Drawing on Pierre Macherey's location of 'real history' in the silences and gaps of the historical record, this paper studies the changing role of the paid singer in England. Although singers and musicians in England have been rewarded for their performances at all periods, more attention has been given in recent years to traditional singing as a recreational, even domestic activity than as a means of livelihood. Because of their constantly changing social status, the position of the paid singer has been ambiguous and frequently oppositional. A recent book sees their status as one of continuous decline. However, the process was not a continuous and inevitable one: the singer adapted to changes in society and found new sources of support.
Drawing on Pierre Macherey's location of 'real history' in the silences and gaps of the historical record, this paper studies the changing role of paid singer or sell their ballad sheets on the street corner, in the market or at local fairs in order to raise money for the community such as other disabled individuals, the widows and 'orphans' of colliery disasters, or other causes. The ballad, has a long history. Irish American author Malachy McCourt unravels the mysteries surrounding the song 'Danny Boy', introduced to a wider audience by Elsie Griffin, who introduced the song to a wider audience. The first recording was made in 1915 by the German vocalist Ernestine Schumann-Heink. There are many theories behind the lyrics of 'Danny Boy' with everybody making their own of the song's true meaning. This edition of Words and Music celebrates the very act of singing, with readers Jessie Buckley and Julian Ovenden. This edition of Words and Music celebrates the very act of singing, with readers Jessie Buckley and Julian Ovenden. This edition of Words and Music celebrates the very act of singing, with readers Jessie Buckley and Julian Ovenden. This edition of Words and Music celebrates the very act of singing, with readers Jessie Buckley and Julian Ovenden.