clerk of the Court.

12 Original designation and name → d51. ‘The Green Man’ was changed by Britten to ‘The Boar’. The hotel opposite the Moot Hall in Aldeburgh, ‘The White Lion’, has both colour and animal associations.

13 Designation revised → d56 by Slater (cf. the revision of the final text in 1.1, Grimes 1979: 8, line 15).

14 Lines revised → d58-d59 in a more blunt manner which suits the change of casting to Auntie.

15 Chorus added → d64{a}-d64{b}, the second such (cf. 8).
Line and SD added → d64{c}-d64{c}.1, extending the process (cf. 10) with the SD which requires an additional character, the Beadle, not identified among those present at d0.2-6 and a further line to be added. This extra character and repetition did not remain in the final version.

Line revised → d69, in a less blunt manner which suits the cultivated nature of the Vicar.

Line extended → d70, in a cultivated manner which matches that of the Vicar and emphasizes Swallow Junior’s point.

SP ambiguous → d75. For much of the scene ‘SWALLOW’ indicates SWALLOW (senior) but I add the suffix (junior) as necessary when both are involved in the proceedings. In two cases SWALLOW is ambiguous. This is the first. Here the less aggressive tenor of the questioning, offering Adams mitigation, points to Swallow Senior.

Chorus added → d76{a}-d76{d}, the third such (cf. 8,15).

Lines and SD added → d77{a}-d77{b}.1 (cf. 10,16). The SD clarifies Ellen’s position now occupied on stage.

Line contracted → d85: to indicate a marked fondness by Peter for the boy would convey unwanted sexual undertones. The other material begun to be expressed was transferred to the following line.

SP ambiguous → d86, the second ambiguous reference to ‘SWALLOW’ (cf. 19). Here the use of a question to create a favourable impression of his client points to Swallow Junior.

Lines added → d88{a}-d88{b}, (cf. 10,16,21).

Line added → d112, a rare instance of Slater repeating a text.

Chorus added → d112.1{a}-d112.1{d}, (cf. 8,15,20).

Line added → d113{a), departing from Britten’s usual practice (cf. 24) of adding a line in which the Beadle repeats the Clerk’s line.

SD contracted and extended → d113.3. Britten’s deletion is puzzling as the SD simply confirms the proceedings are at an end. Slater’s addition confirms the relationship between Peter and his lawyer.
1.1 Draft: Notes

1. **Unusual spelling** of Keene, only found in source B here and d35.1.

2. **SD extended** → d0.7.

3. **Suggested division of chorus** is indicated by Britten, ‘½ chorus in Boar, 2nd ½ chorus outside’. This suggests d1-d4 women’s chorus outside, d5-d8 men’s chorus inside but likely to obscure the words with the latter offstage.

4. **After Crabbe** see *Introduction to 1.1* §1.1.1.

5. **SD discarded** → after d.10 Presumably Slater decided extra fishermen were needed on stage for the chorus (d14-d17).

6. **SD added, revised and extended** → d13.1-2. The original draft is rather casual in clarification of characters and stage action.

7. **After Crabbe** see *Introduction to 1.1* §1.1.1.

8. **Lines and SD added** after → d17.1, bringing an individual character link to the chorus overview.

9. **SP revised and SD added** → d18. Britten’s SD presumes only one speaker. Slater may have intended more than one fisherman to greet Crabbe but by C it was only one.

10. **Line rewritten** → d19, a sarcastic remark more suited to Boles’s combative character than Slater’s rather bland original and closer in tone to Boles’s remark at d136.

11. **Lines deleted** see *Introduction to 1.1* §1.1.2.

12. **Source A available** from this point, so reference is made to its variants in crit. app. and these notes.

13. **SD absent** from B can be supplied from A: → d23.1. This clarifies Balstrode’s appearance and activity though strictly it should begin ‘Balstrode enters and crosses’.

14. **Allocation not clarified** but from the chorus because no fisherwomen have entered at d8.1. The same applies to the 2nd Fisherwoman’s following line. The earlier allocation of ‘Fisherman’ (d9, d12) is no clearer but must still be taken from the chorus. It is implied that the Fisherman at d9 is one of those who has just approached the pub (d8.1).

15. **An evolving text** Source A has the text by Slater

   BALSTRODE Still a long way out.
   FISHERWOMAN Storm?
   BALSTRODE Sea-horses.

Britten changed the opening to ‘A long way out. Sea horses’ and deleted the rest but added the instruction ‘+ couplet for Balstrode’. Slater produced a text in B and Britten made further changes: → d26-d29. ‘North cone’ in d28 requires a gloss: *cone* (a mass of water in cone form (*i.e.* circular at its base and pointed at its apex, see *OED* noun 1a and c). The final version (from J, *Grimes* 1979: 7, lines 10-14) retains Britten’s revised opening line with an added couplet (13-14). The first line of this couplet, derived from d28, gets the key
point across more directly while the reversed ordering of the final line has greater dramatic impact. d26-d34 were bracketed together in B by Britten to indicate simultaneous presentation but this did not occur in the final text.

16 **An evolving SD**  Source A, has ‘<Mrs. Sedley comes down the main street> Vicar comes down street. Ned Keene comes out of his shop’ after the brief dialogue (d34-d35). In B to Slater’s revised opening (→d33.1) Britten added ‘Mrs. Sedley follows. Nieces come out of the Boar. Ned at his shop door’ co-ordinating all stage action at once when he introduced the ‘Good morning’ sequence 22.

17 **An evolving line**  A has ‘It will turn’. Slater revised this to ‘Near the turn’. Britten deleted this and replaced it with ‘It will turn. It will turn.’ In B (d35) Slater is determined to be different but 1.1.58, 63 are derived from his revision in A.

18 **Unusual spelling**  for Keene(’)s (cf. 1).

19 **Line revised**  →d36. Britten’s rewrite of Slater’s wordy original in A.

20 **Entrance unspecified**  It is unclear when May appeared on stage or whereabouts she is there.

21 **Line revised**  →d37. Slater modified Britten’s revision. ‘Weekaday’ is not listed in OED.

22 **The ‘Good morning’ sequence evolution**  In B d34-d38 were deleted by Britten and replaced by what he brackets as ‘Sextet insert’

   RECTOR  Good morning, good morning.
   
   NIECES  Good morning
   
   MRS. N.  Dear Rector
   
   NED  Had Auntie no nieces, we’d never respect her.
   
   RECTOR  Good morning, good morning
   
   AUNTIE  Good day, Mr. Adams
   
   NED  If you have a spare rib, you’ll find that its’ {sic} madam’s.

Britten made the necessary additions to Slater’s revised SD at d33.1 16.

23 **Lines revised and deleted**  →d39-d42, d40, d42. Like the first quatrain Britten deleted 11 it is not directly concerned with action and indeed introduces a philosophical element.
An evolving SD →d42.1-2. The positioning of Auntie seems confused. She is placed in the doorway of “The Boar” (d8.1-2) from which there is no indication that she moves yet she needs to be outside for her line in Britten’s added ‘Good morning’ sequence 22. Source A reads ‘Two fishermen come out of “The Boar”. Auntie comes <down the street> [to door again]’ {Britten}. The revision in B strictly still requires Auntie to have left the stage at some intervening point. The appearance of two fishermen from “The Boar” parallels their entry to the pub in B (d8.1).

Line rewritten →d44. to more suave effect in A from Slater’s more blunt original.

SD revised →d44.1, more precisely by Slater in B.

Line revised →d45, from question to statement.

SD and dialogue later deleted The omission of d44.1-d46 from source C is owing to the removal of Swallow Junior from the cast, but this dialogue indicates the potential for the development of intrigue.

SP revised →d47 in B. Britten set the words for full chorus.

Line and allocation revised →d53, focusing dislike of Grimes more precisely through an individually developed character, May, in the final text (Grimes 1979: 8, line 9) Boles.

SD revised →d53.1. Slater’s original in A allowed for a moment of repose before Peter’s appearance. Britten queried this but in the final text after the equivalent of d51 (Grimes 1979: 8, line 7) and d53 (Grimes 1979: 8, line 9) there are general pauses in the music score. Britten’s deletion in B obscures necessary stage action.

Line revised →d54. The revision changes the tone from a humble request to a peremptory summons.

Music and performance indicator Though the heading of B only provides the music indicator, the SD added here by Britten in A (→d54.3) incorporates a performance indicator, added after Grimes 1979: 8, SD following line 10 in my edition.

Line revised →d55. This is the reverse of Britten’s change to d5432.

SD later deleted Queried by Britten in B, ‘(already made fast?)’, but incorporated in my edition (Grimes 1979: 8, SD following line 10).

SP revised and SD added →d56. The line was allocated in A to Keene, then reallocated by Slater to Swallow Junior. In B it is allocated to Swallow, undesirably vague, but clearly in context Swallow Junior. The SD was added in B when the following SD was modified (→d56.1).

SD revised →d56.1. The first sentence of the SD in A was modified in B to that at d56, the third sentence modified to that at d57. Slater corrected in A his initial mistake in the allocation of d57.

Lines rewritten and reallocated Slater’s text in A was

If this dumb fisher-fellow, Grimes, should be,
   Excluded from polite society
   No doubt he’ll share our demi-mondaine ease
   With shipless mates and quacks without degrees.
This text was assigned to Swallow Junior, which makes the first line a very cynical reference to his client while the second couplet is a mixture of the arch, arcane and patronizing, ‘shipless mates’ a reference to Balstrode’s retirement and ‘quacks without degrees’ to Keene’s lack of professional expertise. Even in A Slater deleted this, started reallocating the speech to Auntie, beginning “If this fisherman” then deleted this, reallocating to May as at d57-d60 except for the deletion of a first description of ‘lazy’ before ‘fisherman’ in d57. In the final text of 1.1. (Grimes 1979: 8, lines 18-19) the gist of the opening couplet alone survives.

39 Lines revised by Slater largely as a result of the change of publican from James to Auntie: →d64 and d66. In the final text of 1.1 (Grimes 1979: 8, lines 14-15) only the first couplet was retained.

40 Lines heavily revised The starting point d67-d70 was Slater’s couplet in A, with his modifications of presenters and the lines here indicated

<SWALLOW & JAMES> [MAY & AUNTIE]  
<We have our business. Let these teachers learn>  
<She’ll> You’ll have to choose your <<custom> trade as you will>  
customers you’ll learn  
Hell may be fiery but the pub won’t burn.

Britten deleted the lines and replaced them with

AUNTIE O proper men will run through what they earn  
Hell may be fiery but the pub won’t burn

MAY O let these captains here {sic}, these teachers learn  
You have their friendship but the people’s scorn

These were then further modified in B as d67-d70 with the presentation of the couplets reversed. From C May’s lines were modified again and assigned in 1.1 to Auntie (Grimes 1979: 8, lines 22-3) and Boles (Grimes 1979: 8, lines 20-21).

41 SP revised →d71. The lines are sung individually, as clarified in my edition, but revert to the original allocation.

42 Source A ceases having been available from d23.1.

43 Line revised →d74. The briefer, less repetitive revision still gets across the point that Swallow Junior is ignoring Swallow Senior’s recommendation at the inquest (Prologue d106-d112).

44 Lines deleted Lines d86-d89 were deleted by Britten who in a marginal note had previously suggested allocating them to the chorus. They point the implications of Swallow Junior’s acquiring an apprentice for Grimes in competition with his father and there is no harm in stating those implications as starkly as the Second Fisherman does in d89. Without these lines the justification for the SD at d85.1 is weakened.

45 SP revised →d93, fittingly for it is unduly antagonistic for Peter to intervene at this point.
SP revised \(\rightarrow\) d99. As earlier: Britten’s revision maintains the dispute between Swallow and Hobson. It would not be appropriate for Peter to intervene at this point and does not seem in character that the Chorus, Slater’s revision, would deliver this text taking Swallow’s and Peter’s side.

Chorus inserted by Slater in B: \(\rightarrow\) d100a-e. This (Insert A) is the first of three choruses written by Slater on an additional sheet, all of which were deleted by Britten. Alongside this first one Britten queries ‘too light?’. Perhaps this relates to its deceptively gentle, whimsical tone because the sentiment echoes the anguished protest of Crabbe regarding apprenticeship (see Introduction to 1.1 §1.1.3).

SP revised \(\rightarrow\) d102. Given the combative, accusatory tone of the line, it is more appropriately delivered by the Chorus. Hobson’s opposition has been purely practical, that of the Chorus is moral.

Forceful original lines \(\rightarrow\) d104-d106, strongly emphasize personal, professional and moral obligations. There is no equivalent in the final text.

Chorus inserted \(\rightarrow\) d107a-e. This (Insert B) is the second of Slater’s three added choruses (cf. 47). Here the poetic, whimsical reflection is becoming more morbid and arguably indulgent. Pathos turns to righteous indignation with the force of ‘sinful’ but the question then arises, ‘Whose sins?’, the answer or answers to which remain obscure.

Line added \(\rightarrow\) d107f.

Line added \(\rightarrow\) d113a, a repetition of d107.

SP revised \(\rightarrow\) d114, allowing Britten to include a Chorus here without accepting any of Slater’s three inserted choruses and one with more personally directed invective

Chorus inserted \(\rightarrow\) d115a-e. This (Insert C) is the third of Slater’s three added choruses (cf. 47,50). This is a garish poetic fancy which contrasts the affluence of the purchasers with the poverty, implied spiritual as well as temporal, of those purchased. It neatly describes Swallow Junior and even more entrepreneur Ned Keene, his replacement from source C as Peter’s agent, but does not relate to the relative poverty of Peter which is the driving force behind his ambition.

Line added, revised and deleted \(\rightarrow\) d115f. Like May, this line does not appear in the final text where Boles might have made the protest.

Line added \(\rightarrow\) d115g, a repetition of d113a which itself repeats d107.

Line revised \(\rightarrow\) d120, to more fitting biblical language from Slater’s clumsy, wordy original.

Line revised \(\rightarrow\) d122, making the expression more immediate.

Lines deleted Britten queried d128-31 and Slater deleted them. They make the dignity of Ellen’s earlier biblical lines (d120-d124) seem more sanctimonious and grow patronising. They also give Ellen a broader philosophical perspective which anticipates and weakens the novelty and surprise of that of Grimes in his ‘Great Bear’ aria in 1.2 (Grimes 1979: 17, lines 32-2; 18, lines 1-13).
60 Line rewritten →d133, an improvement on the ambiguous tone of the original.

61 Text relocation suggested by Britten that Balstrode’s tide warning (d161-d165) be placed here, a suggestion he deletes.

62 SDs and lines later deleted (d133.1-d136.2). The entrance of Crabbe, resulting three greetings and following SD are only in this draft. d135 is the first of only two lines delivered by Boles’s wife Polly, the second being d198. She and May Sanders are absent from source C onwards. The taunting of Crabbe (d134, d136) is in keeping with the revised version of d1910.

63 Lines largely deleted →d137-d142. Slater’s original lines which charmingly point Mrs. Sedley’s hypocrisy were all deleted when the entrance of the Rector shortly after this point and the ‘Good morning’ sequence was brought forward 22. This results in an unintentionally clumsy and unexplained entrance for Mrs. Sedley at d143. So in C Mrs.Sedley asking if Ned has her pills and his response (d140, d142) were restored in the final text of 1.1 (Grimes 1979: 10, lines 14-15).

64 Performance indicator added →d143, either in consistency with those at d137 and d139 or, more likely, to preserve the indicator once Britten had deleted the earlier lines 63.

65 Performance indicator later deleted →d148. Like the deletion of d137-d142 63 this makes Mrs. Sedley a more serious, less comic bigot.

66 Performance indicator later deleted →d149. Ned’s laid back manner contrasts with Mrs. Sedley’s petulance in d148. Once one element of this contrast was removed65, there was no need for the other.

67 Lines deleted (d152-d154) when the ‘Good morning’ sequence was moved forward in the scene 72. This resulted in an abrupt ending to the encounter between Keene and Mrs. Sedley (d151), tidied up in the final text of 1.1 from source E (Grimes 1979: 10, lines 25-8).

68 Music and performance indicator A marginal note by Britten indicating his initial plans for setting the ‘Good morning’ sequence. When he composed the music in its earlier position in the scene he set it as recitative secco.

69 Line revised and line added →d156-d156a. It would be too ironic of the Nieces to refer to the Rector in the same way as Mrs. Sedley has already at d153 but appropriate that Mrs. Sedley reprises her earlier thoughts at d156a.

70 Position unspecified Presumably at the pub door with the nieces.

71 Line revised by Britten in B: →d166, perhaps so that Auntie marks out her presence distinctively, as Mrs. Sedley has, or perhaps just for the sake of variation. The use of the Rector’s surname from the outset is retained to prepare for the rhyme in Ned’s following line.

72 Lines relocated d155-d160 were inserted after d38. In 1.1 they appear in modified form as 34-41.

73 SD relocated to d154.2, making clear the ‘Good morning’ s take place while the Rector and Mrs. Sedley are in motion.
Lines later deleted  d161-d165 are only found here. Baltrode’s lines are quite mundane but the exchange does valuably establish for Peter a rare equality as a fellow professional, anticipating their long discourse at the end of 1.1 (Grimes 1979: 11, from line 26).

Lines deleted  Beside these lines (d165.1-d176) Britten queries ‘Cut?’ and Slater deleted them. This was wise in removing two explicit allegations against Peter of ‘cruel games’ and thus speculation as to what these might be, and when later the earlier lines of May Sanders (d93-d95) were reallocated to Boles, a repetition of Boles’s sanctimonious stance. The cut also proved neat when Swallow Junior was removed, though here the rivalry between father and son is at its most comically explicit. It leaves the briefing of Swallow Senior to take place offstage, appropriately in the manner of furtive and malicious gossip.

A repeated misnomer  The name Strode also appears in 0.d22.

Lines deleted  This glorious encounter (d177-d190.1) between the formal, pompous Swallow and the slyly dumb insolent Peter is only in this draft. But its disappearance is understandable. It shows Peter able to operate a certain cunning to fix on his purpose not to be disturbed from work. It provides a rather unseemly comic angle on a subject which is the core of the work’s tragedy. It also allows for more explicit criticism of Swallow who gives up very easily when only alluding to what after all is no more than his professional recommendation (Prologue d107-d108) and advice (d108-d110). When this encounter is removed we are left with a grey area: the Borough, the Coroner included, is compliant with Peter ignoring the advice Swallow gave.

Lines revised  →d191-d192, effectively a repetition of d161-d165, which suggests the earlier lines had already been deleted.

After Crabbe, deleted and lines added  d200-d211 were deleted by Britten and the replacement lines by Slater (d211a-d211h) inserted on a separate sheet. Regarding the adaptation from Crabbe see Introduction to 1.1. §1.1.2. Slater’s replacement lines have more action, momentum and drama and are more suited to the growing tension of the scene.

SD variation  →d211.1. Slater’s variation appears to be a revision of the original SD but that is not deleted. Britten’s addition is presumably the action intended for Dick and Boles, in which case ‘then hurry off’ should have been deleted. Nevertheless the principle is established, that the stage should be cleared so that Grimes is the main focus of the end of the scene which closes with his soliloquy.

Reallocation suggested  by Britten to Swallow Senior. This makes sense in relation to a preferable reallocation of the following lines to Swallow Junior. From C and in the final text of 1.1 (Grimes 1979: 11, line 16) the line is allocated to the chorus for which its generalized anxiety is better suited.

Reallocation suggested  by Slater querying Dick and by Britten querying Swallow Junior or Ned, but Ned does not number among the diminishing group on stage (d211.1). Swallow Junior is the most appropriate choice. The suave banter of the remark suits a lawyer or entrepreneur but not a fisherman. Peter’s distinctiveness lies rather in pithy, enigmatic lines like d223. In the final text of 1.1 (Grimes 1979: 11, lines 17-19) the lines are allocated to Ned in common with all the other Swallow Junior’s lines which are retained.

Line added  → {before d218}. Its inclusion well suits Boles’s preaching manner and the performance indicator.
84 Reallocation suggested  The same argument applies as at 82. Slater queries Dick and adds ‘(goes)’ thus clearing the stage for a dialogue between Swallow Senior and Peter. As earlier, Britten suggests Swallow Junior but not this time Ned; yet in the final text of 1.1 (Grimes 1979: 11, line 23), the line is allocated to Ned.

85 Lines deleted  (d225-d226). While these provide an amusing contrast between Swallow’s informality and Peter’s formality, the opposite of the conduct to be expected by their standing in the community, they are also an unnecessarily light-hearted distraction, part of the comic slant to this draft that was gradually excised (cf. 77).

86 Lines revised  →d229-d230[a], d229 delineates Peter’s stance more strongly; the matter of d230 is made clearer by d230[a] which sets up Peter’s question for clarification.

87 Lines deleted  by Slater and Britten in B: →d231-d232. It is odd that, having taken care to clarify the tenor of this conversation 86, Slater and Britten now seek to make it ambiguous (cf. 77). Without d231-d232 it might simply be about Peter not conforming by caring for his house and boat.

88 A position of principle  is maintained by Peter here. Peter only seeks to be ‘Like every other fisherman/I have to hire an apprentice. I must have help—’ (0.136, 138-9). In fact Swallow’s second suggestion, that he ‘get a woman to help you look after him’ (0.140) is to a limited extent taken up, e.g. 2.1.43-44, ‘we/Make a new start’, but this is through Ellen’s initiative, as is the offer of collecting the boy (1.1d101-d132).

89 SD precision  Peter does not leave the stage but withdraws from conversation and association with Swallow Senior, which is consistent with his behaviour at d190.1.

90 Line revised  →d238. The change is apposite. Given that Yarmouth is on the east coast, ‘The German Sea’ (d236) being the North Sea, a flood would only be alarming in a direction other than the east.

91 Lines and SDs deleted  →d239-d240.1. This second emphasis on Swallow’s advice (cf. 77) may be considered superfluous but with it is also lost the contrasting common sense of Balstrode’s perspective. The SDs are also deleted, but the exits of Swallow Senior and Balstrode are implied by the SD at d241.

92 The concept of the stranger  is introduced in this soliloquy by Peter, usually linked with ‘Young’ (d244, d249, d253) and with ‘Young’ once added by Britten (d261), leaving only one occurrence without ‘Young’ (d258). ‘Young’ has connotations of innocence but also energy and freshness, so when matched with ‘stranger’ for Peter the boy arriving may be seen as a fresh start. Being an orphan, the boy’s origins are mysterious and obscure but equally he starts without the community’s prejudice against Peter. So here is the apprentice idealized by Peter as a companion, a willing and even enthusiastic sharer of his isolation and dreams. In source C this text is shortened as shown in my edition crit.app. and in source D deleted by Britten, after he had suggested at the head of this source that ‘Young Prentice’ or ‘the Youngster’ be preferred to ‘Young stranger’. Something of the original poetic quality survives but not the dreaminess, which allows Peter’s soliloquy added by Britten to the next scene, the ‘Great Bear’ soliloquy (Grimes 1979: 17, lines 32-3; 18, lines 1-13) to be more of a surprise. Moreover, as the ambiguity of the portrait of Peter developed, these early lines’ reference to a domineering father (d247-d248, d250-d252, d256-d257) had to go as did any suggestion that more than one apprentice had previously died (also d256-d257 and d258-d260) or, at this point, Peter’s feelings of guilt on that account.
93 Line revised  →d258. A change of greater realism, from affirmation to question, with hope yet uncertainty.

94 Line revised  →d261. This longer term prospect places the focus equally on the youth of John as well as his being, like Peter, an outsider.
1.2 Draft: Notes

1 *Bare SD* shows that the main focus of ‘stage business’ from the outset was the battling with the pub door, even before any attempt to describe the setting.

2 *Mrs. Sedley’s response* ‘Referring to me?’ (d6) is more patrician and appropriate than the more aggressive final text from C (*Grimes* 1979: 14, line 6). But ‘Rest from the storm’ (d9), given the identification of interest in meeting Ned, is perhaps more deceitful than the final gtext from C’s revision (*Grimes* 1979: 14, line 9).

3 *Auntie’s response* is more barbed and extreme than her characteristic archness. The final text revision {sv} from C (Grimes 1979: 14, lines 10–11) with a commercial rather than legal concern, is an improvement.

4 *SD revised* This marks the point at which Britten replaced Dick Sanders in this scene by Balstrode.

5 *Line reallocated and revised* The replacement of Dick Sanders resulted in several reallocations of his lines as marked  but Britten did not reallocate lines d21, d44, d66, d122b, d122d, d122i, d122n and d127.

6 *Lines reallocated and line revised: Balstrode’s response* →d16. Britten appropriately changes Slater’s colloquial response originally to be spoken by fisherman Dick Sanders to one more suited to a merchant sea-captain.

7 *Line not reallocated* Probably simply an omission by Britten but possibly he intended this as a line for the accompanying fisherman (d12.1) rather than Balstrode.

8 *Line reallocated: a more considerate approach* The original line for Dick shows more concern for Auntie’s restlessness than the protest given to Balstrode in the final text in Britten’s change from source D (*Grimes* 1979: 14, line 23), its italicized emphasis adding insult. Furthermore the original question neatly allows ‘fearful’ the double meaning of frightened as well as annoying. Auntie’s response also seems a more adequate answer to the original question.

9 *Bare SD* As at  the focus of the SD is purely on action and direct consequence.

10 *Bare SD* As earlier  the focus of this draft is on the action with a brief indication of state of mind.

11 *Lines not reallocated but revised* As with possibly an omission by Britten, but there is a stronger case here for these original lines being those of a fisherman with the dialect form ‘ee’. ‘I always knew how it would be’ has a playful quality which is carried over to ‘Nieces all over palpitations/Auntie, where d’you get your relations?’ On the other hand Britten’s removal of the dialect form (→d45) and later revised text (→d46-8), more dogmatic and alluding to the commercial basis and expendability of the ‘nieces’ as goods, is more suited to Balstrode.

12 *Line revised: Auntie’s response* Britten revised this line on all three appearances (d52, d57, d63). Though acknowledging there is still an element of banter, this is blunt and is more suited to Auntie laying down the law to a fisherman than to Balstrode.
Line added →d53a. Correcting an omission by Slater as the lines by the nieces and Mrs Nabob form a refrain to Auntie’s three tirades (d49-d52, d54-d57, d60-d63).

Lines revised and later deleted →d60-d61. Auntie’s remarks grow more sardonic. Slater’s original is straightforward brutality, Britten’s revision, meaning ‘Are you the man that boasts he beats his partner and gets sexual satisfaction from this?’ (see OED nut n.14.b, nutmeg n.3), is more sexually suggestive and it is likely he soon deemed overmuch so. For the gradual disappearance of these lines see 1.2 note 28.

Line revised and later deleted →d66. After two attempts Slater removed this line. By doing so Boles’s drunkenness is brought into sharper relief and communal tipsiness reserved for the opening of Act 3.

Line reallocated and revised →d68. The original term used by fisherman Dick is more pejorative than Britten’s revision for Balstrode, ‘waster’ being a dialect word (see OED n.1), the opposite of earlier revision practice 11.

SD revised and relocated Britten’s addition (→d65.1), having Balstrode enter with May Sanders, was made before Dick’s entry at d12.1 was changed to Balstrode’s 3. The subsequent revision of this SD is shown at 1.2.104.2-3 of my edition.

Line reallocated and relocated in the final text to a Fisherman to before 67 (Grimes 1979: 16, line 7), the reallocation when May Sanders was removed from the opera.

Line deleted by Slater, stressing the charming side of his drunkenness and removing the aggressive, as the cry ‘I want her’ is soon heard (d79).

Line reallocated →d77. Slater corrected his initial error; thereafter Britten made the reallocation.

Sentiments later elaborated From C and in the final text these lines became the refrain to 2 quatrains by Balstrode (Grimes 1979: 17, lines 1-2, 7-8).

SD revised →d88.2. This original entrance for Balstrode was deleted by Britten when he brought forward his entrance (d65.1).

SD revised and later extended The extension in the final text from C (Grimes 1979: 17, SD after line 22) is necessary to explain Peter’s lack of protective clothing and hair looking wild contribute to Mrs Nabob fainting. These details do not occur in this text until d103.2.

Lines added and later relocated →after d100.2. On the draft Britten requests a ‘Couplet for Chorus’ at this point and Slater then added these lines, though spacing them as three lines. In the final text from C they occur as a couplet (Grimes 1979: 17, lines 26-7). From E they are relocated after the brief exchange between Ned and Auntie (d101-d103).

Line revised →d101. The revision is the only use of ‘aunt’ but the half rhyme of ‘aunty’ and ‘brandy’ was presumably felt inappropriate in these circumstances.

An unusually prescriptive SD This is the first mention relating to the stage setting in this draft, though an opening description occurs from C onwards. It is clarified by the photograph of Kenneth Green’s original set with its central table (see Appendix E, Figure 2). The reference to a table and Peter sitting down is last found in D. What is later dramatised is the contrary motion between Peter and the rest, from L onwards ‘As Grimes moves forward, the others shrink back.’
27 SD later relocated  This SD is better merged with that at d100.1-2 which is where it in effect occurs from C onwards 23.

28 Layout of soliloquy  Its special nature is made clear from this earliest source by the indentation of the second lines of the couplets and organization into five-line stanzas.

29 Lines added and later revised →116{a-d} Slater added a third stanza to this draft.

30 Lines later reallocated  In D Britten gave both lines to the Chorus. Then when he set them he repeated them across the chorus voice parts (1.2.193-203, 206-11).

31 Line later rewritten and allocation revised  Rewritten in C, allocation revised in D (1.2.204-5, note 27).

32 Lines, with allocation revised, as part of an extended ensemble section  When Britten set the text the section began with the repetition of d117-8 29 with the rewritten d119 with allocation revised 31 in the midst of this. New text was then introduced and repeated (1.2.212-21, 223-29) with d121 surviving, allocated to both Nieces, as 1.2.222 in the midst of the newly introduced text. Thereafter d120 survives dispersed among the chorus voice parts (1.2.230-38).

33 Line later deleted  when replaced by d122n 34. In this draft the introduction of the round is relatively casual. Alongside the lines from May’s ‘He’s mad or drunk’ (d117) Britten added and later deleted ‘Quarrel starts. Grimes interrupted by Auntie who <suggest> orders Round to restore order and keep up spirits’. This is also later deleted by Britten, presumably because he felt more dramatic incident should take place before the round could be suggested as a defusing device. This incident is Boles’s approach to Peter and its aftermath → d122{a-n}.

34 Interpolated texts  d122{a-n} and d162{a-i} were added by Slater on separate leaves.

35 A stymied SD  This was originally the response to Auntie’s request that someone sing a round 32 but Britten here is ensnared by the reallocation of Dick’s part to Balstrode. Consequently somewhat incongruously in Britten’s revision → d122{n} Balstrode requests that a round be sung and then starts one himself. While it is in character that he should take the lead, the community here appears to be uncharacteristically unresponsive. The solution to this problem took time to achieve. C is still vague (‘Somebody starts one’). Only in ♫ is it first clear that Keene starts the round and this is not specified in ☞ until NU.

36 Line not reallocated  This appears to be an omission by Britten, particularly given Britten’s SD revision (→d122{k}.1) that Balstrode becomes physically the intermediary between Boles and Peter.

37 Lines later revised  These original lines are relatively mildly expressed, rather out of keeping with the rest of Boles’s drunken behaviour. For the shorter revision cf. 1.2.244-5, note 83.

38 Line not reallocated  as at 36.

39 SD revised  Slater’s original brief indication of action is expanded in stage business by Britten (→d122{k}.1), stoking up the dramatic tension which the round is intended to defuse.
Line reallocated and revised  Slater’s relatively casual request for a round is made more dramatic by Britten’s alteration (→d122{n}).

Lines reallocated and line revised  Britten’s reallocation of this stanza to Boles continues his desired link with the Nieces (cf. d74-6) in ‘the oldest game’, as Slater pertinently revised its closing line, but is arguably better delivered, as originally, by the Nieces themselves.

Lines reallocated  This stanza’s emphasis on ‘flesh and bone’ is arguably more appropriate to the fisherman Boles than the quack apothecary Ned to whom Britten reallocates it.

Lines reallocated  There seems no strong reason for Britten adding the nieces to May for this stanza. Possibly he felt having a number of women gave more point to its emphasis on birth, also increasing the number of voices here begins a process of contrast.

Lines reallocated  By having a chorus of fishermen here rather than just Ned Britten continues the process he started in the previous stanza with three women, highlighting and isolating Peter’s solo contribution in what in his revision became the following and final stanza.

Lines reallocated  aptly. This stanza is better suited to Peter than the fishermen as it hints at Peter’s doom to close the round as it closes the opera.

Stanza deleted  by Britten when he reallocated the previous five stanzas. This original allocation linking Peter with being down was appropriate but the revised scheme, with Peter dwelling on tragedy, more fitting.

Stanza deleted  The original scheme closing with a fishermen’s chorus emphasizes the opera’s conflict between Peter and the community; but Peter is not ‘carried home’ at the end: he is just ignored.

Round version 2  This is the second of the interpolated texts (→d162{a-i}). The allocation of participants has not been made except for the second entry which is for Peter. This anticipates the linking of him with the storm (cf. 1.1.422+424) and begins a link with dreams which is to become important (cf. 2.2.31-50). It is unashamedly comic, short but a competitive, rhyming round, with only Peter not producing a rhyming entry, thus different.

Britten marginal note  Alongside the SD Britten writes ‘Boy’s tune’, then after, to the end of the scene, an ‘Ascending Bass’ charted as 6 minims evenly spread over 3 bars. At the end Britten writes ‘Climax of storm (& boy’s fear & murder)’.

Britten marginal note  Here Britten speculates ‘More reactions chorus?’ but this was not pursued.

The early concept of the stranger  see 1.1 draft note.

Line revised  Originally a repeat of d178, Slater’s revision of the final word (→d180) introduced the concept of ‘home’ for significant subsequent revision (1.2.488-9, notes).
2.1 Draft: Notes

1 Lines lost Source B was originally a sequence of scenes which was later split by scene. Page 1 of this scene was lost during this action as the first extant sheet is numbered page 2.

2 Line rewritten →d8. Slater’s original version is more to the point and echoes Peter’s aspirations (1.1.391-3).

3 Lines deleted →d8-d47.1. Many are concerned with trivial details about minor characters but the loss of an articulate John who continues to press his salient question on Ellen (d8, d32, d47) is regrettable. On the other hand Ellen’s rather dismissive approach to the Anglican rite (d14-d15, d27) is something of a mismatch with the religious moral high ground of her aria at 1.1.d116-d126.

4 SD added by Britten, indicating that such music should accompany the text from here to d45. It is particularly suited to Ellen’s retort to May, ‘You’re a pair/Of clattering churchbells’ (d17-d18). The ‘bell music’ is that introduced at the beginning of Interlude III.

5 An improved revision Slater’s opting for the gentler querying of just one word is preferable to the original rather hectoring manner which Ellen, unlike Peter, does not assume with John elsewhere (cf. 1.2.480, 483, 485-6).

6 A combative revision Slater’s original emphasizes Polly Boles’s valour. His revision makes how she differs from Bob explicit but also casts her in a more aggressive light.

7 A weaker revision? Slater’s original is neater. When assigned to John d46 suggests Ellen’s d33 to d45 are a diversion to avoid answering John’s question at d32 and previously d8.

8 Lines deleted and lines added Slater originally only provided for the closing couplet of the first verse of the hymn to be heard here. Britten extended its representation by transferring this following d49 and adding the full quatrain of the second verse here.

9 A weaker revision? Slater’s original lines, though unclear, suggest more of a context for the rest of the song than simply John’s d67.

10 An improved revision ‘Loving’s end’, the experience of loving, better accounts for the contrast between knowing, not forgetting (d71-d72) and ignoring (d74). That ‘Loving’s aim’, the purpose of loving, is to ignore is a more contentious statement.

11 A problem song and alternative lines Exactly to what does the song as a whole allude? To the problem Peter had with his first apprentice? Yet d76-d83 suggest the reference is to the deaths of more than one previous apprentice. And to whose jealousy is reference made in d80? To Peter? This could mean that Ellen thinks Peter is jealous because she is showing more care, tenderness and concern for John than she is showing to him. This would certainly partly account for the vehemence of his actions insisting John come to work and, finally, striking Ellen.

12 Music indicator Britten at this point suggests ‘Bit of Service?’ This is partly intended to relieve the lyrical but obscure song text of d68-d83. Slater, however, places it at d102-d110 after the discovery of John’s bruise.
13 **Interpolated text** d85-d110 were added by Slater on a separate sheet. I have conjectured their exact position in relation to the surrounding text.

14 **A weaker revision?** Britten deletes this line to leave John silent at this point (→d87) but queries this deletion. Yet this lie, quickly proven at d97, is also explained by John’s fear of being found out to have told tales about Peter revealed in d97.

15 **Lines deleted** The repetition of d97 at d101 adds nothing to the force of the proof of Peter’s guilt while Ellen’s palliative is just a distraction from the main issue.

16 **Line and comment added** Britten’s comment, ‘(References to the beating?)’, comes first, followed by the line furtively cast in curves. Doubtless the content of the interpolation was in general terms discussed by Britten and Slater but it is clear here that d111 is the source of d97. I have therefore retained it here for added emphasis in the context of Ellen’s following conciliatory lines.

17 **Music indicator** Britten has a note in the margin that ‘Sea music’ should accompany this text from here to d139.

18 **Lines revised** Slater’s revision (→d123a-d126a) is preferable in that the expression is more straightforward and d125a-d126a especially ring true. There are whiffs of pedantry such as the use of ‘curriculum’ (d113) and ‘desmesne’ (d121) and sprinklings of maxims (d118, d135-6).

19 **Lines deleted** Britten deleted d120-d132, perhaps partly because of the pedantry and maxims 18 but probably more because they are rambling and make little sense other than as recollections of a hard life. Minor revisions (→d129, d130, d132) do not make it any more intelligible.

20 **Lines lost** At this point a page is missing from the extant draft text: page 62 of the pencilled numbering of source B. From the final text it can be surmised that this page includes Peter’s entry and probably more liturgy from the church service.

21 **Music indicator** Britten adds ‘Creed’ at this point, signifying that the creed should be sung in conjunction with the dialogue between Ellen and Peter.

22 **Line revised** I have used Slater’s revision here in the text presented as it is simply a correction of his initial thought. He clearly intended the ‘shall we try?’ to be a refrain, occurring for the third time here after d159 and d165.

23 **Lines deleted** Britten deleted d148-d169, perhaps because Ellen’s lines were too analytical, though the focus on her and her sacrifice in d148-d151 is pertinent and masked in the final text. d152-d155 are more of a petulant protest. This is the Peter of Crabbe were he to articulate, as Slater allows him here, a brutal self character study. And yet the recurring ‘shall we try?’ is a harrowing flicker of hope. Britten adds ‘(Cut to first creed?)’ presumably the opening of the creed he had asked for at d147 21.

24 **Music indicator** Britten adds ‘More alternation’ at this point, signifying he wants the cut and thrust of shorter contributions from Ellen and Peter rather than Ellen’s lengthy analysis.

25 **Lines added** This sequence of lines (d195-d221) was added to the text by Britten.

26 **SD revised** by Britten when Polly was removed from the cast.

27 **SP revised** as 26.
28 **SD extended** by Britten (→d201.2).

29 **SP revised** by Britten (→d202) as Swallow Junior was removed from the cast. ‘(Chorus)’ here indicates that the part of the Fellow Lawyer was to be taken by a member of the chorus.

30 **Chorus added** by Britten (→d203). The lines are set out thus

```
CHORUS What is it?
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What do you suppose.

Grimes is at his exercise.

which suggest that Britten was already considering dividing them among voice parts of the chorus. In, e.g., 2.1.239-50, he divides the lines between chorus voice parts and ensemble of soloists.

31 **SP revised** by Britten (→d204), the suffix being unnecessary as Swallow Junior had been removed from the cast 29.

32 **SP revised** by Britten (→d206) as Dick Saunders had been removed from the cast. The designation ‘(Chorus)’ is as at 29.

33 **SP revised** by Britten (→d208) as May (Saunders) had been removed from the cast. The designation ‘(Chorus)’ is as at 29.

34 **Lines reallocated** In the final text, with minor revisions, d218-d219 are more suitably allocated to the Rector and the more critical d220-221 to Mrs. Sedley.

35 **Returning and modified lines** d222-d223 were the chorus added to the Prologue draft text by Britten (→0.d48{a}-d48{b}). d224 was the chorus similarly added (→0.d64{a}) but the equivalent of d225 was more ambivalently questioning, less openly critical in the Prologue’s ‘Is it his job to fix the guilt?’ (→0.d64{b}). d226-d227 were the chorus added by Britten to the Prologue draft text (→0.d76{c}-d76{d}) save that d226 omits the ‘And’ at the beginning of 0.d76{c}. d228 is as Britten’s added line for chorus (→0.d112.1{c}), except that its second word there is ‘if’ rather than ‘then’. But the equivalent of d229, like that of d225, is more deferential, ‘But who can dare to fix the guilt’ (→0.d112.1{d}) than the open questioning of authority of d229, reinforced by its two repetitions, a rare occurrence in Slater’s text.

36 **SD revised** by Britten (→d231.1) as May (Saunders) had been removed from the cast.

37 **SP revised** by Britten (→d232) as at 36.

38 **Query deleted** I reproduce Slater’s query as in the draft (→d232).

39 **Lines deleted** by Britten (→d239-d256) who adds the comment ‘?little long’. They amply exemplify ‘Tub-thumping’ (d234) but Slater, taking his cue from the force of Crabbe’s critique of the apprentice system (cf. Introduction to 1.1. §1.1.3) has in effect here created an aria for a minor character which Britten did not wish to set.

40 **Lines revised and deleted** Slater’s revision (→d261) was an improvement, more clearly referring to the Rector’s love of gardening, as in Crabbe (cf. Perspectives on Crabbe §1.2), but d262 is an extreme response. The problem is the focus of critique. The rector can
hardly be blamed for the apprentice system which is under the aegis of judicial authority. But it may be considered he should apply moral authority in the matter of Peter’s ill treatment of John.

41 SP revised by Britten (→d265) as at 36. Consequently the next SP was deleted (→d267) as an original attack by two parishioners became confined to one.

42 SP revised by Britten (→d270) as at 36. Britten does not reallocate the line to Boles but to the fuller force of the chorus, as if the community’s seething disquiet has finally burst forth.

43 SP revised by Britten (→d274) as at 42.

44 Lines deleted (→d281-d282). Britten’s trimming of Ellen’s heavy character analysis is neat, concentrating on the matter in hand.

45 Line added (→{after}d294). This suggested repeated line well conveys the exasperation of the community but Britten was insufficiently confident about it to transfer it to the chorus as at 42, 43.

46 Lines deleted (→d296-d297), as at 44.

47 Lines queried Britten now questions the entire passage d290-d302 and it is not found after this draft, though neither are any lines from d278 onwards. In 2.1.348-53 Ellen more properly concentrates on her practical initiatives, but the idea that no action is a feasible response, however irritating to the community 45, is a challenging one. It was in effect that of the community in Crabbe’s original: it ostracised Peter but left him to himself (Borough, XXIII, 165 onwards).

48 SD unrevised contrary to (→d202)29 and (→d204)31. The removal of Swallow Junior from the cast is not noted here.

49 Lines added (→{after}d307). These, unlike d307, survived slightly revised as 2.1.491-5.

50 SP revised by Britten (→d308) as at 42.

51 Placing of line awkward Slater seems to have been attracted by the rhyme with d308 but d309, another criticism by Boles of the Rector, refers back to d303-d304. The line was deleted in E (see 2.1. note 190).

52 Lines added (→{after}d310). Britten is uncertain whether to place the lines here or after d307.

53 SD unrevised as at 48.

54 SP requiring clarification i.e. the three on stage who have already sung: Auntie and the two Nieces.

55 Interpolated chorus (→d310a-d310l) added on a separate sheet by Slater, requested at this point by Britten and identified by him as ‘Chorus of Inspection’.

56 SP revised Britten notes that the last two lines of the stanza (i.e. d337-d338) are Ellen solo. Slater seems initially to have thought d338 might be sung by all and Britten that d335-d336 might be sung by all. At 2.1.536-9 the quatrain (d335-d338) becomes Ellen’s solo.
2.2 Draft Fragments: Notes

1 Lines deleted  d4-d7. Only surviving out of context, these lines are obscure but of interest in that they give Peter’s perspective on the advice by Ellen. He feels she is chipping away at his identity, to maintain which he must respond aggressively.

2 Lines and SD deleted  →d8-d12. Alongside this quatrain Britten queries ‘More?’ which explains Slater’s revision. d10 refers to the ‘accident’ of the second apprentice in Crabbe’s poem, suggesting this was partly caused by Peter’s oppression.

3 Lines added  →d12a-d12j. My placement of this added text is conjectural, based on its almost identical initial line (d8 becomes d12a). The text is on a leaf headed by Slater with a capital A with a circle around it to identify the insert within a draft. The extant draft does not contain such an identifier which suggests the text was originally placed in another draft.

4 Britten query The term ‘soothe’ is queried, possibly deemed too soft for the following lines glimpse of a humane Peter.

5 Second fragment with revised allocation This text follows d1-d22 after two further pages of draft now lost. At this point the part Slater created for Swallow Junior passes to Swallow (Senior) even at the draft stage. This is consistent with the Prologue source B as distinct from source A and suggests these fragments of a draft of 2.2 are from source B.

6 Line revised  →d30. The revision, in more officious and archaic language, is more appropriate for the Rector. 2.2.12 steers a mid course between the original and this first revision.

7 SD revised and deleted, SD added  →d30.1, Slater clarifies the cliff-side door, Britten the road door in the SD later deleted and replaced by Britten →30.1-3. ‘Exit’ (d30.1) should read ‘Exeunt’ as both Swallow and the Rector go out. In the replacement text the semicolon after ‘door’ seems to be a revision of a full stop which suggests ‘after looking out’ is an afterthought.
3.2 Draft & Slater publication: Notes

1 **SD variation**  \(\text{→d0.1}\). Britten’s original added SD envisages the orchestra fading out at the end of 3.1 and thereafter remaining silent. But when he set the music he followed the procedure of his revised SD in E: the orchestra only remains silent until 3.2.126.5 \(\text{(i.e. 3.2.d77.5)}\).

2 **Line revised** Strictly it is only Hobson’s posse that is in the hunt. The original line anticipates the return to the everyday normality of 1.1.

3 **Cries extended** Slater adds a further line in N, ‘VOICES ‘Grimes!’, as also do JQ (see 3.2 note 3).

4 **Music indicator revised** \(\text{→d1.1}\), an improvement in detail.

5 **SD added** \(\text{→d2}\) which, combined with the existing SD, stresses the changeability of Peter’s madness. Peter in this draft version is more demonstrative, less reflective than in the final version where he enters ‘weary and demented’.

6 **Lines considered for revision in D** On the opposite verso page of the D script Britten experiments with an alternative text to the draft’s opening stanzas

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Quietly. There you are. Nearly Home.
Into harbour. Home. Into Harbour,
It’s calm now. Deep water. <Home.>
Waters will drink my sorrows dry.
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This marks a transitional point between the original and the final text with input by Duncan. Line 3 above moves towards ‘Deep in calm water’ (3.2.4) and line 4 is 3.2.5. Even in Britten’s experiment these lines in combination are more subtly suggestive of suicide than the original maudlin mantra ‘and you’re going to die’ (d7, d13).

7 **Cries extended** where Slater in N repeats ‘Peter Grimes’, perhaps an acknowledgement of the greater repetition of ♦ (cf. 3.2.16-20).

8 **Line sometimes revised** \(\text{→d18}\). Britten’s revision to ‘would have’ stresses Peter’s distant recall and fixation on his father, a significant element in Crabbe’s poem. But in N Slater preferred his original text.

9 **SD deleted or revised** Though retained in E, Britten deleted the SD in D, probably because he did not wish to extend the hysterical reaction to Ellen as well as Peter, but the deletion awkwardly leaves no entrance SD for Ellen. She spends more time with Peter than in the final version. Unlike that he does here interact with her, but it is the disembodied voices and in this draft version also the dead that focus his attention. In N Slater retains the SD but dispenses with the original prescriptive stage business, modifying the second sentence to ‘His appearance startles her.’

10 **Lines retained in N, contracted in DE, relocated in E** In D Britten replaced ‘and the’ (d23) with ‘all’, in E he placed the ‘all’ after ‘money’. In E he also deleted ‘I’m alone now as you foretold./I am alone.’ (d21-d22) but ended d25 with a comma rather than full point followed by a repositioned ‘Now as you foretold.’ Still the emphasis is on Peter’s wild past, another element in Crabbe’s poem not featured before in this adaptation. In 3.2.40 the more colloquial ‘The argument’s finished’ is associated with the events of the opera, ‘Friendship lost’ (41).
11 Lines contracted in D, deleted in EN, line added in E In D Britten reduced d27-d28 to ‘You hear my name?’, removing Peter’s identification with the elements which recalls the heroic, poetic manner of ‘Now the Great Bear and the Pleiades’ (1.2.176-92) but this comes when the lines recur at d36-d37. In E Britten deleted d27-d28 completely, replacing them with a repeat of ‘I’m alone now, as you foretold’ (d21).

12 Lines retained in EN, relocated in D The relocation by Britten in D is to after d38. This is a better place for Ellen’s response, after a voice has clearly been heard (d31) but she denies its existence (d33). The audience then shares Peter’s experience but still might wonder if his imagination enlarges it. Or is Ellen lying as a calming schoolmistress? Slater’s SP and SD move from ‘VOICES (louder)’ (d14) to ‘VOICE’ (very near and loud) (d31), a gradual increase of tension and linking with Peter’s individual focus, on his father and later (d46) his apprentice. But d36 should reflect this by reading ‘You hear him’ rather than ‘them’. Although the SD at d39 refers to the voices collectively it is again one voice, now ‘distantly’ that he hears next (d40). In the final version there are only voices and therefore no links with the distant past, only with the Borough’s recent hunt.

13 Line extended in DE, line not in N In DE Britten adds ‘my dear!’, an unusual and touching demonstration of affection from Ellen, though tempered in that she is about to make explicit his suicide (d42-d45). Slater in N appears to have not wished to recall a relationship between Ellen and Peter as he omits Ellen’s line.

14 SD modified in N Slater’s version, ‘He shouts back at them’, accepts that the voices are real (cf. 12).


16 SD revised in D, absent from N Britten’s revision in D to ‘VOICES (loud)’, makes Peter’s roaring response (d41) consistent with his shouting (d39) to the earlier close voice (d31). Slater in N has no SD but accepts Britten’s revision to ‘VOICES’.

17 SD not in N This makes for vagueness, or flexibility with regard to interpretation, of the loudness of the voices at this point and is consistent with Slater’s practice at 16.

18 Repetition extended in N, further extended in D, SD added in D In N Slater adds just one repetition of ‘Peter Grimes’, in D Britten adds two repetitions. In D Britten also adds a confused SD, ‘Enter E & B’. But Ellen has already entered at 18.1 and spoken to Peter while in her next speech she says she is ‘going to fetch Balstrode’ (d44). Britten’s intention in this revision seems to have been to have Ellen and Balstrode witness his revised arioso 22 and then directing his suicide. The text is thus at a transitional stage before the final removal of the earlier discourse with Ellen (d19-d38).

19 Line modified in N to ‘Sea will tranquilise your soul’, a smoother suggestion of suicide.

20 Lines partly deleted in D and considered for revision and reallocation In D Britten crosses through ‘Your spasm’s over now’ and puts brackets around the rest with a query in the left hand margin, ‘Balstrode?’ Yet the soothing and calming role as indicated in the SD (d42) is appropriate only for Ellen and d44-5 can only be spoken by her. Perhaps Britten’s intended revision was that Balstrode enter at d41.1 and say the lines ‘The cool/Sea will rise to calm your soul’ so that it is always he and not Ellen who directs Peter’s suicide as in D Britten also deletes ‘left alone’ in the next SD (d45.1) 21 and Balstrode’s original entrance (d53.1). This latter, retained in E, is preferable as Balstrode then only speaks in this scene and mostly in a business-like manner.
21 Line revised in D  Britten deleted ‘left alone’ so that Ellen and Balstrode witness Peter’s following arioso 22.

22 Lines modified in N, replaced in DE  In N Slater retained these lines but changed ‘Stranger’ on every appearance to ‘Prentice’. This is following Britten’s directive in D with regard to all references to ‘Stranger’. In DE Britten replaced these lines with a text mirroring early versions of 1.1.425-8, 431-2.

The text in D is

What harbour for my Peace
Away from tidal waves, away from storms
What harbour can embrace
Terrors & tragedies.

Her Breast was harbour too
Where we, where we, where we...

The text in E has as line 4 ‘This day’s fair promises?’ by Britten, changed by Crozier to the above text. The text in E has as line 5 ‘Her Breast is harbour too’.

23 SD retained in N, deleted in D  This deletion by Britten matches the suggested deletion of d42-d45 and entrance of Ellen and Balstrode at d41.1 20.

24 Speech indicator added in CD, absent from N  The use of speech, the stipulation added by Britten in CD, makes an effective contrast at this point in the manner of epigraph. To be fully effective as such it needs to be briefer than Slater’s original and this justifies Britten’s deletions and contractions 27-37. The absence of the indicator in N reveals that Slater did not approve of it, although he accepted Britten’s deletions and contractions.

25 Line modified in N  Slater’s version in N, ‘Come on. I’ll help you with the boat’, is as 3.2.122.

26 Line replaced in N  Here Slater begins to follow Britten’s contractions and deletions and replaces this line with Ellen’s ‘No’ which first appears in J (see 3.2 note 25).

27 Lines contracted in DE(+F), lines not in N  Britten deletes Slater’s ambiguous ‘Make seawards’ (d57) and the unnecessarily explicit ‘and both go down’ (d58) whose rhyme with ‘town’ (d57) gives it an unfortunately jaunty manner. The directive is in any case repeated at d60-d61.

28 Lines deleted in DE, absent from N  →d59-d61. Again (cf. d55-d58) lines which pitch a confused, uncomprehending Peter against a patronizing Balstrode repeating the same message are deleted, in favour of a terse message of tragic dignity.

29 SD not in DN  This stage business prolonging of the preparation for Peter’s final exit is another taking away of responsibility and dignity from him and is therefore appropriately deleted by Britten together with the associated line (d62) and following SD (d62.1).

30 Line contracted in E, deleted in D, absent from N  The original second sentence was deleted by Britten in E, being in any case repeated at d66-d67. The whole line was part of the more extensive deletion by Britten in D of d59-d77 accepted with minor modification by Slater in N.

31 SD not in DN  A continuation of the stage business deleted earlier 29.
32 Line deleted in DE, line not in N  This reaction of helplessness by Peter is deleted by Britten even in E where he kept more of Slater’s text than in D. Slater accepts this deletion in N.

33 Spelling later revised  Slater’s use of the older form ‘Mote’ was changed in F by Britten to ‘Moot’, the spelling today.

34 Lines contracted in N, deleted in D  Slater’s response to Britten’s extensive deletion in D of d59-d77 is to fashion a fairly neat edit of the salient features of these lines:

Sail her out till you lose sight of the Moot Hall, then
Sink her. You’ll know what to do. Good-bye, Peter.

The opening is d65 without the surrounding patronising instruction (d64) or topographical detail (d66), followed by d58, taking the cue from its contraction in E to ‘Then sink your boat’ 27. Slater’s personalizing of the boat twice as ‘she’ in these lines is a terse allusion to the sentiments of the deleted d68-d71. Slater then retains d72 and ‘You’ll know what to do’ (adapted from d66-d67).

35 SD not in DN  A continuation of the stage business deleted earlier 29, 31.

36 Lines deleted in DE, briefly represented in N  Britten deleted d68-d71, d73 in DE but retained d72 in E. It is a pity to lose Slater’s very human response by Peter to Balstrode’s giving out his death sentence, ‘This is too early’ (d73) but otherwise Balstrode’s lines (d68-d71) have suddenly become uncharacteristically sentimental and their deletion ensures the spoken recitative is to the point yet sufficiently valedictory. In N Slater fashions his own edit 34.

37 Word deleted in E  because it is a response to the deleted previous line. d74-d77 are otherwise retained in E though entirely deleted in D and edited in N 34.

38 Lines deleted in D but not E, briefly represented in N  For N see 34.

39 SD revised in E (+N)  Britten changes the opening to ‘The men pushing the boat out has been the cue’, a direction of a more prosaic, practical nature which does not require a specific sound effect.

40 Music indicator added in CD, absent from EN  Britten’s addition recalls his description in CD of Interlude 1, ‘’Everyday’, grey seascape ’, just as the music itself is recalled.

41 SD revised in N  From J Dr Crabbe ‘nods at’ became ‘nods to’ which Slater uses in N.

42 SD deleted in DE, absent from N  Britten removed Slater’s original SD as he did not want a church bell sounding at this point which might create a confusing recall. He uses a church bell not at the beginning of 1.1 but 2.1 for Sunday morning.

43 SD revised in N  The original distinguishes Swallow’s position in the community by the courtesy prefix of ‘Mr.’ as in £ in his first entrance in the Prologue (0.5). In H this was misprinted as ‘Mrs.’ and this reading followed in JQ. In N Slater omits the prefix.

44 Music indicator and placing of Chorus revised in E, both absent from N  (d77.23). Britten’s revised indicator in E stresses the fragmentary, inconsequential nature of the discourse and dismissal of the tragic events earlier in the scene. At the same time by bracketing text he brings forward the first quatrain of the final chorus (d85-d88) before these
lines (d78-d84) and the second quatrain (d89-d92) before the closing 3 lines of dialogue (d82-d84).

45 **Line added in DE, absent from N**  
Britten’s addition was

FISHERMAN Let’s have a look thro’ the glasses

anticipating Slater’s SD at 81.2. It does not occur in 💉 until Q.

46 **Line reallocated in E (+N)**  
to Auntie. In D he had queried reallocating it to Boles.

47 **Line reallocated in E (+N)**  
to Boles.

48 **Line later revised**  
From F ‘spy’ was changed to ‘see’ but the original is found in all 💉 until U. In D Britten suggested ‘we’ rather than ‘I’, but this would have required a change of SD to the effect that the glass was passed around among the fishermen.

49 **Line reallocated in E (+N)**  
to Auntie.

50 **Music indicator added in CD, not in N**  
This addition by Britten flags that the music is the same as at 1.1.1-4. There Crabbe is directly quoted, but these opening lines (d85-d88) are Slater’s rewrite of Borough, I, 287-90 (see Introduction to 3.2 §1.1).

51 **Text revised in DE (+N)**  
Slater’s original ‘the Borough’s bells’ follows Crabbe’s line (Borough, I, 287) he rewrote, ‘There as we pass the jingling Bells betray’. Britten changed this to ‘the Borough sounds’ in DE (+N), following his deletion of church bells in the earlier SD 42. The deletion of the apostrophe avoids the extra sibilance.

52,53 **Quatrain relocated in E but not N**  

54 **SD added in N**  
Slater here adds ‘By now the morning life of the Borough is in full flood.’ This is found in no other 💉 but is Slater’s response to Britten’s closing SD in ♪, ‘The stage is now filled with people singing at their daily work.’

55 **Music indicator added in CD, absent from N**  
→d96.2.
Appendix G: Bibliography

§1. Primary sources (texts consulted for the edition)

I designate the texts alphabetically in chronological order. The dates are as suggested in Banks 2000. ✎ denotes a literary text, ♪ a music score.

A ✎ Preliminary draft, Prologue (1942?), 8 folios: typescript with manuscript annotations, revisions and corrections by Britten and Slater [Location and callmark GB-ALb 2-9401380] {GB-ALb denotes the Britten-Pears Foundation Archive, The Red House, Aldeburgh, Suffolk}

B ✎ Revised preliminary draft, Prologue only (1942?), 6 folios: typescript with manuscript annotations, revisions and corrections by Britten and Slater [GB-ALb 2-9401381]

C ✎ Top copy of final draft, complete libretto (September 1942?), 69 folios: typescript with manuscript annotations, revisions and corrections by Britten and Slater [GB-ALb 2-9401387]

D ✎ First carbon copy of final draft, complete libretto (September 1942?), 69 folios: typescript with manuscript annotations, revisions and corrections by Britten and Slater [GB-ALb 2-9401388]

E ✎ Second carbon copy of final draft, complete libretto (September 1942?), 69 folios and 7 paste-overs: typescript with manuscript annotations, revisions and corrections by Britten, Slater and Crozier [GB-ALb 2-9401389]

F ♪ Composition draft of complete full score (January 1944-January/February 1945), i-iii, 119, iv-vi folios and 2 paste-overs: manuscript by Britten [GB-ALb 2-9401098] {facsimile published in Banks 1996}


H ✎ Fair copy of complete libretto sent to the Lord Chamberlain’s Office for licensing (May 1945): typescript with manuscript annotations, revisions and corrections by Britten {after 24 February 1945 when Britten states Slater agreed to the revisions of 3.2 he added by hand, see Banks 2000: 44} and Slater {after 26 October 1944 when Slater assigned the libretto to Boosey & Hawkes, see Banks 2000: 38} [GB-L LCP 1945/16]

I ♪ Pre-publication vocal score, Boosey & Hawkes, 1944-45, x, 380, xi-xii p [GB-ALb 2-9500683]
<p>| | | |</p>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>✈</td>
<td>Complete libretto, first edition, Boosey &amp; Hawkes, 1945, vi, 50 p; 19 cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>✨</td>
<td>Manuscript full score, 1945-6, 3 vols (218, 174, 126 pp): manuscript by copyists, includes annotations, some probably by Reginald Goodall [GB-ALb 2-9501109]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>✨</td>
<td>Full score published only for hire, first printing, Boosey &amp; Hawkes, 1946, 3 vols ([i-vi], 218; [i-ii], 173; [iii]; [i-ii], 135 [iii] p.): Prologue &amp; Acts 1-2 printed from K, Act 3 from a lost manuscript [GB-ALb 2-9401174] {Full score for hire, second printing, Boosey &amp; Hawkes, 1963, is an enlargement of Text P}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>✨</td>
<td>Vocal score, first edition, Boosey &amp; Hawkes, 1945, viii, 380 p: [GB-ALb 2-9500572, Reginald Goodall’s copy with his annotations; GB-ALb 2-9401394, Pears’s copy with his annotations; GB-ALb 2-9401392, Britten’s file copy with corrections by Rosamund Stroud for Text R]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>✈</td>
<td><em>Peter Grimes and other poems</em>, ‘Slater’s edition’, John Lane The Bodley Head, 1946, 108 p {<em>Grimes</em> pp. 7–56}; 21 cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>✈</td>
<td>Sound recording conducted by Britten, Decca, 1959 3 LPs {The 1985 reissue on 3CDs includes a printed libretto text}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>✨</td>
<td>Study score, first edition, Boosey &amp; Hawkes, 1963, vi, 508 p [GB-ALb 2-9700001, Britten’s file copy with corrections by Rosamund Stroud for Text T]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>✈</td>
<td>Complete libretto, second edition, Boosey &amp; Hawkes, 1964 [copyright 1961], vi, 50 p; 19 cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>✨</td>
<td>Vocal score, second edition, Boosey &amp; Hawkes, 1967, viii, 380 p [G-ALb 2-02052454]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>✈</td>
<td>Video recording conducted by Britten, BBC, 1969; 1 DVD; 27 p; 20cm {with partial libretto text as English subtitles, for which acknowledgement is made to the Boosey &amp; Hawkes edn (unspecified) but there are sung variants from this, e.g. ‘the boat’ (O.4) and it is likely the subtitles date from the preparation of the DVD version of the film in 2008}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>✨</td>
<td>Study score, corrected edition, Boosey &amp; Hawkes, 1973, viii, 508 p; 27 cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>✈</td>
<td>Complete libretto, third edition, Boosey &amp; Hawkes, 1979, vi, 44 p; 27 cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>✨</td>
<td>Vocal score, third edition, Boosey &amp; Hawkes, 2003, viii, 380 p; 27 cm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other primary are the texts of the scenarios and three other texts:

Scenario A 1.1-2 (c. 1 July 1941 – c. 16 March 1942), 1 folio: manuscript by Britten [GB-ALb 2-9401374]

Scenario B 1.1-2, 2.1-3, 3.1 scenarios, 1.1 libretto (c. 1 July 1941 – c. 16 March 1942), 4 folios: manuscript by Pears [GB-ALb 2-9401375]

Scenario C Prologue, 1.1-3, 2.1-3, 3.1-2 (March – April 1942), 1 folio: manuscript by Pears [GB-ALb 2-9401377]

Scenario D Version 1: Prologue, 1.1-2, 2.1-3, 3.1-2; Version 2: 1 & 2 as Version 1, 3.1 Court Scene, 3.2 Epilogue; Incomplete attempts: 1.1, 1.2 (= Prologue), 2 (= 1.2); 1.1 (March – April 1942). 2 folios: manuscript, Versions by Britten; Incomplete attempts at 1.1-2, 2 by Pears, at 1.1 by Britten {on headed paper of the JOHNSON LINE of Sweden} [GB-ALb 2-9401378]

Scenario E 2.1-3, 3.1 (March – April 1942). 1 folio: manuscript by Pears [GB-ALb 2-9401379]

Notes Descriptions in Crabbe’s The Borough of interest, viz.: Storm (Letter I); Inns (Letter XI); Poor (Letter XVIII) (c. 1 July 1941 – c. 16 March 1942), 1 folio: manuscript by Britten [GB-ALb 2-9401376]

Cast List (1942?), 1 folio: manuscript by Britten with annotations, revisions and corrections [GB-ALb 2-9401386]

3.2 revisions (January 1945), 8 pages: manuscript by Britten and Duncan [US-AUShrce, GB-ALb photocopy boxed with scenarios and libretto drafts consulted]

§2. Secondary sources cited in commentaries
{The suffix, §4 etc., indicates an annotated entry in that section}


‘Benjamin Britten: Tributes and Memories’, Tempo, 120, March 1977: 3. 84

Brett, Philip. comp. (1983), Peter Grimes. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 84


Britten, Benjamin. (1948), Albert Herring, vocal score. London: Boosey & Hawkes.

Britten, Benjamin. (1955), The turn of the screw, vocal score. London: Boosey & Hawkes.


Crabbe, George. ed. George Crabbe (1851), The Life and Poetical Works of the Revd George Crabbe. London: John Murray {Crabbe’s son’s edition, the text acquired by Peter Pears}.


*Oxford English Dictionary* online.


§3. Literature on Crabbe

The remaining sections of this bibliography I have annotated with reference to the interest of the titles for a study of Grimes.


p.40 notes that Peter is frightening because not a norm for Crabbe. He is a natural phenomenon, not a weak man but an original sin. The imagery and verse organization is used to evoke a response from the reader with the airlessness and desolation of the marshland and inner landscape of moral distress. Language itself is reversed for immediacy: ‘hot-red’ rather than ‘red-hot’.


p.141-9, notes that the landscape with which Crabbe surrounds Peter offers a commentary on the mind rather than the converse typical of chorographic verse: that the vision favours ‘imperfection and muddlement’; the choice of images, rhythm and how it is handled convey progressive constriction.


p.145-65, ‘The Grimeses’, explores, with some reference to psychoanalysis, a concern that the poem does not fully explain the motives or meaning of Peter’s conflict. The Britten-Slater transformation is criticized as a liberal-humanist reply to the poem rather than an operatic vision of it. Notes the paradox that Crabbe wants to see Peter as a member of human society as an instance of certain general laws of human feeling and an object lesson to us all. Comments that Crabbe’s language, ‘Where all presented to the Eye or Ear, Oppress’d the Soul! With Misery, Grief, and Fear.’ (Borough, XXII, 203-4), the use of the past tense ‘Oppress’d’ denotes a compulsive, recurrent activity while the use of ‘the’ Soul universalizes it, We are with Peter and we are Peter.

The earliest and least generous of Forster’s writings on Crabbe. He disapproves of what he rightly terms Crabbe’s speciality, ‘the analysis and censure of weakness’, but censure is too crude a term for Crabbe’s practice. At least with Peter (p.xvi) there is no grey area, a character who goes wrong deliberately, ‘who tortures and murders his boy apprentices’, Forster jumping to the same conclusion as the Borough folk (2.1.482) in lines Britten added with the same scarcity of evidence.


The content is largely the same as 1932a but this shorter, freestanding piece is in chattier style and, being less concerned with the nature and writing of biography, concentrates on a critique of the poet.


(p.161-5) Demonstrates the effectiveness of Crabbe’s use of language. The callously humorous understatement, ‘Grimes is at his exercise’ derives its force from its conscious inadequacy to the occasion. In the closing hallucinations Crabbe is sparing in words with horrific associations, using common words but in abnormal word order, ‘dream it was not’, ‘He, with his hand, the old man, scoop’d the flood’ and an emphatic inversion of rhythm, ‘Thrice, when I struck them’, ‘Still did they force me’.


p.34, Crabbe shows how typical details of everyday life, emptied of meaning, have a spectral character which evokes the sense of a disintegrating personality; p.105-8, emphasizes Peter fits into a society that allows his actions, the workhouse clearing men, the community noting his ‘exercise’ calmly.


p.294-9 on *Grimes*, stresses Peter’s degradation is mirrored and intensified by that of his natural surroundings, that Crabbe’s focus is on psychology rather than melodrama. Taking a hard moral line on deserved punishment, criticizes the account of Peter’s suffering as unreal but a ploy for pathos.


‘The Borough’, p.93-100 on *Grimes*, provides the most focussed analysis available of the nature of Crabbe’s Peter, the problem of defining his tragic quality yet Crabbe’s success in achieving this. Includes a detailed study of Crabbe’s manipulation of language to effect his transformation of Peter from victimizer to victim.


Has fascinating critiques of *Grimes*, not least because they originate arguments still made, e.g. Francis Jeffrey, 1810 (p.93): ‘There is a degree of depravity which counteracts our sympathy with suffering, and a degree of insignificance which extinguishes our interest in guilt.’ At least by 1874 (p.448) Leslie Stephen is writing, in more enlightened manner, that Crabbe’s ‘peculiar power is best displayed in so presenting to us the sorrows of commonplace characters as to make us feel that a shabby coat and a narrow education, and the most unromantic causes, need not cut off our sympathies with a fellow-creature.’ Also in 1810 an unsigned review picks up Crabbe’s contrast of manner (p.111), ‘The greater part of this hideous story is told in the Ordinary of Newgate style; but the conclusion,
where the dying villain pours the wild effusions of his guilt-distracted brain, is
drawn with terrific strength.’ The point is missed that the power of the conclusion
is in relief to the earlier deliberately deadpan reportage. Hazlitt, 1821, is rather
faint in his praise (p.306): ‘He is a most potent copyist of actual nature, though
not otherwise a great poet.’

‘In search of Peter Grimes’, p.188-198, points out the problem of
coming to the character via the Britten-Slater ‘transmutation’ because
what distinguishes the original from other Crabbe characters is its
greater inward realization, ‘directness or intimacy or immediacy’.
He argues this is owing to Peter being a portrait of Crabbe’s father.

of Arizona Press.
The title alludes to Byron’s praise, ‘Though nature’s sternest painter,
yet the best’ but Sigworth is careful to distinguish the link in Crabbe
between nature and Peter’s mind’s reception of it. Because he is ‘dull
and hopeless’ the natural surroundings accentuated this. He shows this
is a structural device: ‘Crabbe places Peter Grimes in the dull solitude
of the salt marsh, and there, amid desolation symbolizing his state of
mind, Peter is gradually overcome by his consciousness of guilt and
sin until nature itself seems to breed the demons which haunt him. The
natural surroundings are morally neutral; it is what Peter transfers to
them from his own mind which is significant for the story.’ There is
also a dramatist’s sense of transformation within a timespan here.

University Presses.
(p.81-87) focusses on the Grimes tale as a parable: ‘‘want, disease, solitude
and disappointment’ {quoting Crabbe’s Preface} follow on from and are the
inescapable corollary of Grimes’ own actions and temperament.’ Both
sociological and psychological realism is noted, the former in the community’s
acquiescence in the apprentice system, the latter by the hallucination that Crabbe
added to the factual accounts of apprentice abusers. Sees Crabbe’s description
of Peter’s sadism (*Borough*, XXII, 79-85) as grimly compassionate realism using
the poetic resources of parallelism and antithesis. The line ‘Meanwhile the fish
and then th’Apprentice died’ (152) shows a bathetic parallelism which signifies
the distorted value scale that animates Peter’s actions. {Slater’s original line,
0.27, ‘The fish died — and the boy’, preserved this.}

Aldershot: Ashgate.
(p.155-60) quotes Crabbe’s lines Slater uses at the end (3.2.144-50) in terms of a
broader discussion of the sea’s power both to attract and repulse, commenting
on the dangerously seductive tug of the tide yet sublime allure of its depths.
Notes the lines bring aesthetic gratification and make an atmospheric backdrop
but are also related to the moral concerns of the text and that ‘the ability to
stand firm and stem the tide is praised highly by the moralist Crabbe.’
Given this, Peter’s ‘The storm is here, and I shall stay’ (1.1.422, 424) becomes
an heroic statement. The book’s wider preoccupation is with boundaries,
pressure and containment. Peter refuses to be contained.
§4. Literature on Britten

{the first 4 items are general bibliographies}


   Includes a discography.


   An indispensable reference tool, its most significant items being:

Banks, Paul. 'Bibliographic notes and narratives', p.167-228, listing and describing the primary source material.

Crozier, Eric (1946), 'Notes on the production of Peter Grimes', p.7-20, outlines the issues to be faced in staging the opera, with particular reference to set design.

Brett, Philip. 'The growth of the libretto', p.53-78, an overview of significant issues including quotations from drafts and a well considered analysis of the limited place of Duncan’s contribution.

Reed, Philip. 'Finding the right notes', p.79-114, looks at Britten’s creative process as revealed by discarded drafts of the music which includes a consideration (p.97-9) of slightly variant texts of the Prologue’s ‘love duet’ not found in sources DE.

   among the plates are photographs of the composition draft (source F), typescript libretto drafts with additional manuscript notes by Britten and Crozier (sources DE), Britten and Slater (1.1, 2.1 draft texts)

Banks 2000 is a paperback reissue of vol. 1 of a 1996 hardback publication, vol. 2 of which presents a photographic reproduction of the composition draft (source F), necessarily in colour because the SDs are in red pencil and the black pencil manuscript is difficult to read against the faded and water stained paper.


   Contribution by Nicholas Maw reveals Britten modest and critical about his own ability but giving a younger composer encouraging advice.


   Amid a range of material on Britten (p.95-101, 188-228) usefully considers the paradox (p. 197) that Grimes’ atypicality has made it successful because its conventional grand opera structure {and references to earlier composers’ musical styles} render it accessible to a traditional opera audience.

Kildea, Paul. ‘Britten’s biographers’, p.3-15, is a useful survey including a critique of Carpenter’s over emphasis on innocence destroyed, tempered by a brief but insightful quote from Mitchell: ‘at the centre of his music there is an intensely solitary and private spirit, a troubled, even sometimes despairing visionary, a creator preternaturally aware of the destructive appetite … that feeds on innocence, virtue and grace [but also] the eminently practical, rational man’ [taken from Cooke, Meryvn, ed., 1995. Cradles of the new: writings on music 1951-91: 488-9. London: Faber & Faber.]

Hammond, Nicholas. ‘Peter Grimes: Now gossip is put on trial’, p.92-101, neatly distinguishes a difference of attitude to gossip between Ellen, ‘But we’ll gossip too’ (0.182), making it something she and Peter can share and Peter’s seeing it as a force which isolates him. Balstrode and Ned share Peter’s view of gossip as a destructive force but the quartet including Ellen at 2.1.517 shows gossip can incorporate a shared ideal and the capacity for redemption.

Gardner, Edward talks to Nicholas Kenyon. ‘Conducting Britten’, p.113-23, considers Grimes is distinctive among Britten’s works in that it is ‘so visceral and so meant’ with a ‘raw, elemental energy that generates such momentum.’

Brett, Philip. comp. (1983), Peter Grimes. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. The most important book of criticism on Grimes. Particularly significant are:

Forster, E.M. (1941, 1948), p.1-21, ‘Two essays on Crabbe’. The first essay, reading which inspired Britten to undertake Grimes, is much more generous to Crabbe than Forster 1932. His quotation from The Borough shows exactly, as he claims, how subtly Crabbe links a scene and a soul, in this case Peter’s. Crabbe is praised because he is unusual and sincere. Now Forster likes his tartness and acid humour. In the second essay, a lecture at the Aldeburgh Festival in 1948, Forster observes the paradox that Crabbe was both repelled by and attracted to Aldeburgh. His skill is as a grim realist without Wordsworth’s sense of regeneration. Forster then observes that the Britten-Slater Grimes diverges widely from Crabbe’s but that their duty in their work is to be original. Had Forster written the libretto, he says, he would have starred the murdered apprentices and kept Crabbe’s ending.

Brett, Philip. p.47-87, ‘‘Fiery visions’ (and revisions): Peter Grimes in progress’, a summary, with quotations, of the significance of the scenarios, the influence of reading Crabbe, the various versions of the libretto, Slater’s letter to Britten [Appendix C in this document]. Concludes that ultimately Britten made the decisions.

Keller, Hans. (1952), p.105-20, ‘Peter Grimes: the story, the music not excluded’, stresses the strength and complexity of the character of Peter, ‘His pride, ambition, and urge for independence fight with his need for love; his self-love battles against self-hate.’ He accounts for the work’s universality in that ‘we do identify him, and ourselves with him, unconsciously.’

Wilson, Edmund. (1947), p.159-62, ‘An account of Peter Grimes from London in Midsummer’, emphasizes that the community’s savagery is that of a people recently at war, ‘the blind anguish, the hateful rancors and the will to destruction of these horrible years.’

Garbutt, J.W. (1963), p.163-71, ‘Music and motive in Peter Grimes’, notes the discrepancies in the characterization of Peter, ‘clear-sighted enough to see that the Borough gossips listen only to money’ but ‘at the same time blind enough to desire their respect’. Deeper issues are discerned owing to the transformation from Crabbe’s to Slater’s Peter. Should he accept death without established guilt?
Brett, Philip. (1977), p.180-89, ‘Britten and Grimes’, considers ‘the drama is an encoded projection of Britten’s own experience, the opera a disguised and flawed endeavour to win compassion and sympathy for the homosexual community.’ {summary in Seymour 2004:73}

Caron, C.L.Nathalie (1998), The role of the chorus in Benjamin Britten’s opera Peter Grimes. University of Glasgow: MA dissertation {copy at BPF} views the chorus as condemned by the decision to make Peter innocent {an interesting reversal of the usual perspective}; considers its malevolent gossip a force antagonistic to, and distinct from, Crabbe’s wish to empathize with individuals through meticulous psychological descriptions; its judgemental nature is similarly at odds with Crabbe’s objective reporting. In their ‘Ha-ha’s at the end of 2.1 (477) the chorus becomes the demons they accuse Peter of being (1.2.160). At the beginning of 2.1 the chorus is commentator, in the church service, as it is heard in parallel with Ellen’s and later Peter’s song. In the final scene the chorus becomes Peter, the forces which torture him from within singing his name. They are able to maintain a physical presence or a sinister off-stage presence, even if not directly in the immediate stage action {so is Peter}. They are not just a stock role but shape the action and music {and may be regarded, therefore, as a character, as a collective body, in their own right.}

Conrad, Peter (1989), A song of love and death: the meaning of opera. London: The Hogarth Press. (p.39-40) notes Britten revises operatic convention by giving Peter a ‘furious monologue’, ‘When I had gone fishing’ (1.2.362), rather than traditional drinking song and (p.345) that Slater created a community for Peter to {wish to} belong to whereas Crabbe deliberately left the focus on him.

Cooke, Mervyn. ed. (1999), The Cambridge Companion to Benjamin Britten. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Allen, Stephen Arthur. p.79-94, ‘‘He descended into Hell’: Peter Grimes, Ellen Orford and salvation denied’, through close attention to the relationship of the Interludes and motifs used and transformed through the opera, argues for the centrality of Ellen’s perspective as ‘the opera’s fallible spiritual heroine’. Suggests Interludes 1, 3 and 5 represent Ellen while Interludes 2, 4 and 6 represent Peter who has both visionary (Apollonian) and aggressive (Dionysian) characteristics. The opera is a tragedy because the aggressive characteristics overcome the visionary. Like Peter, Ellen stands apart from the community but her aria in 1.1 has a stable emotional essence distinct from the rhythmic instability of Peter’s and the community’s music. The tonal regions of E, A and D are those of fantasy vision for Peter but reality for Ellen. It is Ellen who is actually confronted by the community (1.1, 2.1), not Peter {except in 1.2}. Her aria in 3.1 is a lament on the theme Of betrayal.

Cross, Joan (1989), {Autobiography} {Unpublished typescript, BPF 1-9700292} Chapter on Grimes, p.129-43 records the hostile reception by some of the company but valuably a thorough character study of Ellen by the artist who created the role. Also mentions the vocal qualities of Peter Pears (p.124-5), Owen Brannigan, the first Swallow (p.126), Edith Coates, the first Auntie (p.103) and Valetta Jacobi, the first Mrs. Sedley (p.115).

(epecially p.37-9), a recollection of revising 3.2 with Britten at his request. Claims he persuaded Britten to recall phrases and music from earlier in the opera, though from Scenario D it had been intended to recall the chorus music of 1.1. Claims he revised other, unstated parts of the libretto.

(p.127) Picks up Kennedy’s concept {see entry below} of Britten’s ‘spiritual leitmotif’ but points out *Grimes* is not a Christian parable (there is no redemption) but a moral parable with Christian implications{OK} and a strong Christian undertone{an overstatement}. States the established church is the social centre for the community {but only in 2.1 and not for everyone then}. (p.35-6) argues against Brett’s focus on the homosexual perspective, that the work should be interpreted in a wider and more inclusive context.

Provides the complete libretto texts, Britten’s (*i.e.* the music score) versions rather than the librettists but, unlike this edition, without Britten’s repetitions. Includes valuable insight from one librettist, Myfanwy Piper, ‘Writing for Britten’, p.8-21 {quotation from p.8}: ‘When I showed the first tentative words of dialogue to Britten he said, ‘Don’t colour them, the music will do that.’ This did not mean that they were to be colourless, or flat, but that they were not to be high-flown, over-descriptive, self-indulgent or imprecise.

‘Peter Grimes’, p.168-76, is probably the most freshly written introduction to the work. Introduces the concept of a ‘spiritual leitmotiv’, ‘how innocence can be tainted and corrupted by the world, how the ability to create depends upon a renewal of innocence.’ One can understand Peter as an innocent but no renewal is possible for him, though he dreams of it at 2.2.31-44.

(p.2) points to Pears creating a ‘conflation’ between Britten and Peter Grimes with a portrait of a character ‘at odds with the society in which he finds himself’. Then Keller’s comment on Britten’s ‘heavily repressed sadism’ which ‘underlies pacifistic attitudes’ {e.g. the *Grimes* 2.2 draft}. Kildea argues (p.13) that Britten in later works followed Chekhov’s dictum of being ‘an unbiased witness’ of his characters but in *Grimes* ‘his control over our emotional response to the characters is absolute.’


Includes letters from the period of the evolution, composition and first performance run of *Grimes* and major critical notices (p.1253-65) and a reproduction of the programme of the first performance (p.1266-7).


Mark, Christopher (2013), Britten: an extraordinary life. London: ABRSM Publishing. ‘An enormous commitment’, p.69-75. Clarifies Britten’s misgivings by 1943 with Slater as librettist yet conviction that his interest in character and situation can be expressed musically. Emphasizes Brett’s analysis that Peter internalizes the Borough’s opinion of him.


Powell, Neil. (2013), Benjamin Britten: a Life for Music. London: Hutchinson. (p.231-2) Criticizes Britten and Slater for their ‘misconception’ that Crabbe’s poem is melodramatic and Peter a villain rather than tragic hero. As a result the repeated ‘I’ll marry Ellen’ (1.1.391-3) appears emotionally insincere. Crabbe’s torments for the dying Peter make him a tragic figure where Slater’s change of ending makes him merely a suicide (but directed).

Rupprecht, Philip ed. (2001). Britten’s musical language. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ‘Peter Grimes: the force of operatic utterance’, p.32-74, the tragedy turns on acts of naming which are also signs of social identity, it is pervaded by moments when simple naming can coerce, wound and, finally, destroy. Varieties of naming are explored: speech as action in the Prologue, choric utterance in 1.1, Peter’s self-sentencing in 2.1, the chorus and hate speech in 2.1, melancholy and incipient madness in 3.2. The tragic distance traversed is that from ‘a hand that you can feel’ (0.208-9) of Ellen to an end when he can no longer register her presence (3.2.88, 89.1).

Rupprecht, Philip ed. (2013). Rethinking Britten. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Ashby, Arved. p.63-85, ‘Peter Grimes and the “Tuneful Air”’, exemplifies the transformation of ordinary speech, unnatural stress of the prosody of poem and demands of the emotional situation, founded on Purcell’s practice whose recitatives dance. Variety is achieved by contrasting the tuneful and declamatory air. ‘And do you prefer the storm’ (1.1.319) is a recitative in the style of a tuneful air. Peter is distanced from the dance of the chorus, ‘He’s mad or drunk’ (1.2.193) with his ametrical, pitch fixated ‘Now the Great Bear and Pleiades’(1.2.176). In 3.1 the dances animate and typify the characters who sing to them, the amorous Swallow’s barn dance, Mrs Sedley’s ländler, the Rector’s hornpipe and finally Mrs Sedley’s attempt at a gallop when seeking Swallow. In 3.2 Peter is at his most ametrical, with a quiet, complete fluctuation of pulse against the rhythmic chorus cries of his name. Mrs Sedley, by contrast is rhythmically formulaic and arguably over comic thereby. Ashby claims where Slater’s text is often inert or non-committal in characterization {which is what Britten monitored}, Britten does this through rhythmic expression {including repetition}.

Harper-Scott, J.P.E. p.86-101, ‘Post-war women in Britten’, argues Ellen is presented as a cipher in support of Peter rather than existing in her own sake. Mrs. Sedley is disregarded because she doesn’t submit to the sexualized role that the Borough requires of women [yet Boles
is equally disregarded}. Ellen’s Es towards the end of the Prologue’s ‘love duet’, ‘Uncloved the hot sun will spread his rays around’, represent a redemptive goal whereas Peter’s monotone Es at ‘Now the Great Bear and Pleiades’ (1.2.176) are an attempt to fake the reality of his character {which, however, makes him manipulative}. Harper-Scott suggests the Nieces see through Peter when they mockingly imitate his Es at ‘His song alone would sour the beer’ (1.2.204-5) {but perhaps they just mockingly imitate}.

Cooke, Mervyn. p.102-27. ‘Be flat or be natural: pitch symbolism in Britten’s operas’ exemplified in Grimes. ‘Be flat’ means being weighed down by discipline, duty and conformity; ‘be natural’ means pursuing freedom and dreams, being faithful to one’s private desires. So while Swallow’s opening questions in the Prologue are in B flat major, the chorus with ‘Truth from lies’ intones B natural. Other notable B flats in Grimes are Ellen’s ‘Hush’ to Peter in 2.1 and the chorus’s 3 cries of ‘Grimes’ at the end of 3.1. In 2.1-2 the chorus posse sings in an aggressive B major while Swallow’s drawing the moral at the end of the scene returns to a pompous B flat major {interestingly it might be argued the chorus acting naturally are the more unnatural}.

Examines the difficulty of defining Peter. The opera’s conflict is that between the individual and society yet Peter is both repulsed by and attracted to society. Peter is also at war with himself, his violent and rebellious individual will, the basis for it unexplained but perhaps the potential dark side of repressed homosexuality. Part of the difficulty is the amalgam resulting from a number of contributors to the libretto. There are quotes from the drafts and their significance is considered, e.g. that of 2.2 {see my 2.2 note 7} displays a Peter of more pragmatic honesty. As the opera evolved analysis turned more intensely on the psychology of Peter {but Crabbe’s poem evolves similarly}. Ellen’s redemptive status is reduced {like her role generally after 1.1} and therefore her relevance. If Peter is not guilty, why does he so passively accept his death? {echoing Garbutt in Brett 1983}. Includes a detailed comparison of the vocal characteristics of Pears’s and Vickers’s Peters, the former more aurally soothing, the latter more dramatically satisfying.

Shipton, Eileen. (2003), Musical, psychological and dramatic conflict in Britten’s Peter Grimes. Cardiff University: BMus dissertation. {copy at BPF}
notes the dramatic and psychological insight, the different perspectives, of the Ellen and Peter ‘love duet’ at the end of the Prologue, but wrongly suggests, not being in the original draft, it was borne out of Britten’s musical ideas rather than the text, because Britten had added that text before he started composing. Rightly emphasizes the work is more concerned with psychological than sociological exploration {in this it matches Crabbe’s priorities}. Posits Peter is a modernist critique of the heroic: alienated from society, emotionally unstable, psychologically complex yet ultimately realistic, and {rather more covertly} preoccupied with guilt, perhaps owing to sexual desire for the apprentice {but perhaps just for the death of a boy in his care}.

An account by its producer of the making of source O. Britten’s clarity of beat and ability to inspire the performers is noted. The problems of performance are also detailed: those of ensemble and balance with a large orchestra, mobile soloists and chorus, off-stage chorus, off-stage band, bells, shutting doors, foghorn, wind machine, John’s scream. The movement of performers as on
stage was planned in detail with Britten. Sound effects were only selectively used where essential to the unfolding drama, but the supernatural quality of the ‘Voices’ in 3.2 was emphasized. Comments on variations in text from the published version ‘mostly made over the years for reasons of sound and suitability for singing’. Also notes the return to the originally named non-singing character, Dr. Crabbe {see Prolegomena, note 33}.


(p. 407) Implies a mismatch owing to the revision of the libretto. Peter’s outsider status is both social and sexual, ‘When the Borough hatred burgeons it needs to register something more fundamental than common brutality.’ [equally it might be argued that hatred is more terrifying if it cannot be warranted]. Argues the opera could be considered a British form of expressionism, especially owing to the final progression of the opera to Peter’s demented state.


(p.73-85), Jane Brandon, ‘Storms, Laughter & Madness: Verdian ‘Numbers’ and Generic Allusions in Benjamin Britten’s Peter Grimes’, demonstrates Britten’s structuring scenes, noting his numbering and annotations in the early typescript libretti {texts C-E}, but also his innovations in comparison with examples in Verdi, e.g. Britten’s storm chorus in 1.1 is a concertato with complex layering of voices, alternating between diegetic song and recitative to accompany action. In 2.1 a concertato, ‘Who lets us down must take the rap’ (433), culminates in a cruel laughing chorus while 3.1 features a concertato Lynching Chorus (262) with a choral curse.


Begins by noting Peter and Ellen only have 2 duets, only the first a ‘love duet’. Claims Britten dramatizes a deviant perspective, resulting in a queer aesthetic and that sexuality, though concealed, interacts significantly with the ethical, rhetorical and aesthetic meanings in Britten’s operatic discourse. Claims Peter, like Claggart in Billy Budd, embodies a confrontation with the dangers of deviant knowledge. But has to point out the sexual elements in Peter’s subdual of his servant boys have been, through revision of the libretto, relegated to the realm of innuendo.


‘Queer fish’, p.19-28, offers a polemic that the visionary idealist outsider of Pears’s portrayal doesn’t wash, nor does death from dehydration after only 3 days if the boat is full of fish. This is all lies to mask that Peter sexually abuses his apprentices, that is ‘The charges that no court has made’ (0.148) and the ‘exercise’ to which the community alludes (2.1.193 etc.).


Offers a neat description of Keller’s Three psychoanalytic notes on Peter Grimes (1946). Peter is the Freudian ‘anal’ type with characteristics shared by the community whose own repressed sadism makes Peter seem stronger in the Borough’s opinion. Peter’s ‘mother’ is only partly Ellen, also the sea, the Earth, Auntie and the Nieces and an ‘imago’ of Ellen which is why ‘Her breast is harbour too’ are almost his final words (3.2.111-12). Balstrode is Peter’s substitute father, giving the oedipal order to his ‘son’ to kill himself (3.2.125), but so is the storm and his apprentices. Keller cites the version in
source D of 2.2.47 with the link, ‘I hear my father and the one that drowned’. Also includes a reproduction of Keller’s letter praising Pears’s Peter as ‘unsurpassable’ because ‘an unbroken line of development runs throughout his interpretation.’

§5. Literature on Slater

Gives a homely picture of Slater, based on an interview with his wife Enid, but framed with an emphasis on Grimes being an extension of his work in realistic theatre and Britten’s consideration Grimes was his most realistic opera. Crozier noted the long evening sessions when Slater, he and Britten went over the libretto together with Slater reluctant to make changes so the others did (which explains the differences between source C and DE).

14 poems follow an article aiming to revise judgement about writers of the 30s. Argues the nature of their writing was not so much political as an attempt to subject literature to a rational critique. Literature was moribund because it reflected society and the proper preoccupation of writers should therefore be social change. (p. 111-13) Slater advocated the widest, most catholic attitudes to creative art. ‘All the dramas are before their time in the sense that they experiment with song and chorus, audience and stage relationships, and often express the action in verse.’ Adds (p.135-6) a bibliography of Slater’s writings up to 1940.

Comprises 7 poems, a prose passage and an introduction by John St. John stating that Slater is difficult to assess partly because he wrote many works in many literary forms, partly because he was a paradox, ‘both the most intellectual and simple, the most sophisticated and humble of men.’
§6. Discography

{listed in chronological order by date of recording}

1948
Peter Pears (Peter), Joan Cross (Ellen), Tom Culbert (Rector), BBC Theatre Chorus, Orchestra of the Royal Opera House Covent Garden/Reginald Goodall. Recorded at EMI Studio 1, Abbey Road, 12, 14, 16-17 July 1948, under Britten’s supervision. {London:} EMI, 1993.

Comprises excerpts:

i. Ellen you’re leading ... Lord!’ 1.1.125 (words 130-43) – 152
ii. ‘Mind that door! ... again.’ 1.2.156.1-185
iii. Interlude III & ‘Glitter of waves ... weeping.’ 2.1.1-188.2
iv. ‘In dreams I’ve built myself ... deep.’ 2.2.28-57
v. ‘This I found ... no power.’ 3.1.135 (words 139-154) -157
vi. Interlude VI & ‘Steady! ... to day.’ 3.2.1-121.

These substantial excerpts, albeit having orchestral accompaniment only without the full solo vocal contributions, offer the closest we can get musically to the original performances. Particularly notable is Pears’s electric frenzy in 3.2.

Banks 2000 details (p. 215-20) the evolution of this recording, Britten’s misgivings and refusal to publish it but gradual publication.

1958

Banks 2000 details (p. 221-3) the evolution of this recording.

Smith 1959, the recording’s producer, gives an account of the sessions.

Gardner in Bosridge 2013: 119 says of Britten’s conducting: ‘He stretches the piece: he takes what’s there and pushes it in different, extreme directions’

1978
Jon Vickers (Peter), Heather Harper (Ellen), Jonathan Summers (Balstrode), Orchestra & Chorus of the Royal Opera House Covent Garden/Sir Colin Davis. Recorded at All Saints Church Tooting April 1978. {Amsterdam:} Philips, 1978.

1992
1995


Blyth, Alan {review}, *Gramophone*, May 1996.

Gardner in Bostridge 2013§: 117 admired Langridge’s ‘focus and intensity of expression’.

2000


Fairman, Richard {review}, *Gramophone*, January 2011.

2004


2013

Alan Oke (Peter), Giselle Allen (Ellen), David Kempster (Balstrode), Chorus of Opera North with the Chorus of the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, Britten-Pears Orchestra/Steuart Bedford. Recorded live at Snape Maltings 7, 9 June 2013. Perivale: Signum Classics, 2013.

§7. Filmography

{listed in chronological order by date of recording}

1969


Conrad 1989§4 deemed Pears ‘an ineffectual dreamer: a misfit but no menace’ (p.344-6).

Responsible for the staging, Cross 1989§4 incorporated her variation in the original final scene (p.140) that Ellen not be led away by Balstrode but watches Peter’s final voyage.

Banks 2000§4 details (p. 223-8) the evolution of this recording and its significance for Britten. Kildea 2013§4 includes (plate 51) a photograph of Britten, the orchestra and set filling the Maltings’ space.


Kildea 2013§4, p.4, writes of ‘the dreamy lyricism Britten had in mind’ for Peter {this Pears so well exemplifies}.

1981


Conrad 1989§4 considers Vickers ‘enlarged the work by his audacious revision’, playing Peter as ‘a barnacled prophet’ (p.344-6).

Sutcliffe 1996§4, p. 407-8, writes ‘all the cruelty Crabbe described pulsed through his performance, though the apparent nobility and suffering … turned the dark side into a kind of dangerous schizophrenia’

Bostridge 2011§4, p.197, notes that Vickers’ appropriation of the role, although not to Britten’s taste, made it ‘a star vehicle for the Heldentenor’ and thereby more commercial.

Kildea 2013§4, p.4, considers ‘Vickers brutalized Grimes’s personality, took liberties with text and tempo, and robbed his voice of the dreamy lyricism Britten had in mind for the role.’
Peter Langridge (Peter), Janice Cairns (Ellen), Alan Opie (Balstrode), Tim Albery (director), English National Opera Orchestra & Chorus/David Atherton. Recorded live at the London Coliseum 1994. {Halle/Saale:} Arthaus Musik.

Langridge was the outstanding Peter of the generation following Pears and Vickers. Of small physique, he intimidated through his wildness, seeming to contain an ever present anger which erupts from time to time into frenzy.

Christopher Ventris (Peter), Emily Magee (Ellen), Alfred Muff (Balstrode), David Pountney (director), Zurich Opera Chorus & Orchestra/Franz Welser-Möst. Recorded live at Zurich Opera 13, 21, 23 December 2005. {London:} EMI.

Ventris is a heldentenor, a physical presence but also with something of an heroic quality. Set and design are controversial: Auntie has a 1930s style cabaret welcoming bar, members of the community are suspended witnesses at various levels across the stage.

Anthony Dean Griffey (Peter), Patricia Racette (Ellen), Anthony Michaels-Moore (Balstrode), John Doyle (producer), Metropolitan Opera Orchestra & Chorus/Donald Runnicles. Recorded live at the Met 15 March 2008. {London:} EMI.

Simon, John (2008), ‘Grimes begrimed’, The Hudson Review, 61(1), Spring 2008: 155-7, is a withering critique of this production, largely owing to the bizarre nature of the set design. {Griffey is a heldentenor of pathos as well as physical domination}.

John Graham-Hall (Peter), Susan Gritton (Ellen), Christopher Purves (Balstrode), Richard Jones (director), La Scala Milan Chorus & Orchestra/Robin Ticciati. Recorded live at La Scala Theatre May 2012. London: Opus Arte.

A baffling set: apparently an industrial estate in an unregenerate Eastern Europe with most of the action taking place from a portakabin from which the apprentice falls perhaps 3 feet to his death. Of medium physique, Graham-Hall portrays Peter as a neurotic who finds daily living a challenge but holds the focus of attention because the structuring of the plot by Britten and Slater ensures this.

Alan Oke (Peter), Giselle Allen (Ellen), David Kempster (Balstrode), Chorus of Opera North with the Chorus of the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, Britten-Pears Orchestra/Stuart Bedford. Recorded live at Aldeburgh Beach June 2013. {Halle/Saale:} Arthaus Musik.

Uses Aldeburgh Beach, Crabbe’s authentic context, as the backdrop. This creates a unique atmosphere with the sound of the sea and gulls a natural accompaniment. The problem is that the filming of June evening performances means that 1.2’s night pub scene takes place in daylight yet it is dark by the time of 2.1’s Sunday morning. Of slender physique, Oke plays Peter as an ordinary guy, introverted, proud, stubborn, sometimes angry, closer to Pears than any other portrayal but more realistic.