

Manx Notes 473 (2020)

“DISTURBING THE PUBLIC PEACE BY SINGING”

(1872) *

William Proctor was summoned in August 1872 before the High Bailiff in Douglas, charged with disturbing the “peace of the town at one o’clock in the morning by singing.” The police were on the scene in the form of P.C. Cannon, who was in Duke Street at that early hour of the morning, and “heard some persons singing loudly in Wellington-street.” Meeting the pair at the corner with Duke Street he ordered them to stop singing, but after they were some thirty yards away, “they commenced whistling, and when they reached the Market-place they returned to their singing.” Proctor’s fine was a mild one, one penny and costs, as no one in the nearby streets had complained at all. Proctor’s advocate in mounting a defence for him mentioned that “I have heard people singing in the streets at half-past five o’clock on Sunday morning, ‘We are going home to glory,’ and I did not interfere.” “We are going home to glory” fits a number of hymn titles, but, nevertheless, it is still a hymn.

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REFERENCES

Anon. “[Local Intelligence] Disturbing the Public Peace by Singing.” *Mona’s Herald* 14 August 1872: 4e.



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