



MUSIC FROM THE PETERHOUSE PARTBOOKS | 5 CDs

# THE LOST MUSIC OF CANTERBURY

Anonymous • Aston • Hunt • Jones • Ludford • Mason • Pygott • Sturmy

Restored by Nick Sandon

**BLUE HERON**

Scott Metcalfe



**MUSIC FROM THE PETERHOUSE PARTBOOKS, VOL 1** restored by Nick Sandon

**Hugh Aston** (c1485-1558)

1 Ave Maria dive matris Anne (11:17)

**Robert Jones** (fl1520-35)

2 Magnificat (13:38)

**Aston**

3 Gaude virgo mater Christi (12:02)

**John Mason** (c1480-1548)

4 Quales sumus O misereri (12:13)

**Aston**

5 Ave Maria ancilla trinitatis (14:36)

Total time: (63:48)

*Gaude virgo* edited by, and all other works edited and completed by Nick Sandon. Published by Antico Edition ([www.anticooedition.co.uk](http://www.anticooedition.co.uk)). Used with permission.

Recorded September 6–11, 2009 at the Church of the Redeemer, Chestnut Hill, MA

*Engineering & mastering* Joel Gordon

*Producer* Eric Milnes

*Editing* Eric Milnes, Joel Gordon & David Corcoran

*Cover photo* Radius Images

*Group photos* Liz Linder ([www.lizlinder.com](http://www.lizlinder.com))

*Graphic design* Melanie Germond & Pete Goldlust

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**Blue Heron** Scott Metcalfe, *director*

Noël Bisson (1-3, 5)

Lydia Brotherton (2, 5)

Teresa Wakim (1, 3)

Brenna Wells (1-3, 5)

Jennifer Ashe (2, 5)

Pamela Dellal (1, 3)

Martin Near (1-5)

Michael Barrett (3)

Allen Combs (1-5)

Jason McStoots (1-5)

Marc Molomot (4)

Aaron Sheehan (2, 4, 5)

Steven Soph (4)

Mark Sprinkle (1-5)

Sumner Thompson (1-4)

Cameron Beauchamp (1-3, 5)

Glenn Billingsley (1, 4, 5)

Paul Guttry (1-5)



**MUSIC FROM THE PETERHOUSE PARTBOOKS, VOL 2** restored by Nick Sandon

**A MASS FOR SAINT MARGARET**

**Nicholas Ludford** (c. 1490-1557)  
Missa Regnum mundi

**Sarum plainchant**  
Proper for the Feast of St Margaret

**Richard Pygott** (c. 1485-1549)  
Salve regina

- 1 Introit: Me expectaverunt peccatores (4:08)  
*RULERS PG UT*
- 2 Kyrie XII (Conditor) (2:26)
- 3 Gloria (9:40) *MISSA REGNUM MUNDI / LUDFORD*
- 4 Gradual: Specie tua (4:35) *SOLOISTS PD SW*
- 5 Alleluia: Veni electa mea (2:45)  
*SOLOISTS PG ST*
- 6 Credo (9:18)  
*MISSA REGNUM MUNDI / LUDFORD*
- 7 Offertory: Offerentur regi virginis (1:25)  
*RULERS UT PW*
- 8 Sanctus (13:26)  
*MISSA REGNUM MUNDI / LUDFORD*
- 9 Agnus Dei (7:17)  
*MISSA REGNUM MUNDI / LUDFORD*
- 10 Communion: Feci iudicium (1:15)  
*RULERS UTPW*
- 11 Ite missa est (0:43) *DEACON OM*
- 12 Votive antiphon: Salve regina (22:42)  
*PYGOTT*  
*SOLOISTS JM MB ST PG*

**Blue Heron** Scott Metcalfe, *director*

- treble* Julia Steinbok, Teresa Wakim,  
Shari Wilson
- mean* Jennifer Ashe (Pygott),  
Pamela Dellal, Martin Near
- contratenor* Owen McIntosh,  
Jason McStoots
- tenor* Michael Barrett,  
Sumner Thompson
- bass* Paul Guttry, Ulysses Thomas,  
Peter Walker

*Missa Regnum mundi* and *Salve regina* edited and completed by Nick Sandon (Antico Edition RCM135 and RCM 104). *Kyrie* and *Ite* edited by Nick Sandon (Antico Edition LCM1). Used with permission from Antico Edition ([www.anticoedition.co.uk](http://www.anticoedition.co.uk)). Other Sarum chant edited by Scott Metcalfe from *Graduale ad usum Sarisburiensis* (Paris, 1532).

Recorded September 18–21, September 26-27 & October 8, 2011, Church of the Redeemer, Chestnut Hill, MA

*Engineering & mastering* Joel Gordon (assistant: Livia Lin)  
*Producer* Eric Milnes

*Editing* Eric Milnes & Joel Gordon

*Cover photo* Green Iguana (*Iguana iguana*),

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*Group photos* Liz Linder ([www.lizlinder.com](http://www.lizlinder.com)) in the Italian Garden of the Codman Estate in Lincoln, MA (courtesy Historic New England)

*Graphic design* Pete Goldust & Melanie Germond

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Total time: (79:40)



## MUSIC FROM THE PETERHOUSE PARTBOOKS, VOL 3 restored by Nick Sandon

**John Mason** (c. 1480-1548)

1 Ave fuit prima salus (19:17)

**Sarum plainchant**

2 Kyrie Cunctipotens genitor (3:07)

**Nicholas Ludford** (c. 1490-1557)

MISSA INCLINA COR MEUM

3 Gloria (8:09)

4 Credo (10:20)

5 Sanctus (11:25)

6 Agnus dei (7:37)

Total time: (59:58)

*Missa Inclina cor meum* and *Ave fuit prima salus* edited and restored by Nick Sandon (Antico Edition RCM132 & RCM108). *Kyrie Cunctipotens genitor* edited by Nick Sandon (Antico Edition LCM1). Used with permission from Antico Edition ([www.anticoedition.co.uk](http://www.anticoedition.co.uk)).

Recorded September 21-22 and October 22-23 and 25-26, 2012 at Church of the Redeemer, Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts

*Engineering & mastering* Joel Gordon

*Producer* Eric Milnes

*Editing* Eric Milnes & Joel Gordon

*Cover photo* Close-up of white lamb's wool

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*Group photos* Liz Linder ([www.lizlinder.com](http://www.lizlinder.com))

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**Blue Heron** Scott Metcalfe, *director*

*treble* Julia Steinbok  
Sonja Tengblad  
Shari Wilson

*mean* Jennifer Ashe  
Pamela Dellal  
Martin Near

*contratenor* Owen McIntosh  
Jason McStoots

*tenor* Michael Barrett,  
Mark Sprinkle (Ludford),  
Sumner Thompson (Mason)

*bass* Cameron Beauchamp,  
Dashon Burton (Ludford),  
Paul Guttry, David McFerrin (Mason)





## MUSIC FROM THE PETERHOUSE PARTBOOKS, VOL 4 restored by Nick Sandon

### Nicholas Ludford (c. 1490-1557)

- 1 Ave cujus conceptio (8:51)

### Sarum plainchant

- 2 Kyrie Deus creator omnium (2:27)

### Robert Jones (fl. 1520-35)

#### MISSA SPES NOSTRA

- 3 Gloria (8:31)  
4 Credo (9:07)  
5 Sanctus (10:26)  
6 Agnus dei (8:37)

### Robert Hunt (early 16th century)

- 7 Stabat mater (17:51)

Total time 65:51

### Blue Heron Scott Metcalfe, *director*

- treble* Jessica Petrus (1, 5-6),  
Julia Steinbok, Sonja Tengblad,  
Shari Wilson (3-4, 7)
- mean* Jennifer Ashe, Pamela Dellal,  
Martin Near
- contratenor* Owen McIntosh, Jason McStoots
- tenor* Michael Barrett, Mark Sprinkle,  
Sumner Thompson (1-6)
- bass* Paul Guttry, Steven Hrycelak,  
David McFerrin

*Ave cujus conceptio*, & *Stabat mater* edited and restored by Nick Sandon (Antico Edition RCM127, RCM118, and RCM103). *Kyrie Deus creator omnium* edited by Nick Sandon (Antico Edition LCM1). Used with permission from Antico Edition ([www.anticoedition.co.uk](http://www.anticoedition.co.uk)).

Recorded October 14-15 & 21-26, 2013, at the Church of the Redeemer, Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts

*Engineering & mastering* Joel Gordon

*Producer* Eric Milnes

*Editing* Eric Milnes & Joel Gordon

*Cover photo* *Trillium erectum*, Wake Robin.

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*Group photos* Liz Linder ([www.lizlinder.com](http://www.lizlinder.com))

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## Hugh Sturmy

❶ Exultet in hac die (3:31)

## Robert Hunt

❷ Ave Maria mater dei (4:40)

## John Mason

❸ Ve nobis miseris (12:46)

## Sarum plainchant

❹ Kyrie Orbis factor (2:10)

## Anonymous

MISSA SINE NOMINE

❺ Gloria (7:42) ❻ Credo (7:34)

❼ Sanctus (9:05) ❽ Agnus dei (8:02)

Total time: (59:58)

*Missa sine nomine, Exultet in hac die, Ave Maria, and Ve nobis miseris* edited and restored by Nick Sandon (Antico Edition RCM126, 117, 111, and 113). *Kyrie Orbis factor* edited by Nick Sandon (Antico Edition LCM1). Used with permission from Antico Edition ([www.anticoedition.co.uk](http://www.anticoedition.co.uk)).

Recorded October 19-20 & 24-25, 2014 (*Missa sine nomine*, Hunt) and September 18-20, 2016 (Mason, Sturmy) at the Church of the Redeemer, Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts

*Engineering & mastering* Joel Gordon

*Producer* Eric Milnes / *Additional session producer* Brad Milnes

*Editing* Eric Milnes & Joel Gordon

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## Blue Heron

 Scott Metcalfe, *director*

*Missa sine nomine* ❻-❽ & Hunt ❷

*treble*

Jolle Greenleaf  
Sonja Tengblad  
Teresa Wakim

*contratenor*

Owen McIntosh  
Jason McStoots ❷  
Mark Sprinkle ❻-❽

*bass*

Paul Guttry, Steven Hrycelak, Paul Max Tipton

*mean*

Jennifer Ashe  
Pamela Dellal  
Martin Near

*tenor*

Jonas Budris  
Jason McStoots ❻-❽  
Mark Sprinkle ❷

## Sturmy

 ❶

*treble*

Margot Rood  
Sonja Tengblad  
Shari Wilson

*mean*

Jennifer Ashe  
Pamela Dellal  
Martin Near

*contratenor*

Jason McStoots  
Aaron Sheehan

*tenor*

Michael Barrett  
Sumner Thompson

*bass*

Paul Guttry  
Steven Hrycelak  
John Taylor Ward

## Mason

 ❸

*tenor I*

Owen McIntosh  
Aaron Sheehan

*tenor II*

Jason McStoots  
Alexander Nishibun

*tenor III*

Michael Barrett  
Mark Sprinkle

*bass I*

Paul Guttry  
Sumner Thompson

*bass II*

Steven Hrycelak  
John Taylor Ward

### The Peterhouse Henrician partbooks and their context

All of the music included in this collection comes from a set of mid-sixteenth-century manuscript partbooks belonging to Peterhouse, Cambridge (Peterhouse, Perne Library, MSS 31, 32, 40 and 41). These books are known as the 'Henrician set' to distinguish them from two sets of seventeenth-century partbooks, the 'former Caroline' and 'latter Caroline' sets, also belonging to the college. There is a certain irony in the fact that Peterhouse, one of the oldest and smallest of the colleges comprising the University of Cambridge, should today own not just one but three very important sets of partbooks, for the college had no early choral tradition and did not even possess its own chapel until the 1630s. The building of the chapel, the formation of a choir, and the provision of music for it to sing, gave practical expression to the High-Church ideals of two successive masters of the college, Matthew Wren (1625–34) and John Cosin (1635–43), whose belief in 'the beauty of holiness'—the intensification of the experience of worship by aesthetic means—reflected the ecclesiastical policy of Charles I and William Laud, archbishop of Canterbury. Cosin enthusiastically promoted the development of the college choir and its repertoire, and the music in the Caroline partbooks seems

to have been composed or acquired on his initiative. Some of the music came from Durham Cathedral, where Cosin had been a prebendary since 1625, and it was from Durham that he brought Thomas Wilson to be organist at Peterhouse. It seems likely that Cosin was also responsible for the acquisition of the Henrician partbooks, and that his interest in them was musical rather than antiquarian. In other words, he saw them as a potential source of music for performance, not just as a vestige of a vanished religious culture with which he had some sympathy. This raises the tantalising possibility that at the time of its arrival at Peterhouse the Henrician set of partbooks was complete, not incomplete as it is now. Mid-seventeenth-century Cambridge was a town with a long and strong tradition of radical Protestantism, and many of its inhabitants would have found the singing of pre-Reformation Latin church music highly provocative; as other events were soon to show, however, neither Cosin nor the king nor the archbishop were inclined towards compromise.

Partbooks are so called because each contains a single vocal part of the music copied into them, just as an orchestral part contains a single instrument's contribution to an orchestral piece. Peterhouse's Henrician partbooks are the most important source of English church

music to survive from the reign of Henry VIII (1509–47); it is tempting to write 'from the eve of the Reformation', but that would invoke hindsight, an intellectual weakness that has bedevilled interpretations of the period and is best avoided as much as possible. The repertoire of five-part polyphony contained in the books is uniquely large and uniquely varied, consisting of seventy-two compositions in the standard forms of the day—Mass, Magnificat, votive antiphon, ritual antiphon, and one or two mysterious pieces whose function is debatable—and more than half of these works do not survive in other sources. The composers represented (twenty-nine, plus one anonymous) range from those widely admired both at the time and also today, such as Robert Fayrfax, John Taverner and Thomas Tallis, whose careers are relatively well documented and whose music is ubiquitous in sources of the period, to obscure figures whose careers have yet to be traced and whose music survives nowhere else. The musical quality of the works in the collection is mainly very high, and many pieces—by no means exclusively those by well-known composers—show not only excellent craftsmanship but also imagination and individuality. The music also offers much more evidence of innovation than the received view of English church music of this period would lead one to predict, and one or two compositions of surprisingly distant provenance hint at unexpected sources of influence.

The repertoire of the partbooks is very varied, intermingling compositions in a conservative style (expansive, melismatic, ornate, and structurally rather opaque to the listener) with others in a more modern idiom (concise, syllabic, plain, and structurally more transparent), and placing settings of well-worn Marian texts in medieval Latin alongside settings of new texts honouring Jesus in humanistic Latin. This diversity is not surprising, because around 1540, when these partbooks were being compiled, the English church was in a state of flux to which natural evolutionary processes as well as political and religious controversy all contributed. What would happen in the future must have been much less predictable to contemporaries than, with the dubious benefit of wisdom after the event, it may seem to us. The idea that in order to accomplish his repudiation of papal authority Henry VIII was obliged to give free rein to Protestant opinion, and that this unleashed forces that brought about the abandonment of traditional forms and styles of church music nearly a decade before the introduction of the Book of Common Prayer in 1549, stems from a partial reading of history. Henry himself remained conservative in religious belief to the end of his days: his will, signed on 30 December 1546 'in the Name of god, the Blessed Vyrgyn oure Lady saynte Mary and all the holie cumpany of heaven', is fundamentally Catholic. He acknowledges the salutary effects of good and charitable works upon the

performer's soul and enjoins the Virgin and all the company of heaven to pray continually for him during his earthly life and departure from it, so that he may the sooner attain life everlasting. He also requires daily masses to be said for him 'perpetually while the world shall endure', directs his burial at Windsor to be marked by the traditional services of 'placeto and dirige with a sermon and masse on the morowe', and bequeaths alms to the poor of the neighbourhood in order to elicit their prayers for the remission of his sins and the welfare of his soul.

For some years after 1534, when the Act of Supremacy established the king's headship of the English church, Henry's religious policy wavered. During the next two years, probably in preparation for the assault on the monasteries, considerable licence was allowed to opponents of Catholic practices and doctrine such as the cult of saints, pilgrimage, pardons and purgatory, but the Ten Articles issued by convocation in July 1536 restated a moderated form of traditional belief. In September 1538 the king's radical first minister Thomas Cromwell issued a set of Injunctions markedly Protestant in content, but two months later a royal proclamation reaffirmed the Ten Articles. In June 1539 the Act of Six Articles, which continued in force for the rest of the reign, confirmed the official position, which was essentially Catholic but not Roman, and the laws against heresy. A year later the conservative

faction headed by the Duke of Norfolk was allowed to bring about Cromwell's downfall. During 1543 the reforming Archbishop Cranmer found himself endangered by a conspiracy in which the canons of his own cathedral had a leading role. In the same year, while Cranmer was drafting vernacular versions of parts of the Latin liturgy, Bishop Nicholas Heath of Rochester issued a set of liturgical injunctions thoroughly traditional in their cast, requiring the attendance of the full choir to sing polyphony at matins, conventual Mass, vespers and the evening devotion on major feast days, and the attendance of the boys to sing polyphony at the Lady Mass on ordinary days. The repertoire of the Henrician partbooks reflects the unstable and unpredictable context in which the books were copied. While much of the music in the collection is so traditional in function, form, content and style that it would not have astonished Henry VII or even his Yorkist predecessors, some of the more recent compositions show features which can be interpreted as responses to changing conditions.

### **Provenance and destination of the partbooks**

A great deal can be deduced about these partbooks: who copied them, and when; how he did it; where he found his exemplars; for whose

benefit the work was done; and why the enterprise was necessary. If a musical source contains music by composers not represented elsewhere, discovering where they worked may reveal the source's provenance. In the case of the Henrician partbooks the presence of music by front-rank composers such as Fayrfax, Taverner, Nicholas Ludford, Hugh Aston and Richard Pygott tells us little, because their work was widely distributed. On the other hand, the presence of music by otherwise unknown composers such as William Alen, John Catcott or Cobcot, Arthur Chamberlayne, 'Edwarde' (probably Edward Hedley) and Edward Martyn, who do not figure in other extant sources, is strongly suggestive of a connection with Magdalen College, Oxford, because the names of all of these

men occur in a musical context—mostly as lay-clerks (professional choral singers)—in college records dating from the later 1480s to the early 1540s. What is known about some of the other composers in the books also implies links with Oxford: John Mason, Hugh Aston, John Darke and James Northbroke held the degree of B.Mus. from the university; John Taverner was choirmaster of Cardinal College between 1526 and 1530; and William Whytbroke was a chaplain of that college in 1529/30. In addition, John Mason had briefly been choirmaster at Magdalen, and he and Richard Pygott had served in the household chapel of an alumnus of Magdalen College who made some headway in the world: Thomas, Cardinal Wolsey.



The chapel at Magdalen College, Oxford. (Photo by Scott Metcalfe.)



It therefore seems likely that most of the music in the partbooks was available for copying in Oxford, and that some of it was only to be found at Magdalen College, where polyphonic church music was something of a speciality. But where was the collection intended for, and why should such a large copying project have been necessary? A possible explanation is offered by a cataclysmic event in recent English history: Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries. This sordid episode, in which cupidity masqueraded as reforming zeal, began in 1536 with the suppression of the lesser houses and reached its climax in 1539–40 with the closure of the wealthiest foundations, including all eleven of the cathedrals which were staffed by monks or canons regular rather than by secular clergy: Bath, Canterbury, Carlisle, Coventry, Durham, Ely, Norwich, Rochester, Winchester, Worcester and Christ Church, Dublin. All of these were Benedictine priories except Carlisle and Dublin, which were Augustinian. All of them except Bath and Coventry were immediately reconstituted as secular cathedrals with a dean, a chapter of prebendary canons, a choir of singing men and boys, and the necessary ancillary staff. Three other dissolved monasteries, Chester, Gloucester, and Peterborough, were also refounded as the cathedral churches of new dioceses. A great deal of preparation for as seamless as possible a transition must have been undertaken beforehand. When it came, the tran-

sition seems to have been smooth enough: some monks became prebendaries of the new cathedral chapters; others became parish priests; and others retired with pensions. With new constitutions, new members and a secular liturgy these cathedrals of the New Foundation could in many respects take over from their predecessors without serious discontinuity.

The major obstacle concerned their musical activity, where substantial initiative and organization must often have been needed. Until the early 1400s polyphony had been very largely a medium for solo singers, and any monastery with a handful of musically competent brethren could cultivate it and remain more or less up-to-date. Thereafter secular foundations such as collegiate churches, academic colleges and household chapels kept by royal and aristocratic patrons promoted musical developments aimed at strengthening the impact of worship, affirming the values of the established church and enhancing the prestige of the ruling class. In pursuit of these aims new contexts were found for the performance of polyphonic sacred music; compositions became more massive in scale, more ornate in style and more elaborate in texture and scoring; and small ensembles singing sacred polyphony expanded into choirs. Only a few monasteries could keep pace with these changes of fashion: their role in society was increasingly questioned;

membership was falling; resources were under pressure; and the exclusive nature of the conventual liturgy prevented the employment of professional lay singers except as a discrete ensemble performing not in the monastic choir but elsewhere in the church, usually in the Lady Chapel. In most if not all cases the refoundation of a monastic cathedral as a secular cathedral would necessarily entail the recruitment of a professional choir and the accumulation of a repertoire for it to sing. Typically consisting of about eight to twelve boys and around a dozen men, such a choir would be expected to perform, to a high standard fitting the cathedral's status, an impressive and liturgically comprehensive repertoire largely consisting of widely-circulated works by eminent composers but perhaps also including music produced locally. Members of a monastic Lady Chapel choir might sometimes be drafted into the choir of a refounded cathedral; at Canterbury, for example, Thomas Wood, master of the Lady Chapel choir at the time of the dissolution, became a lay-clerk of the new cathedral choir. Perhaps music sung in the previous monastery may sometimes have been adopted too.

Thus, within a period of less than two years, there appeared on the scene several important choral foundations urgently in need of skilled singers and music suitable for them to perform. Could the Peterhouse Henrician

partbooks have been intended for use in one of these cathedrals of the New Foundation? One of the compositions in the partbooks has a direct bearing upon this question. Hugh Sturmy's *Exultet in hac die*, honouring St Augustine of Canterbury, the missionary sent by Pope Gregory the Great to bring Roman Christianity to the Anglo-Saxons, could have been relevant only to Canterbury, capital of the Saxon kingdom of Kent, where Augustine established himself and sited the cathedral church that he founded soon after his arrival in 597. Perhaps *Exultet* was taken over from the repertoire of the monastic cathedral, or from that of St Augustine's abbey close by, which had been dissolved in 1538. No other work in these partbooks celebrates a saint having a particular connection with any of the refounded cathedrals, but none of them could lay claim to a saint with comparable national credentials.

The hypothesis that the partbooks were intended for Canterbury is reinforced by the existence of a highly relevant human link between the refounded cathedral and Magdalen College, Oxford, in the person of a professional singer and copyist named Thomas Bull. The first known reference to Bull occurs in 1525 in the record of an episcopal visitation of the collegiate church of St Mary Newarke, Leicester, where Hugh Aston was then choirmaster. Between Michaelmas 1528 and Michaelmas 1539 Bull was a lay-clerk in the

choir of Magdalen College. When he next appears, in the summer of 1540, it is as a lay-clerk at Canterbury, where the priory had been surrendered to the king's commissioners on 4 April and was currently undergoing reorganization into a secular cathedral. Bull was to serve the cathedral for more than twenty years, and is called *magister chorum* or choirmaster in a staff list dating from 1560. He married in 1546 and lived in St George's parish in the city, and the Thomas Bull named first among the boy choristers in the same list may have been his son.

During his time at Magdalen Bull had often received extra payments from the college for copying a wide variety of documents

both musical and non-musical. When he moved to Canterbury the cathedral acquired not only an experienced choral singer but also a professional copyist who had until recently had access to the resources of one of the musically most active and ambitious colleges of the university. It seems probable that he spent his final months at Magdalen selecting and copying music to bring with him to Canterbury, perhaps working to a brief supplied by his new employers. When he arrived at the cathedral his draft copies would have been neatly recopied, carefully checked and corrected, and bound up into partbooks—the partbooks that we now have—to provide the choir with a repertoire of five-part music which would cater for the

chief liturgical occasions of the year. Bull may have acquired additional music during his journey from Oxford to Canterbury (which in all likelihood would have taken him through London), more could have been waiting for him at Canterbury, and still more could have been added during the following few months. This could explain why the partbooks contain two copies, made from different exemplars, of the votive antiphon *Salve intemerata* by Thomas Tallis, one of the other lay-clerks in the cathedral's newly formed choir. *Salve intemerata* probably dates from the late 1520s and was certainly circulating shortly afterward; Bull may have made one copy from an exemplar at Oxford and a second copy at Canterbury from another exemplar provided by the composer himself.

try which had recently repudiated papal authority: Canterbury was England's Rome, and the cathedral was her St Peter's. It would be immoderate to suggest that the Archbishop of Canterbury was England's Pope; Thomas Cranmer would have been appalled by such an analogy. Cranmer's authority and powers of initiative were immeasurably less than papal, but he had more sustained influence on religious policy than anyone else excepting the king himself. His cautiously-expressed but tenaciously-held reformist beliefs may seem to weaken the possibility that such a liturgically conservative collection of music could have been designed for performance at Canterbury, but like all English bishops Cranmer's authority over his own cathedral church was limited, because the Dean and Chapter were responsible for the institution's direction and administration and had considerable autonomy. In the early 1540s the chapter of Canterbury Cathedral was a markedly conservative body; in 1543 some of the canons even abetted an attempt—the 'prebendaries' plot'—to destroy the archbishop himself. This collection of polyphonic Masses, Magnificats and votive antiphons celebrating saints and the Blessed Virgin is precisely what one would expect such men to have set out to procure. It thus appears that around 1540 there was still room, at the very heart of the Church of England, for music that was fundamentally traditional.

### The historical significance of the Henrician partbooks

If we accept that the Henrician partbooks were copied for and used at Canterbury Cathedral, they become even more significant. Canterbury was regarded as the cradle of Roman Christianity in England; it was a cathedral city of unrivalled antiquity; and its archbishop was the senior primate of the English church, with a mandate descending directly from Pope Gregory. Such considerations may have had even greater resonance in a coun-



The choir of Canterbury Cathedral. (Photo by David Iliff. License: CC-BY-SA 3.0)

Such music, however, was not impervious to change, and the content of the Henrician partbooks confirms this. For at least a decade before 1540 English church music had been showing signs of stylistic evolution in ways which arguably reflected changing aesthetic values as much as or more than they reflected religious ideas. The music was becoming somewhat more concise, more lean, more obviously designed as a patently coherent discourse, and more communicative of the words that it set. Music in the older style was still valued, as the Peterhouse repertoire amply demonstrates, but in these partbooks it is intermingled with music more akin to that of composers active in the 1550s and 60s. Thus an old-fashioned piece such as Pygott's *Salve regina* coexists with markedly innovative works such as Taverner's *Mean Mass*, which influenced William Byrd in the composition of his four-part Mass about half a century later. Clearly many different influences were at work. One of the most surprising features of the partbooks is the presence of two continental compositions, the first to appear in an English collection of sacred polyphony since the early fifteenth century. How did the Mass *Surrexit pastor bonus* by Lupus Hellinck and the motet *Aspice domine* by Jacquet of Mantua find their way into the collection, and what did English musicians and ecclesiastics make of them?

If the music in these partbooks is as important as I am suggesting, one may ask why it is

so much less celebrated than, for example, the music of the Eton choirbook (a very large collection of votive antiphons and Magnificats assembled for Eton College some forty years earlier), and why does the music unique to it remain almost unknown? The main reason is that the set is no longer complete. Originally it consisted of five books, each containing one of the voices—usually treble, mean, contratenor (a rather high tenor), tenor (a slightly lower tenor, or sometimes a baritone), and bass—of this repertoire in the five-part texture that had over the previous six or seven decades become standard for English sacred polyphony. However, the book containing the tenor parts is missing, and some pages have been lost from the beginning and end of the treble book. Although some of the missing voices can be supplied from other musical sources, no fewer than fifty of the seventy-two works in the collection lack their tenor parts, and nineteen also lack their treble. In its surviving state more than two thirds of the repertoire cannot be performed.

### Restoring the incomplete compositions

One of the tasks that I set myself when I began working on the Henrician partbooks more than forty years ago was to restore the incomplete pieces to a performable state by

recomposing the missing voices. I included completed versions of all but two of them in the doctoral dissertation that was accepted in 1983, completed the others later, and published them all between 1992 and 2015. I am still revising them and publishing the revisions: it would of course have been preferable for my original versions to be immaculate, but it is in the nature of such work that one's insight and skill improve over time. The editions have been kindly received, but few of the compositions gained much exposure through live performance or recording until the vocal ensemble Blue Heron and its director Scott Metcalfe began a sustained and very successful campaign to stimulate interest in the repertoire. Their technical skill and musical intelligence have produced revelatory performances.

In the 1970s and 80s attempts to restore incomplete compositions to a performable state tended to arouse suspicion and even disdain on such grounds as the following: they were akin to forgery; they might misrepresent the original; they forsook objectivity for subjectivity; they smacked of the musical 'general practitioner', the organist-cum-antiquarian and untrained dabbler in scholarship, whose ghost one coterie of British musicology was for a variety of reasons anxious to lay. It is certainly true that not all the restoration carried out around that time carried conviction. I thought, however, that

the potential gains outweighed the risks: competent restoration might help to foster awareness of an important musical collection, improve the understanding of musical developments in England during the crucial years immediately before the Reformation, and make some exceptionally fine music available for the enjoyment of listeners and performers. Today things have changed: we seem to have recovered from the insecurity and ideological angst of half a century ago, and the restoration of music of all periods is widely practiced and acknowledged to be capable of producing highly convincing and illuminating results.

The restorer's task is to complete what remains of the original in the most congruous way possible, not to improve and still less to distort it. Restoration demands some technical training, an observant eye, an acute ear (particularly the ability to hear in one's head what one sees with one's eyes), time, concentration, patience and (my wife asks me to add) surpassing tolerance from one's partner. In this context the term 'restoration' is perhaps slightly misleading in that it implies that one should be able to work out precisely what is missing from an incomplete piece and supply it with total fidelity. This, however, is rarely the case, even though one may aspire to it. Wholly accurate restoration can be guaranteed only when a missing vocal part is proved to have been based exclusive-

ly and literally on material which still exists somewhere else, and to have used that material in a detectable fashion. For example, a missing voice may quote a plainchant melody without ornamentation and in equal note values (as in Hugh Sturmy's *Exultet in hac die*), or reiterate a motto theme, or sing in canon with one of the surviving voices (William Alen's *Gaude virgo*—not on these discs—does both of these).

Several of the Peterhouse Mass settings and some other pieces do indeed incorporate a plainchant or another pre-existing melody as a structural backbone or *cantus firmus*, and in most cases the *cantus firmus* is given to the tenor part, which is helpful when it is the tenor that is missing. The implicit presence of a missing *cantus firmus* still has to be noticed, of course, and it then has to be identified and located, but in Masses which bear a title this will usually lead one to it, as in the *Masses Regnum mundi*, *Inclina cor meum* and *Spes nostra* included in these recordings. Often the surviving texture shows that the *cantus firmus* must have been decorated melodically or laid out in varied rhythmic configurations, so subjective decisions still have to be made. In addition, a composer will usually quote a *cantus firmus* only in a fully-scored section and freely invent the verses or passages in reduced scoring, so subjective invention based on close observation is needed in completing them.

Another technique whose presence can be enormously helpful to the restorer is that of imitation, the statement of a musical idea by several voices in succession, which composers exploited more and more as the sixteenth century progressed. It was especially useful at the beginning of a new group of words, because it clarified the verbal sense by signalling the start of a syntactic unit, imparted a sense of coherence, and helped to create momentum; the effect is rather like several participants entering a conversation one after another by uttering the same opening words. Conventional wisdom used to hold that English composers lagged behind their continental contemporaries in cultivating imitation of this text-based type, but the Peterhouse music suggests that this view needs some adjustment. Another sort of imitation, in which tiny motifs pass from voice to voice during the subsequent course of a section rather than at its beginning, had interested English composers since the fifteenth century and continued to do so; the strongly harmonic character of English music rather encouraged it, and composers probably regarded it as a refinement of their contrapuntal technique. If the extant voices of a composition exploit either of these kinds of imitation it is highly likely that any missing voices did so too; examination will often show where motifs can be fitted in, and their incorporation will not only bind the texture together but also assist the generation of the remainder of the missing lines. In this rep-

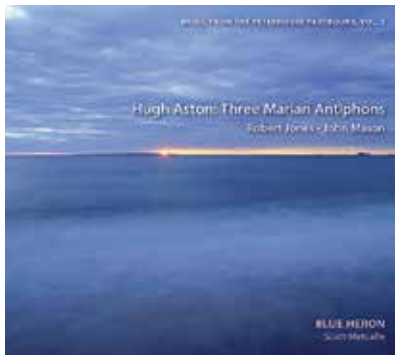
ertoire a search for possible points of entry for imitation is one of the first steps that a restorer will take; once the entries have been located, the continuation of each phrase is planned to fit the context of the surviving voices.

The security of a composer's technique and the strength of his musical personality have a marked influence on the restoration of his music. The greater his skill, the more assured will be his handling of counterpoint (the leading of one voice against another) and the stronger will be the character of his lines, so that sometimes a missing line will virtually write itself. A more limited composer may, by contrast, leave the restorer with a plethora of alternatives, none of which seems more convincing than the others. The more distinctive a composer's style, even if it involves less desirable features such as melodic awkwardness, harmonic eccentricity or idiosyncratic handling of dissonance, the more there is for the restorer to assimilate and emulate. The music most difficult to complete with conviction is that which is incoherent, inconsistent and characterless, because it offers so few hints on how to proceed; happily the Henrician partbooks contain no music as depressingly feeble as this.

It is also considerably more difficult to complete a piece lacking two voices than it is to complete one lacking a single voice; the increase in the number of variables might ap-

pear to be an advantage in that it gives the restorer more freedom of choice, but precisely because of this it greatly diminishes the likelihood of coming close to the composer's original. When both treble and tenor (two of the three pre-eminent voices in the texture, the other being the bass) are missing, the restorer may be severely tested. It is perhaps inevitable that one should feel more often disappointed than satisfied by one's efforts, and that it should be difficult to resist the temptation to revisit pieces time and again afterwards. Reward comes on the very rare occasions when one believes that one has come as close as one can to restoring a work to the state in which its composer left it, and that there is nothing more that one can do. I am emphatically not a spiritualist—it puzzles me that dead composers should strive to communicate inept or jejune music to their amanuenses—but once or twice I have felt that I was experiencing something very close to the composer's original thought process. At such moments the passage of time seems to create no distance at all.





## VOLUME 1

Four of the five compositions recorded on the first disc—Hugh Aston's *Ave Maria dive matris*, *Gaude virgo mater Christi* and *Ave Maria ancilla trinitatis*, and John Mason's *Quales sumus O miseri*, are votive antiphons representing the genre of polyphonic church music surviving most abundantly from late-fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century England; the other work is a setting by Robert Jones of the vespers canticle *Magnificat anima mea dominum*. Votive antiphons were not strictly liturgical, in that they did not form part either of Mass or of the Divine Office; instead they were sung as a separate act of devotion to Mary, Jesus or a saint, usually after Compline, the final office of the day, before an image of or in the

chapel dedicated to their recipient. By singing votive antiphons religious communities sought to enlist intercession for the souls of their founders and patrons and also (as the texts sometimes make explicit) on behalf of themselves: a more powerful expression of belief in the doctrine of purgatory and the beneficial intervention of those already in paradise could scarcely be imagined. Private individuals could seek the same ends by reading or reciting the texts of the appropriate antiphons and prayers, many of which were standard constituents of the books of hours that were being printed in large quantities from the 1480s onwards. Some of the texts, such as *Salve regina*, were centuries old and survive in numerous musical settings, but early Tudor England also saw the production of many new texts, not a few of which exist in a single musical setting, as if they were created especially for a particular occasion.

The literary style and intellectual level of these antiphon texts are astonishingly varied, ranging from pedestrian poetry to closely-argued Ciceronian prose, and from banal eulogies and bald narratives to exhortations that are eloquent and compelling. A significant number of them are elaborations of the *Ave Maria*, the Angelic Salutation combining elements of Gabriel's annunciation to the Blessed Virgin and Elizabeth's prophetic words to her during the Visitation: 'Ave Maria, gratia plena, dominus tecum. Benedicta tu in mulieribus, et

benedictus fructus ventris tui, Jesus'. It is easy to dismiss the more old-fashioned type of antiphon text, exemplified on this disc in Aston's settings of *Ave Maria dive matris*, *Gaude virgo mater Christi* and *Ave Maria ancilla trinitatis*, for being nugatory as literature, but in their intended context repetitive and predictable texts of this kind can be extremely effective as mantras aiding meditation: singing or hearing the music becomes akin to contemplating a religious image. It is interesting that in all three of these compositions by Aston a closing prayer in prose urgently seeking Mary's intercession has been added to the main poetic text, and that in each case the intensity of the music and the clarity of the word-setting increases during the prayer; in the first two the request is made on behalf of the college or religious community performing the piece, while in the last it becomes a personal plea.

Hugh Aston spent most of his working life at the wealthy collegiate church of St Mary Newarke in Leicester, where he was choirmaster at least from 1525 until the college's dissolution in 1548; he took the Oxford B.Mus. in 1510, which implies a birth-date in the mid-1480s. Details of his career between 1510 and 1525 are scanty, but he may have worked in Coventry, perhaps in the cathedral's Lady Chapel. It is clear that he was highly thought of: he was the first choice to be choirmaster of Thomas Wolsey's newly founded Cardinal College, but he declined the post, and only then was it of-

fered to John Taverner. There is evidence that over several decades he played a responsible role in the civic life of Leicester, and that after his retirement he represented the city in parliament. His music is strongly reliant upon imitative writing, a technique that he used imaginatively and with great effect. He was also unusually fond of reiterating short motives in slightly altered forms to create the feeling of a cumulative *ostinato*, well demonstrated in the concluding 'Amen' sections of *Ave Maria dive matris* and *Gaude virgo mater Christi*.

Robert Jones's *Magnificat* observes many of the conventions that had grown up in English settings of this canticle during the previous hundred years. Jones sets only the even-numbered verses of the canticle and its doxology, leaving the others to be sung to their usual plainchant formula; he sets some of the verses for the full complement of five parts and the others for a smaller number; and he bases many of the polyphonic sections (sometimes so loosely that it is almost imperceptible) on a rather unusual type of *cantus firmus* called a *faburden*, which had originally been the lowest voice of an improvised harmonisation of a plainchant. Very little is known about Jones's career except that he was a singer in Henry VIII's household chapel in 1520 and still a member of it in about 1534. Whether he was related to Edward Johns or Jones, a slightly earlier member of the royal household chapel, or to the later lutenist and song composer

Robert Jones, has yet to be established. This Magnificat and his Mass *Spes nostra* (recorded on the fourth of these discs) are the work of a talented composer with a fine sense of line and phrasing. An interesting detail occurs in the 'Sicut locutus' verse of the Magnificat, where at 'ad patres nostros' Jones writes a very striking cadence straight out of the fourteenth century; the cadence is inevitable because his chosen scoring for treble, mean and contratenor, with the faburden-based contratenor cadencing from B natural onto A, means that the only possible progressions in the two higher voices are from G sharp to A in the treble and from D sharp to E in the mean (which cannot descend low enough below the contratenor to take the more usual step from E to A). The resulting 'doubled leading-note cadence' is reminiscent of Machaut and his contemporaries; the D is even signed sharp to ensure that no mistake is made. Jones's choice of this archaic cadence for the phrase 'As it was spoken to our forefathers' shows a nice sense of fitness and also an awareness of historical style that may surprise us.

John Mason can probably be identified with a singer of the same name in the household chapel of Margaret Beaufort, mother of Henry VII, whose studies for the priesthood she financed in 1504 and 1505. Mason said his first Mass in 1507, and if he had then attained the minimum age for ordination he can have been

born no later than 1483. Almost certainly he is the Dominus John Mason ('Dominus' or 'Sir' being the title usually accorded to a priest) who in January 1509 was admitted to the degree of Mus.B. at Oxford on the grounds of a year's residence; he must surely have been the 'Dominus Maason' (*sic*) who served as joint instructor of the choristers at Magdalen College for a year from Michaelmas 1508 and then as sole instructor until June 1510. After this he disappears for more than a decade, to reappear in 1521 as a chaplain in Thomas Wolsey's household; it seems likely that he had been in the employment of Wolsey, a Magdalen man like himself, for some or all of the intervening period, and that his duties included singing in the choir and producing music for it. It would have been through Wolsey's patronage that during the 1520s Mason secured several lucrative benefices including the rectory of Pewsey, Wiltshire (1521), a very well-paid chantry at Chichester Cathedral (1523), and cathedral canonries at Salisbury (1523) and Hereford (1525). He appears to have chosen to live upon his prebend at Hereford, where in 1526 he was granted one of the dwellings reserved for canons-resident. In 1545 he became treasurer of the cathedral; the collation of a new treasurer in February 1548 and the admission of a successor at Pewsey in May of the same year suggest that he died during the winter of 1547–8. In the indexes to the Henrician partbooks Mason's name always has the qualification 'Cicerstensis' ('of Chichester');

this rather muddies the biographical waters because the 'John Mason, B.Mus.' admitted to the Chichester chantry in 1523 resigned it in 1527, and a namesake for whom no degree is specified held it between 1539 and 1540. Was there one composer called John Mason or were there two?

The Peterhouse partbooks are the only source to include any complete compositions by Mason (two Mary-antiphons *Ave fuit prima salus* and *Quales sumus O miseri*, a Jesus-antiphon *Ve nobis miseris*, and a ritual antiphon *O rex gloriose*), although two extracts from *Quales sumus* are to be found in a musical commonplace-book compiled between about 1581 and 1606 by John Baldwin, a singer in St George's Chapel, Windsor and later in the Royal Household Chapel. All but *Ave fuit* are annotated in the indexes to the Henrician partbooks as being for male voices; perhaps they date from a period before Wolsey's household chapel choir had been enlarged to include boy singers. The text of *Quales sumus* is stuffed with biblical allusion and written in rather elegant and resourceful Latin. As with most votive antiphons we do not know its author, but it could have been the composer himself showing the results of the schooling that Margaret Beaufort had paid for. One of the literary references in the text of *Quales sumus* is accompanied by a matching allusion in the music: when the words 'Sicut cervus aquarum fontes' are quoted from Psalm 41:2,

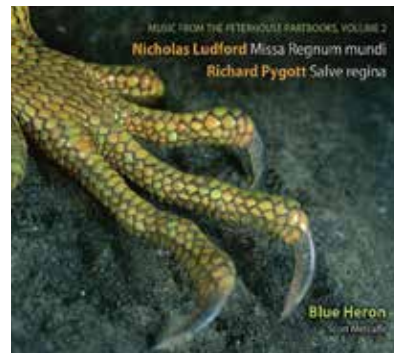
the bass voice sings the plainchant melody to which they are sung in the tract from the Mass for the dead.

Listeners will notice that although these five compositions share many characteristics, such as a rather ornate style, a tendency to create variety and contrast by juxtaposing large blocks of music in different scorings and metres, a slightly ambiguous attitude to imitative writing which is sometimes decorative and sometimes structural, their composers also have unmistakably individual traits. Aston is the most showy, delighting in elaborate figuration and striking effects, tolerant of stronger-than-average dissonances, and fond of playing with short motifs in a rather dogged way; he is also the most innovative of these composers in experimenting here and there with a more syllabic style of writing allied to exact musical repetition and rapid changes of scoring. Jones's music is more relaxed and lyrical, and he has a talent for telling touches of detail such as a felicitously placed dissonance or a slightly surprising harmony. Mason perhaps gives an impression of reserve and remoteness (possibly because the interweaving of five ornate vocal lines in a space of only two octaves creates special difficulties for the listener) but his very well-crafted music has an unmistakable dignity and poise.

*Gaude virgo mater Christi* is the only one of these works not to need editorial comple-

tion; it survives in its entirety in another manuscript where it is given an alternative text addressed to St Anne beginning *Gaude mater matris Christi*; the version recorded here attempts to marry the version of the music in the complete copy to the Marian text of the incomplete copy in Peterhouse. *Ave Maria dive matris*, the Magnificat and *Quales sumus O miseri* lack their tenor part; *Ave Maria ancilla trinitatis*, which lacks both its tenor and its tre-

ble, was the first Peterhouse piece that I tried to restore, more years ago than I can believe; some vestiges of that first attempt still survive in the version sung here.



## VOLUME 2

The second disc includes a Mass *Regnum mundi* by Nicholas Ludford preceded by a plainchant Kyrie and followed by Richard Pygott's setting of the votive antiphon *Salve regina*. English polyphonic Masses of this period consisted of settings of the four choral-sung texts that did not change according to the occasion: the Gloria, Credo, Sanctus and Agnus. In this performance the other choral items of Mass are sung in plainchant. Ludford spent most of his career in the collegiate chapel of St Stephen in the royal palace of Westminster, one of the most prestigious choral foundations in the kingdom. He was appointed verger and organist of the chapel on 30 September 1527 and remained in place

until the college was dissolved in 1547; there is no known record of him holding another musical appointment before his death in 1557. The deed appointing him mentions the 'manifold services in the skill of singing and organ-playing' that he had hitherto provided, probably referring to a previous period of employment as a lay-clerk or as a probationer for the position in which he was now confirmed; this suggests a birth-date somewhere in the 1490s. The combination of the offices of organist and verger was less odd than it may appear, because at St Stephen's, as at the royal chapel of St George in Windsor Castle, one of the statutory vergerships had been converted into a post for a choirmaster: an easy way of providing (without altering the statutes) a specialist in polyphonic music to direct the choir now that polyphony had become a choral medium. Ludford's music is of the highest quality, comparable with that of any of his contemporaries, but unlike that of Taverner it did not continue to be copied into later-sixteenth- and early-seventeenth-century musical collections. One reason for this could be that since none of his surviving music has quite the directness and economy of scale that some of Taverner's has, it did not appeal to Elizabethan and Jacobean taste; another reason might be that because no story about repenting his Catholic past and accepting Protestantism became attached to him as it did to Taverner, he was not regarded as 'one of us' but became a symbol of a vanished order.

The modern revival of interest in Ludford began with the exploration of his earlier works, such as the Mass *Lapidaverunt Stephanum*, dating from the 1520s at the latest. The two Masses and three antiphons by him preserved only in the Henrician partbooks show every sign of being works of his full maturity and add considerably to his stature: he was not just an efficient composer in the older style but an exceptionally skilful, imaginative, innovative and eloquent exponent of it. His music sounds supple and approachable but is extremely carefully planned: the shaping of melodies, the control of pace and texture, the variations of scoring and the marriage of text and line are handled with unsurpassed finesse, and his exploration of harmony and dissonance as sensuous devices are exceptional for the time: he manages to rejuvenate an essentially conservative style from within.

All the features just mentioned appear in the Mass *Regnum mundi*, which has as its plainchant *cantus firmus* the ninth responsory at Matins from the Common of virgin martyrs (that is, the material sung on feasts for saints in this category not having their own proper chants). The Sarum calendar includes only two nine-lesson feasts of virgin martyrs with Matins responsories taken from the Common: those of St Margaret (20 July) and St Winifred (3 November). In view of Ludford's known associations with the parish church of St Margaret, Westminster, where he several times

witnessed the churchwardens' accounts and acted as churchwarden himself between 1552 and 1554, it seems probable that he composed this Mass for performance in the parish church on the patronal festival; perhaps it was among the contents of the book of polyphonic music that the churchwardens of St Margaret's bought from him in the year 1533–4. The tenor part of the Mass is entirely lost, and the treble part is missing from 'de lumine' in the Credo to the end because the final pages of the treble partbook are missing. Fortunately, since the plainchant *cantus firmus* on which the Mass is based was given to the tenor in (as far as one can tell) an unadorned form, the melodic line of the tenor can be restored with reasonable certainty wherever it was quoting the *cantus firmus*, which essentially means in the fully-scored sections, and the line can be given a plausible rhythmic profile based on the rhythm of the words that it must have been singing. Where the tenor was freely composed, in the verse sections for fewer than five voices, it has to be invented with reference to the other voices, as does the treble throughout wherever it is singing.

English polyphonic Masses of this period did not include a setting of the Kyrie because on a feast day, the most likely occasion for the performance of a polyphonic Mass, the Kyrie would be sung in chant with a lengthy added text called a prosula; in effect it was treated as one of the changeable Proper texts of the

Mass rather than as part of the unchanging Ordinary. In this recording the Kyrie *Conditor* and the other sung items proper to the day are performed to the plainchant sung on the feast of St Margaret, which allows Ludford's polyphony to stand out in magnificent relief against them. In music of such consistently high quality highlights are hard to choose: on a small scale listeners may relish a miraculous piece of writing in the second 'Qui tollis' of the Gloria, where at 'peccata' the treble has an audaciously prolonged dissonance against the contratenor, the contratenor then repeats the dissonance against the bass and extends the phrase through an interrupted cadence into a rising sequence whose culmination at 'deprecationem' is heightened by a felicitous melodic surprise; on a larger scale they may be transported by the rapturous closing invocation of the Agnus.

Probably a few years older than Ludford, Richard Pygott was successively a member of two elite choral foundations, the household chapels of Thomas Wolsey and Henry VIII. The first secure reference to him dates from January 1517 when, in a pardon for unauthorised possession of a crossbow and handgun, he was described as a servant of the cardinal of York; a later inventory of Wolsey's household goods mentions 'a fedderbedde bought for Pygoote maister of the children' in December of the same year. In the spring of 1518 Pygott was praised by William Cornysh, master of the

choristers in the royal household chapel, for his excellent training of a boy singer commandeered from the cardinal's chapel by the king for his own on the grounds that Wolsey's choir was better than his. Pygott apparently continued to serve Wolsey until the latter's loss of the king's favour led to his fall from power in 1529 and subsequent death in November 1530. It was probably soon after this last event that a place was found for him as a singer or gentleman of the royal household chapel, although the earliest evidence of this new employment dates from October 1532. Pygott dated his will in August 1549, added a codicil six weeks later, and the will was proved on 12 November.

Very few of Pygott's compositions remain. The earliest, and the only one to survive complete, is *Quid petis o fili*, a devotional song in a mixture of Latin and English included in a collection of courtly music copied during the second decade of the century. Another song by him, *By by lullaby*, was included in *XX Songes* (1530), the earliest collection of polyphonic music printed in England, but only the bass part is extant. The bass is also the only voice to survive of a votive antiphon *Gaude pastore* honouring St Thomas of Canterbury, which must have been composed while Pygott was still in Wolsey's service; apart from its obvious purpose it may have intended an oblique compliment to his employer, another Thomas who became an archbishop, albeit of York



rather than Canterbury. A scrap of a setting of the responsory *Domine secundum actum* may be a late work because polyphonic responsories do not seem to have been much cultivated before the later 1530s. The only two works by him that can be fully restored are the votive antiphon *Salve regina* recorded here and a very fine Mass *Veni sancte spiritus* for Pentecost; both are in the Henrician part-books, but the bass part of the Mass is also in the same source as *Gaude pastore*, dating from about 1530. Both compositions are on a huge scale and enormously elaborate; they must represent the kind of music that Wolsey expected his singers to perform: imposing in scale, grand in manner and requiring a level of choral virtuosity that would throw lustre upon himself as a connoisseur and patron of musicians as well as of music.

In the fourteenth century *Salve regina* had been one of the earliest Marian texts antiphon to be set in polyphony, and in the fifteenth it became a favourite with English composers, as the number of settings in the Eton choir-book witnesses. It seems to have fallen out of favour early in the sixteenth century, and Pygott's setting of it is one of the latest to have survived. It is rather traditional in structure, being divided into principal sections in triple and duple metre alternately, and each principal section being split into subsections scored for different combinations of solo voices or for tutti; in the second half the soloists sing

the music with verse texts and the full choir sings the acclamations 'O clemens', 'O pia' and so on. Both the treble and tenor voice parts are missing, and since neither seems to have held a *cantus firmus* both have to be invented. Pygott's habit of beginning phrases of prose and lines of verse imitatively helps in the restoration of the missing parts, and his tendency to make incidental and unobtrusive melodic cross-references between voices elsewhere during their course sometimes helps to make the counterpoint more purposeful than it might otherwise have been. Notwithstanding the assistance offered by the surviving voices, much of this restoration depends on guess-work; in this context the line between intuition and insight is blurred. The occasional passages in dotted rhythms are rather unusual but are found also in Pygott's Mass *Veni sancte spiritus*; here their occurrence at 'clamantium' and 'vulnerato' might lead one to see in them a response to the text, an evocation of savagery or pain, were it not that they happen also in fairly neutral contexts such as 'Eve' and 'nobis'.

The juxtaposition of works by Ludford and Pygott allows some interesting comparisons. Listeners will perhaps find the *Regnum mundi* Mass more approachable and communicative than *Salve regina* because the individual movements are on a somewhat smaller scale and the music is clearer in its local articulation, more obviously lucid in its train of

thought and more exploitive of contrast. The vast scale of Pygott's *Salve regina*, on the contrary, is rather intimidating in itself, and the extremely melismatic word-setting, the unremitting intricacy, the steady pace, the lack of strong local contrast and the heavy reliance upon imitation to produce continuity can create an impression of reserve, dispassionateness and even monotony. It may be that to some extent such perceptions simply reflect real differences between the two composers: both were masters of their craft, but on the evidence of their surviving music Ludford was

more imaginative and inventive. There may also be an aesthetic and cultural difference: Pygott creates a musical icon whose abstract beauty aims to ravish the listener into a deeper spiritual empathy with the divine, whereas Ludford constructs a musical discourse designed to help the listener achieve a better intellectual comprehension of the verbal message; one approach derives from the past, while the other points to the future.





### VOLUME 3

The third disc includes a votive antiphon *Ave fuit prima salus* by John Mason and a Mass *Inclina cor meum* by Nicholas Ludford, preceded by the plainchant Kyrie *Cunctipotens genitor*.

Unlike his other compositions, John Mason's votive antiphon *Ave fuit prima salus* is not annotated 'men' in the indexes to the Peterhouse partbooks, and is much more convincing if the two missing voices are reconstructed to create a three-octave work for full choir rather a two-octave piece for men. The text was quite widely circulated in devotional literature, and other musical settings of it exist; like many such texts it is a trope or expansion of the angelic salutation *Ave Maria*, in which

each word of the original is given a stanza of comment in rather feeble Latin verse. The texts of *Quales sumus* and *Ve nobis* are considerably more interesting and could be by Mason himself.

There are limitations to what can be said about a composition 40% of which consists of restoration. *Ave fuit* seems to have been fairly conservative in style, with a first half in triple metre and a second half in duple, each metrical half being subdivided into verses in contrasting reduced scorings which culminate in a tutti. Mason is fond of using imitation to set the music in motion again after a rest, and he rather likes passing longer musical ideas very obviously from one voice to another during the course of a tutti rather like a banner transferred from the hand of one bearer to that of another, as he does at 'Pre cunctis celi civibus' and 'Tecum letantur angeli', but he shows little interest in other devices, such as musical sequence or repetition, which would be helpful to the listener. Whereas in Ludford's music counterpoint and harmony seem to be in perfect accord, Mason's music sometimes gives the impression that one or other of these parameters is taking precedence of the other. This does not mean that Mason is an inept composer, but that he is not quite in the highest class.

The Mass *Inclina cor meum* seems to inhabit a darker and more introspective world than



Ludford's radiant *Regnum mundi* Mass on the second disc. It takes its name from the opening words of the plainchant that forms its *cantus firmus*, 'Inclina cor meum deus in testimonia tua', a short responsory sung daily at the morning service of terce. Three of Ludford's surviving works are based on this *cantus firmus*: the present Mass, a votive antiphon *Ave Maria ancilla trinitatis* unique to the Henrician partbooks, and a setting of *Salve regina* in the same collection, one voice of which also survives in a manuscript copied about a decade earlier. While it was quite common for a composer to base a Mass and a single votive antiphon—or even a Mass, a Magnificat and a votive antiphon—on the same material, perhaps to create recurrent referential points across a festal day, there is no other known instance of a composer using the same *cantus firmus* in two votive antiphons. The words of the responsory, from verse 36 of Psalm 118 in the Vulgate, appear to have had special significance for Ludford, or for St Stephen's chapel, or some high personage associated with it. The idea of asking God to bend one's heart to bear witness to him has obvious relevance to Stephen, the first Christian to suffer martyrdom for giving public testimony of his faith; the introit and gradual of Mass on St Stephen's day, *Etenim sederunt principes* and *Sederunt principes*, quote verse 23 of the same psalm.

The melody of the *Inclina cor meum* plainchant responsory is rudimentary, consisting

essentially of a recitation oscillating between two notes a tone apart, twice rising a third above the upper note and once descending a third below the lower note; it will be heard particularly clearly in the treble part of the Gloria at the words 'Domine deus, rex celestis, deus pater omnipotens'. Ludford's treatment of this unpromising material is ingenious and extraordinarily skilful: rather than confining it to a single voice he quotes it in every voice except the mean, incorporates it into several verse sections as well as into the fully-scored sections, makes additional passing allusions to it from time to time, and sometimes decorates it melodically instead of quoting it literally. The music sounds as shapely and inventive as any by Ludford, betraying no hint of the constraints imposed by the *cantus firmus*. The missing tenor part can be restored with some confidence wherever it held the chant melody, but one cannot always be sure of having restored its original rhythmic profile; where another voice has the *cantus firmus* the tenor seems to have behaved much like the contratenor, albeit (as in most of Ludford's music) with a slightly lower tessitura.



#### VOLUME 4

The fourth disc begins with a return to Nicholas Ludford for his setting of *Ave cujus conceptio* and ends by introducing a new composer, Robert Hunt, through his *Stabat mater dolorosa*; between these two Marian antiphons it revisits Robert Jones in his Mass *Spes nostra* preceded by a plainchant Kyrie.

*Ave cujus conceptio* presents a widely-circulated devotional poem recollecting five joyful events in the life of the Virgin—her Conception, Nativity, Annunciation, Purification and Assumption—which were commemorated in the five main Marian feasts observed by the medieval Western church. The form of the poem—five four-line stanzas, one for each

event—could hardly be simpler, the thought is uncomplicated and the style direct, and the tone is positive throughout. Ludford's music matches the text perfectly: changes of scoring occur at the beginning or mid-point of stanzas; each joy is announced with conspicuous clarity, often by allowing every voice in turn to deliver the crucial words while the other voices make room for it by singing melismatically ('Cujus annuntiatio', 'Cujus purificatio', 'Cujus fuit assumptio'); and the almost constant sense of animation emphasizes the celebratory mood. Here and there Ludford slackens the pace and uses harmonic colour to gloss the text: in the first stanza the move onto an unexpected chord at 'celestia' underlines the ineffability of heaven, and the turn to the minor form of the same chord for 'terrestria' contrasts man's earthly condition with what is promised to him in paradise; in the third, another harmonic surprise on 'humilitas' highlights the Virgin's meekness, a quality then much admired; in the last stanza one might even interpret the flourishes and emphatic cadence on 'purgatio' as a casting-off of and shutting-of-the-door on sin. It would be very misleading to portray Ludford as a madrigalist, but his responsiveness to words and ideas seems unique among his English contemporaries. Only the tenor part of *Ave cujus conceptio* is missing, so restoration is relatively straightforward. It was tempting to introduce the tenor into one of the two duets between the treble and another voice ('Ave cujus nati-

vitae ...' and 'Ave vera virginitas ...') because it is unusual to encounter two duets in a work of this size and still more unusual for both of them to involve the treble, but the surviving voices are self-sufficient and attempts to add a third voice were not convincing.

Robert Jones's Mass *Spes nostra* has as its *cantus firmus* a plainchant antiphon sung at matins on Trinity Sunday; presumably it was composed for performance on this important feast day, but perhaps this would not have precluded it being sung subsequently on other occasions too. As usual, only the Gloria, Credo, Sanctus and Agnus are set in polyphony; in this recording the plainchant Kyrie *Deus creator omnium* directly precedes the Gloria, as it would in a fully liturgical performance. Only the tenor voice of the Mass is missing; it carried the *cantus firmus* in every fully-scored section and also in the 'qui venit' verse of the Sanctus. The musical context usually shows where the tenor must move from chant pitch to the next, but subjective decisions have to be made about note division and rhythmic layout in order to carry the words of the text. At the beginning of each movement the treble voice anticipates the beginning of the *cantus firmus*, moving up through the notes of a triad and then continuing by step to arrive a seventh above where it started; this is not unusual in Masses based on chant. Jones's music is less ornate and less obviously imposing than that of some contemporaries—

Pygott for example—and he tends to treat dissonance rather more freely and to think in shorter phrases; but his craftsmanship is first-rate and his ear for a touch of colour, whether of harmony, dissonance, or contrapuntal finesse, is extremely acute. He can also pursue a motive as tenaciously as anybody, as at the end of the Sanctus, and show an impressive amount of sinew, as in the very well sustained tutti extending from 'Et resurrexit' to the end of the Credo: the moment at 'Et iterum venturus est' where, so to speak, the music takes a deep breath in order to drive itself through to the final cadence, is particularly striking.

Robert Hunt has yet to be identified with certainty. He may have been the Hunt, alias Stacionar, recorded without a first name as a chorister of Magdalen College between 1486 and 1493. If this boy were born in the late 1470s he could have embarked upon a career as an adult church musician just before 1500 and continued in it at least into the 1530s. In 1535 a Robert Hunt was chaplain of a chantry in Chichester Cathedral, where John Mason held a chantry between 1523 and 1527 and again (unless this second chantry-priest was a namesake) between 1539 and 1540; involving no other duty than singing Masses for the soul of the founder, chantries were quite often awarded to clergy who could be useful to an institution in other ways, such as singing in the choir.

There could scarcely be greater contrast between Jones's genial Mass and Hunt's sombre *Stabat mater dolorosa*. It is interesting that although the Eton choirbook, copied just after 1500, contained five settings of the poem by composers of Fayrfax's generation including Fayrfax himself, Hunt's is the only extant subsequent composition of the text by an Englishman. It is not immediately clear why it fell out of favour: other texts of even greater length and indigestibility were set by composers of the Peterhouse generation, and its invocation of Mary as an intercessor whose efficacy was increased by her witness to her Son's suffering would surely have remained meaningful to traditional Catholics. Perhaps the developing fashion for devotional texts in rhetorical and strenuously classical prose made this plain-spoken thirteenth-century poem seem prohibitively old-fashioned. Whatever the case, the words of *Stabat mater* elicited from Hunt music of remarkable eloquence and evocative power. Although

both the tenor and treble parts are missing and 40% of the piece therefore consists of restoration, I do not think it excessive to claim that no other music in the Henrician partbooks approaches so closely that of the mature Fayrfax in its combination of reticence and eloquence, its close matching of text and music, its subtle variations of scoring, its overall homogeneity and its eschewal of inessential ornament. Although Hunt cannot match the Fayrfax of *Maria plena virtute* and the Mass *Tecum principium* in contrapuntal resource or sure-footedness, he succeeds admirably in arousing compassion for the Saviour, which was the aim of literary evocations of the Passion and of the visual symbols traditionally associated with it. The short duet to the words 'Cujus animam gementem' is the one place in the entire repertoire of the partbooks where the missing treble and tenor were the only voices singing and the music heard in this performance is entirely editorial.





Robert Jones, *Missa Spes nostra*, end of Gloria and beginning of Credo, in the treble partbook: Peme Library, Peterhouse (Cambridge), MS 40, f. 33v.  
Courtesy Peterhouse, Cambridge, and the Digital Image Archive of Medieval Music



## VOLUME 5

The final disc begins with three antiphons, Hugh Sturmy's *Exultet in hac die*, Robert Hunt's *Ave Maria mater dei* and John Mason's *Ve nobis miseris*, and ends with an anonymous and untitled Mass preceded by the plainchant *Kyrie Orbis factor*.

Of all the composers named in the partbooks, none is more obscure than Hugh Sturmy. The name is Kentish, a derivative of the place-name Stourmouth borne by two villages a few miles east of Canterbury, near where the River Stour used to empty into the now silted-up River Wantsum, which separated the Isle of Thanet from the mainland and provided a short cut between the English Channel

and the Thames Estuary. Bearers of the surname were certainly living in this area in the sixteenth century. The only known documentary reference that implicitly could apply to the composer is a license issued by the Stationer's Company in 1557–8 for the printing of a 'ballett of the a. b. c. of a preste called Heugh Stourmy'; here 'ballett' probably denotes a musical setting.

*Exultet in hac die* suggests very strongly that Sturmy had fairly recently been a member either of Canterbury Cathedral priory (where no such name occurs in the dissolution list) or of St Augustine's abbey in the city, because it is a polyphonic setting of the plainchant antiphon sung with the Magnificat at vespers either on 26 May, the day of the saint's death *circa* 604, or on 13 September, the feast of the translation or transfer of his relics in 1091. As usual in polyphonic settings of chant items which were ritual rather than votive in function, the chant melody is laid out in equal notes in the tenor part; the missing tenor can thus be restored with virtually complete confidence. The other voices weave themselves around the chant in a loosely imitative and fluent conversation, reminding us that in a vigorous and deeply-rooted musical culture even an inconspicuous composer may show a remarkably high level of skill. There is some irony in the fact that this unassuming piece has today become a minor hit; Hugh Sturmy would surely be astonished that after five

hundred years *Exultet* is still being sung and admired in parts of the world that in his day had not even been discovered by Europeans. Its inclusion in the Henrician partbooks may have been for votive rather than ritual use.

Having already made the acquaintance of Robert Hunt as a composer on a very large scale in the *Stabat mater* on the fourth disc, we meet him again as an exponent of the shorter votive antiphon in *Ave Maria mater dei*, which lacks its tenor part. Succinct antiphons of this kind already existed around 1500, when William Cornysh's setting of the same text was copied into the Eton choirbook, and they appear to have become more numerous in the later 1520s and 30s; the Henrician partbooks contain several more examples by John Taverner and lesser-known composers. Hunt sets the brief prose text in a rather more modern manner than Cornysh, relying more on imitation and rapid changes of scoring; the style is also more sober, but the lines still tend to open out into melisma at the end of every text phrase. The unusually extended treatment of the musical idea introduced at 'Amen' helps to stabilise the music after the fluctuations and tensions of the previous few bars.

John Mason's *Ve nobis miseris* demonstrates very well the characteristics of the new style of votive antiphon text—self-consciously 'literary', rhetorical, and (at 'Venite benedic-

ti patris mei...' towards the end) quoting Scripture—that came into vogue in the early sixteenth century and to some extent displaced previously popular texts such as *Salve regina* and *Gaude virgo*, at least in institutions whose members had some pretension to humanistic scholarship. It also bears witness to the rise of the Jesus-antiphon, less vulnerable than the Mary-antiphon to reformist criticism. Like Mason's *Quales sumus* on the first disc, it is written for five male voices inhabiting an overall range of some two octaves, suggesting that the choir for which it was intended did not include boys. As one would expect, the music exhibits older and newer features: it is divided into extended sections contrasting in metre and scoring, and the writing is predominantly ornate and busy; but imitative entries clarify the syntax of the text, and crucial words and picturesque phrases attract an apt musical gesture (the thunderous 'Non!' that answers the rhetorical questions beginning with 'Quid ergo?'; the figure scurrying after itself at 'Currimus et festinamus', the tremendous assurance of the proclamation 'Venite benedicti ...'). The spine-tingling cadence at 'floreamus' on a first-inversion chord—so much less stable than a root-position chord—is surely meant to signal the continuation of the verbal sense into the following section. For the trio beginning at 'Obsecramus te igitur' Mason divides the second tenor part into two and makes them sing in canon over the bass: fine crafts-

manship because the artifice is almost unnoticeable. The motivic conversation of the extant voices aids the restoration of the missing voice, which seems to have had a similar tessitura to the two highest parts.

The Mass with which this disc ends raises questions whose investigation may throw further light on the partbooks, their context and their significance. It is one of only two anonymous compositions in the collection, and one of only two Masses in it based on a *cantus firmus* or a polyphonic model that do not carry a title indicating the source of the borrowed material (Ludford's Mass *Christi virgo* is the other). There can be no doubt that it is based on a plainchant melody, a D-mode chant which, as in John Taverner's Mass *Gloria tibi trinitas* in the same mode, is almost always placed in the mean part rather than in the tenor. The closest match so far found in the Sarum chant repertoire sung all over southern England is *Confessor domini*, the antiphon to the Magnificat at first vespers of a confessor-bishop. Of all the saints in this category the one whose commemoration would have been most relevant to Canterbury is St Augustine, who brought Roman Christianity to England and became the city's first bishop. For more than three hundred years Canterbury's chief saint had been Thomas Becket, but during Henry VIII's imposition of himself as head of the English church the cult of Thomas had been pro-

scribed and he had been declared to be no saint but 'a traitor to his prince'; this would have made celebration of him, public or private, not only illegal but probably suicidal.

In St Augustine the cathedral authorities possessed an acknowledged saint for whom they could claim not only strong local connections but also a decisive contribution to the development of the English church and nation. His authenticity and stature were irrefragable; his relations with the secular power had been uncontroversial; he had died a natural death; and he was not the subject of a thriving cult associated with miracles. A strong case could have been made for promoting him as the father-figure of a national church which now lacked one; some of the king's subjects must have felt that the repudiation of papal authority had dealt the church a wound so grievous that a mere king could not heal it. Perhaps such thoughts led to the inclusion in the Henrician partbooks of a Mass commemorating St Augustine. Given the king's pathological insecurity and ruthlessness, however, reticence about the purpose of the Mass and the identity of its composer may have been considered wise. Another reason for caution could have been that both of St Augustine's feasts fell within the scope of the Act 'for the abrogation of certain holydays' passed by Convocation in July 1536, and should not have been observed; hence the absence of a title and as-

cription. The hypothesis is far from proved—why do the partbooks give Fayrfax’s Mass *Albanus*, for a saint whose feast day was revoked by the same Act, its usual ascription and title?—but it may deserve further consideration.

The identity of the composer has yet to be established. There is an astonishingly close similarity between the end of the Sanctus of this Mass and the end of the Gloria of Taverner’s Mass *Gloria tibi trinitas*, but this could imply no more than that the composer of the Peterhouse Mass was aware of Taverner’s setting. *Gloria tibi trinitas* is usually dated to the mid-1520s, whereas some features of this anonymous Mass, such as its thorough exploitation of close imitation and motivic extension, its sometimes angular and wide-spanned melodic lines, and its use of *trippla* (three-in-the-time-of-one) time signatures in the final sections of the Gloria, Credo and Agnus imply a date a decade or so later. Whoever composed the music, it is characterful if sometimes a little idiosyncratic in its vocal figuration, with some very challenging florid writing (‘visibilium omnium et invisibilium’ in the Credo and ‘gloria tua’ in the Sanctus), a ravishing setting of the first ‘Qui tollis’ in the Gloria for divided trebles and mean, a meltingly tender treatment of ‘Et incarnatus’ in the Credo, and the skilfully-handled fleet-of-foot endings to the Gloria, Credo and Agnus. The *cantus firmus* is occasionally transferred to a

voice other than the mean: to the tenor for ‘in nomine domini’ in the Sanctus and to the bass for the second ‘qui tollis ...’ of the Agnus. Only the tenor voice is missing, but since the *cantus firmus* is usually in the mean nearly all of the tenor has to be freely invented; it seems to have behaved like the contratenor but is not always easy to integrate.

These notes cannot end without a declaration of gratitude to Scott Metcalfe and Blue Heron for the immense contribution that they have made to the dissemination of this music. To hear it sung with such skill and with unmatched insight is profoundly rewarding. Not the least piquant of the ironies associated with the Henrician partbooks is that it should have fallen chiefly to a choir in Boston, a New England city founded by settlers unable to tolerate the nostalgic religious policy of those who ruled in their homeland, to reveal to the world at large the beauty and richness of this repertoire.

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Nick Sandon and Blue Heron in Cambridge, Massachusetts, on April 29, 2017.  
L to R: Margot Rood, Owen McIntosh, Mark Sprinkle, Pamela Dellal, Paul Guttry, Scott Metcalfe, David McFerrin, Nick Sandon, Teresa Wakim, Jason McStoots, Martin Near, John Yannis, Shari Wilson, Michael Barrett, Jennifer Ashe. (Photo by Kathy Wittman.)



## NOTES ON PERFORMANCE PRACTICE SCOTT METCALFE

The following notes for those who are curious about the nuts and bolts of singing 16th-century vocal music discuss how the ensemble is constituted, what pitch we sing at, and how the words are pronounced; they conclude with some thoughts on performance style.

### Vocal scoring and voice types

The five-voice scoring of pre-Reformation English sacred polyphony employs five basic voice types. The upper two—treble and mean—were sung by boys, the lower three—contratenor, tenor, and bass—by men. Tenors and contratenors (the latter a part written “against the tenor”) originally shared the same range, but beginning around the 1520s English contratenor parts tended to lie slightly higher than the tenor.<sup>1</sup> On the continent the bifurcation happened earlier; the higher part was called a *contratenor altus*, a “high part written against the tenor,” eventually to

be known simply as *altus*. A contratenor was not a man singing in falsetto (like the modern “countertenor”) but a high tenor.<sup>2</sup>

An anonymous early Jacobean document describes the five voice types succinctly:

Nature has disposed all voices, both of men and children, into five kinds, viz: Basses (being the lowest or greatest voices), Tenors being neither so low or so great, Countertenors (being less low and more high than tenors) of which three kinds all men’s voices consist. Then of children’s voices there are two kinds, viz. Meane voices (which are higher than men’s voices) and Treble voices, which are the highest kind of Children’s voices.<sup>3</sup>

- 1 See Roger Bowers, “The vocal scoring, choral balance and performing pitch of Latin church polyphony in England, c. 1500-58,” *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, vol. 112, no. 1 (1986-7), pp. 38-76, and “To chorus from quartet: the performing resource for English church polyphony, c. 1390-1559,” in J. Morehen, ed. *English choral practice 1400-1650* (1995), pp. 1-47.
- 2 The contratenor altus as a high tenor survived to the end of the seventeenth century and beyond. In England one may see a falsettist countertenor emerging only in Purcell’s later works (see Andrew Parrott, “Performing Purcell,” in *The Purcell companion*, ed. Michael Burden, London, 1994, pp. 417-22), while in France the *haute-contre* was the hero of the Baroque operatic stage. The modern notion of a countertenor as a falsettist was essentially invented in the twentieth century by Alfred Deller.
- 3 London, British Library MS Royal 18. B. XIX; quoted in Peter Le Huray, *Music and the Reformation in England, 1549-1660* (New York, 1967), p. 121.



Charles Butler provides more detail (and some fanciful etymology) in *The principles of musik* (1636):

The Base is so called, because it is the *basis* or foundation of the Song, unto which all the other Partes bee set: and it is to be sung with a deepe, ful, and pleasing Voice.

The Tenor is so called, because it was commonly in Motets the ditti-part or Plain-song... or (if you will) because neither ascending to any high or strained note, nor descending very low, it continueth in one ordinari tenor of the voice and therefore may be sung by an indifferent [that is, average] voice.

The Countertenor or *Contratenor*, is so called, because it answereth the Tenor, though commonly in higher keyz [clefs]: and therefore is fittest for a man of a sweet shrill voice.<sup>4</sup> Which part though it have little melodi by itself... yet in Harmoni it hath the greatest grace specially when it is sung with a right voice: which is too rare.

The Mean is so called, because it is a middling or mean high part, between the Countertenor, (the highest part of a man) and the Treble (the highest part of a boy or woman) and therefore may be sung by a mean voice.

The Treble is so called, because his notes ar placed (for the most part) in the third Septenari [i.e. the highest of the three octaves of the normal composite range of human voices], or the Treble clefs: and is to be sung with a high cleere sweete voice.

Choristers undertakes to “furnishe the quier of the said Cath[edral] church with eight choristers having good and commendable voyces for trebles and meanes.”<sup>7</sup>

As for our forces, since we are not bound by the old ecclesiastical prohibition against men and women singing sacred music together, our treble parts are sung by women, rather than boys. Charles Butler suggests the possibility in the passage quoted above, calling the treble “the highest part of a boy or woman,”<sup>8</sup> and indeed, no less a musician than William Byrd is known to have participated in liturgical music-making with a mixed choir. The English Jesuit William Weston, visiting the Berkshire country house of Richard Ford in 1586, described “a chapel, set aside for the celebration of the Church’s offices” and musical forces that included “an organ and other musical instruments and choristers, male and female, members of his household. During these days it was just as if we were celebrating an uninterrupted Octave of some great feast. Mr Byrd, the very famous English musician and organist, was among the company.”<sup>9</sup>

The division of male voices into five types dates back to well before the Reformation. An entry in the early sixteenth-century Household Book of the Earl of Northumberland, for example, divides the “Gentillmen and childeryn of the chapell” as follows: “Gentillmen of the chapell, viij, viz: ij Basses, ij tenors, aund iij Countertenors, yoman or grome of the vestry j; Childeryn of the chapell, v, viz: ij Tribills and iij Meanys.”<sup>5</sup> The division of boys’ voices into two kinds may be observed at the Lady Chapel of the priory of Llanthony Secunda (near Gloucester) in 1533, where the choristers were to be “four childerne well and suffycyently enstructed that is to say too meanys and too trebles,”<sup>6</sup> and in a document of 1580 from Salisbury Cathedral in which the newly-appointed Instructor of the



4 “Shrill” meant high or bright and did not carry the negative connotations it has now. The word might describe the sound of a lark or a trumpet, as in “the shrill-gorg’d Larke” (*King Lear* IV.vi.58) or “the shrill Trumpe” (*Othello* III.iii.351).

5 Bowers 1986-7, p. 72. The manuscript is preserved at Alnwick Castle, Northumberland: see Bowers 1986-7, p. 57, n. 51. A transcription was published in 1770, edited by Thomas Percy, and revised and reissued in 1905 by A. Brown and Sons.

6 Bowers 1995, p. 35.

7 Salisbury, Archives of the Dean and Chapter, Indenture with schedule, without reference, in box marked “Choristers,” quoted in Roger Bowers, “The performing pitch of English 15th-century church polyphony,” *Early music* viii (1980), p. 28, n. 13.

8 Charles Butler, *The principles of musik* (London, 1636), p. 42.

9 From the diary of the English Jesuit William Weston, quoted in Joseph Kerman, *The masses and motets of William Byrd* (Berkeley, 1981), pp. 49-50.

Sixteenth-century English choirs employed boys on the “mean” line, but on the continent parts in this range (labelled “cantus” or “superius”) were sung by adult male falsettists, boys, or women. Our mean is sung by one male falsettist and two women. Contratenor, tenor, and bass lines are sung by high, medium, and low mens’ voices, respectively.

Four of the works in the Peterhouse partbooks, labeled “men” in the index, are scored for an ensemble of broken male voices, without trebles or means. Three of the four are by John Mason, including *Quales sumus O miseri* (on Vol. 1) and *Ve nobis miseris* (Vol. 5). Here the five parts are given to two high tenors of equal range, one ordinary tenor, and two basses, one lower than the other.

In its size and distribution our ensemble very closely resembles the one pre-Reformation choir for which we have detailed evidence of the distribution of voices used in an actual performance, as opposed to a roster of the singers on staff. On one typical occasion in about 1518, this choir—that of the household chapel of the Earl of Northumberland—was divided very much as ours is, 3/3/2/2/3 from top to bottom.<sup>10</sup> Grand collegiate foundations such as Magdalen College or cathedrals

like Canterbury may have sung polyphonic music with larger forces. Between 1500 and 1547 Magdalen College usually maintained a complement of 16 boys and 9 or 10 men;<sup>11</sup> a Canterbury staff list of c. 1540 includes 10 choristers and 12 men (13 counting the master of the choristers), whom we might imagine to have divided themselves 5/5/4/4/4, if the entire choir ever sang polyphony together.<sup>12</sup> I know of no evidence, however, that connects a particular complement or distribution of forces to the performance of a specific piece of music.



<sup>10</sup> See Bowers 1986-7, esp. pp. 57-9.

<sup>11</sup> Bowers 1986-7, p. 55 and n. 43.

<sup>12</sup> The list is reproduced in Nick Sandon, “The Henrician partbooks belonging to Peterhouse, Cambridge” (PhD. diss, University of Exeter, 1983/rev. 2009, available at [www.diamm.ac.uk](http://www.diamm.ac.uk)), pp. 133-7.

## Performance pitch

The question of the performing pitch of vocal music before the early seventeenth century resists easy answers, due on the one hand to the near-complete absence of surviving instruments whose pitch might be measured, and on the other to the fact that sacred polyphony was normally sung by voices alone. It is sometimes asserted rather off-handedly that all-vocal ensembles simply chose any convenient pitch out of the air and that the result was a complete absence of a vocal pitch standard across Europe. Besides the lack of evidence in support of this view, there are serious objections to its plausibility. Not the least of these is the fact that when evidence for pitch standards of specific frequencies begins to emerge, from the later sixteenth century onwards, whether in Italy, Germany, France, or England, those pitches fall into a pattern. The most common pitch on the continent in the seventeenth century is around A466 Hz (a semitone above the modern standard of A440); the next most common, around A415 (a whole tone below A466); a third, less common pitch occurs yet another semitone down at about A392. That is to say, the most common pitches are a higher one (A466) and a lower one (A415) separated by a whole tone, with a third pitch (A392) a minor third lower than the higher and more common of the first two. As Bruce Haynes realised and documented in his landmark study of 2002,

these pitches are related to each other on a “grid” of integral intervals (not less than a semitone) which allowed players of instruments tuned in meantone, such as organs and most winds, to transpose between them if necessary. And these pitches are associated with names: the pitch around 466 is often called something like “choir pitch” and the pitches at 415 and 392 “chamber pitch.” England, as ever marching to its own drummer, had its own pitch grid that lay slightly above the continental standard. Its “Quire-pitch” was about A473-8.<sup>13</sup>

A reasonable argument may be made that Quire-pitch at around A473-8 was the most likely historical pitch of unaccompanied vocal music in England in the early sixteenth century, just as it was a century later.

1) The normal *written* range of unaccompanied vocal polyphony is far from arbitrary, but rather is tied to *sounding* pitch and grew from a profound understanding of the ranges of human voices. This knowledge is embedded in and manifested firstly by the Gamut, the normative musical space of medieval and Renaissance music, and its range of three octaves from bass G (or F) to treble e” (or f”), encompassing the composite range of adult male singers from the low notes of the average bass to the high notes of the average male falsettist; next, by the five-line staff, which allows an individual voice range of an octave and a fourth or 11

<sup>13</sup> Bruce Haynes, *A history of performing pitch* (2002), Introduction, section 0-3; ch. 2; *et passim*.



notes to be notated without the use of ledger lines; and then by the standard clefs of vocal music (bass, tenor, alto, and soprano), which imply an ordinary range of F to b for a bass, c to f' for a tenor, e to a' for an alto, and b to e" for a soprano. At a pitch somewhere around A415 to 466, these ranges correspond to the comfortable ordinary ranges of human males, within which they can sing "naturally" and deliver text clearly and persuasively, qualities valued by Renaissance writers.

2) Since written ranges derive from the average ranges of actual human singers, standard written vocal ranges are generally stable across the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. (The phenomenon is remarked on by Roger Bowers and David Fallows, both of whom draw the conclusion that A440 is about the right practical pitch for most music of this period, despite their both arguing that the relationship between written and sounding pitch was entirely arbitrary at the time.<sup>14</sup>) These basic ranges remain the same in the seventeenth century as well, in music with and without accompanying instruments.

3) Organs everywhere played *alternatim* with choirs, and cornetts and sackbuts are documented playing alongside or with English choirs from at least 1514.<sup>15</sup> At the very least, a 16th-century organist might give the choir its starting pitch.<sup>16</sup> But whether or not instruments played simultaneously or *alternatim* with voices in church or just played starting pitches, or whether singers simply heard and performed with instruments on other occasions outside of the liturgy, thus developing a strong physical sense of where a given note was located in their voices (as all professional singers have nowadays), the pitch of unaccompanied vocal performance must have been related to the pitch of instrumental music. Or, as we should rather say, the pitch of instruments corresponds to that of voices. In fact, we conceive of the relationship of vocal to instrumental pitch exactly backwards from the way it evolved. We think that vocal pitch derives from instrumental pitch, that instruments give the pitch to singers: historically, it is the ranges of singers that gave instruments their pitch. It is no coincidence that the medieval Gamut from G (Gamma ut) to e" (E la) corresponds to the ordinary compass of male voices.

As Thomas Morley put it in 1597:

*Philomathes.* Why then was your Scale devised of xx. notes and no more?

*Master.* Because that compasse was the reach of most voyces: so that under *Gam ut* the voice seemed as a kinde of *humming*, and above *E la* a kinde of constrained skricking.<sup>17</sup>

The pitch and range of the organ, too, was originally intended to match that of human voices and vocal music. Thus the lowest note of a 16th-century English organ, which was designed for accompanying the choir, sounded "FF fa ut," the normal bottom note of the vocal bass range.<sup>18</sup> A contract for an organ from Padua in 1507 specifies that its pitch "be choir pitch, at [the level of] a man's voice or that of a choir"<sup>19</sup> and Arnolt Schlick in his *Spiegel der Orgelmacher und Organisten* (1511) writes that "The instrument has to be pitched for the choir and be tuned suitably for playing with singers."<sup>20</sup>

4) In the absence of a reason to alter it, performing pitch is unlikely to change. As Haynes observes, "it is in everyone's interest that it remain stable."<sup>21</sup> At most times there will have been many reasons to conserve pitch standards and the pitch grid (while allowing for variations in taste between regions and individual musicians), enabling music to cross distances in space and time and saving a lot of money which would otherwise have to be spent on purchasing or refitting instruments.

5) As one would expect if this line of argument is correct, the pitch grids on the European continent and in England were demonstra-



14 Bowers 1986-7, pp. 38-53; David Fallows, "Specific information on the ensembles for composed polyphony, 1400-1474," in *Studies in the performance of late medieval music*, ed. S.Boorman (1983): 109-159, esp. 125-6; Fallows, "The performing ensembles in Josquin's sacred music," *Tijdschrift van de Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis* 35 (1985): 32-64, esp. 47-53.

15 Andrew Parrott, "Grett and solompne singing": instruments in English church music before the Civil War," *Early music* vi (1978): 182-187. A century earlier, Ulrich von Richental described English musicians at the Council of Constance in 1416 singing Vespers "with organs and *prosunen* [slide trumpets] above which were tenor, discant and medius": see Fallows, "Specific information," p. 127.

16 In 1570 the chapter of Lincoln Cathedral, attempting to restrict what they considered the excessive instrumental display of their organist, William Byrd, instructed him to limit his contribution to giving the choir its notes for the plainsong Canticles: see Ian Payne, *The provision and practice of sacred music at Cambridge colleges and selected cathedrals c. 1547-c. 1646* (New York & London, 1993), p. 147.

17 Thomas Morley, *A plaine and easie introduction to practicall musicke* (London, 1597), p. 7.

18 See Andrew Johnstone, "As it was in the beginning": organ and choir pitch in early Anglican church music," *Early music* 31 (2003): 506-525.

19 "Item sea coristo a voce de homo over da coro": contract for the organ at S Maria di Monteortone, Padua, 1507, cited in Haynes 2002, p. 65.

20 Ist das das werck dem Chor gemeß vnd gerecht gestimpt sey zu dem gesang": cited in Haynes 2002, p. 56.

21 Haynes 2002, p. 96.

bly stable from the late sixteenth century into the middle of the eighteenth century.<sup>22</sup> In a chapter in a forthcoming collection of essays about the musical manuscripts at Peterhouse, I argue that the most common performing pitch of sacred vocal polyphony in 16th- and early 17th-century England was likely a “Quire-pitch” of around A473, nearly a semitone and a half above the modern standard of A440.<sup>23</sup> In England the orientation to Quire-pitch at circa A473-8 can be documented as far back as the early sixteenth century, as Dominic Gwynn, Andrew Johnstone, and others have shown.<sup>24</sup>

On these five recordings we have tried a variety of approaches to the question of pitch. When we recorded Volume 1 in 2009 we were thinking along the lines suggested by Fallows and Bowers (see no. 2 above) and had not yet recognized what 17th-century pitch data might imply about pre-existing 16th-century patterns, and so we generally sang at A440. By the time we recorded Volume 2 two years later we had adopted A466 as our usual stan-

dard for continental music and I had become convinced that the most common historical pitch for the Peterhouse music would have been around A473. Our own modern pitch grid being centered on A440 and its relatives at integral semitones away, however, a present-day *a cappella* ensemble finds it quite challenging to shift itself into the cracks and sing at A473 or so, maintaining that foreign pitch for the considerable durations demanded by the Peterhouse repertoire, so we used a standard of around A466—an integral semitone above A440 and just slightly lower than English Quire-pitch—for Volumes 2, 3, and 5.

In preparing the music of Volume 4 we found both *Ave cujus conceptio* and the *Missa Spes nostra* to lie somewhat too low for our ensemble at A466.<sup>25</sup> Singing them a whole tone higher<sup>26</sup> pushed the treble part uncomfortably high, so eventually we settled on a semitone above A466, plus a little, roughly corresponding to A473 plus a semitone, or A448 plus a whole tone. Hunt’s *Stabat mater*

we sang at A448, more or less—more or less, because none of these pieces uses A for a final, so orienting one’s pitch to A makes little sense anyway. Raising the pitch slightly above the A440/466 grid to a 448/473 grid seemed a good experiment to make at the time, but it

cost us considerable effort and I am not sure that it made any real difference in the end. In subsequent performances of these pieces we reverted to pitches related to A440 by integral semitones. Our most usual performing pitch remains A466.

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- 22 Haynes 2002, *passim*. This stability of pitch has persisted until now, for the modern standard of A440 or thereabouts is essentially a reduction to an average of the various pitches of the earlier pitch grid.
- 23 Scott Metcalfe, “Performance practice in Peterhouse’s chapel: scoring, voice types, number of singers, and pitch,” in Scott Mandelbrote (ed.), *Music, politics, and religion in early seventeenth-century Cambridge: the Peterhouse partbooks in context* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, forthcoming).
- 24 See Dominic Gwynn, “Organ pitch in seventeenth-century England,” *BIOS Journal* ix (1985): 65-78 and “The English organ in Purcell’s lifetime,” in *Performing the music of Henry Purcell* (Oxford, 1996), pp. 20-38; Haynes (2002), ch. 2-5; and Johnstone 2003.
- 25 Once these pieces were transposed down a fourth, as their high-clef notation (G-clef on the bottom line of the staff for treble, C-clef on the top line for bass) and one-flat signature imply. See below on clefs and transposition.
- 26 As Praetorius recommends in cases when a high-clef piece transposed down feels too low for the singers: *Syntagma musicum III*, Part II, ch. 9.



## Clefs and transposition

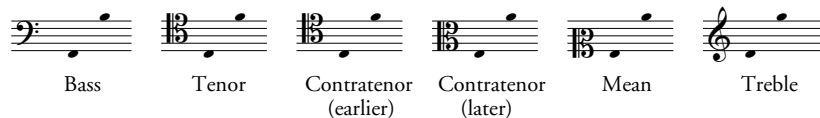
The range of each of the five voice-types of 16th-century English polyphony was perfectly expressed by the clef in which its music was normally notated. Written on a five-line staff without the use of ledger lines, from one note below the bottom line to one note above, a vocal range spanned an eleventh—Butler’s “natural compass of 8 Notes” plus “a Note or 2, or 3, at the most.” Morley emphasizes the importance of limiting a part’s range to notes that could be written on the staff:

Now must you diligentlie marke that in which all of these compasses you make your musicke, you must not suffer any part to goe without the compass of his rules [staff lines], except one note at the most above or below, without it be upon an extremity for the ditties sake or in notes taken for *Diapasons* in the base.<sup>27</sup>

Thus a bass, notated in bass clef or F4 (i.e., F clef placed on the fourth line) sang from F to b $\flat$  or b; a tenor (c4, tenor clef), from c to f; a mean (c2, mezzo-soprano clef; also c1, soprano clef, mostly later in the period), from g or b to c $\sharp$  or e $\sharp$ ; and a treble (g2, treble clef), from d $\flat$  to g $\sharp$ . The early sixteenth century English contratenor commonly shared the range of the tenor and was also written in c4, tenor clef, but the voices began to move apart in the 1520s<sup>28</sup> and the later contratenor was notated in c3, alto clef, with a range from e to a $\sharp$ .<sup>29</sup>

The composite range of 23 notes extends the traditional medieval gamut slightly in either direction: one note below bass G or “Gamma ut” to F and two notes above e $\sharp$  or “E la” to treble g $\sharp$ . The English composers represented in the Peterhouse repertoire exploited this full compass in all their works for the standard five parts, with most works calling for 21 or 22 notes and a handful requiring 20 or 23.<sup>30</sup>

## Clefs and ranges of the English five-part voice distribution in the 16th century.



Nine pieces by English composers in the Peterhouse partbooks, including Ludford’s *Missa Regnum mundi* and *Ave cujus conceptio* and Jones’s *Missa Spes nostra*, are notated in a system of high clefs with a g-clef on the bottom line (g1) of the staff for the treble part and a c-clef on the top line (c5) or F-clef on the third line (F3) for the bass part.<sup>31</sup> Using high clefs allowed the composer to notate a plainchant cantus firmus with a high range in the tenor at its normal written pitch and with its traditional modal final, without using ledger lines, while maintaining the tenor’s customary position relative to the other four parts in the polyphonic texture—three above and one below. (The cantus firmus of the *Missa Regnum mundi* is a fifth-mode melody with final F and a range extending from E below middle C to F above; that of the *Missa Spes nostra* is also a fifth-mode melody, with final F and a range from F below middle C to E above.)

A system of low clefs also existed, and Ludford’s *Missa Inclina cor meum* and Mason’s *Ave*

*fuist prima salus*, like ten other pieces in the Peterhouse partbooks, are written this way, with a C-clef on the second line of the staff for the treble part in the Mass (*Ave fuist* lacks its treble) and an F-clef on the top line for the bass part. Writing in low clefs, Ludford could notate the Mass’s plainchant cantus firmus in the tenor at its normal written pitch and with its traditional modal final on E.

Music written in high or low clefs, when transcribed into modern score, may look “high” or “low” to us, but from the perspective of the singer using a partbook, the ranges appear identical to those of standard-clef works. The notes fit onto the staff with no ledger lines, while the clef and the signature (usually one flat or no flat) tell the singer how the modal scale is constructed—where the half steps lie. The overall compass from bass to treble also remains the same: 22 notes in the case of the *Missa Regnum mundi* and the *Missa Spes nostra*, 21 in the *Missa Inclina cor meum*. In fact, the use of high or low clefs signals the singers to

27 Morley 1597, p. 166. Similarly, Zarlino writes that “It would be good if each of the parts did not exceed eight notes and remained confined within the notes of its diapason. But parts do exceed eight notes, and it sometimes turns out to be of great convenience to the composer... The parts can at times be extended up or down by one step, and even, if necessary, by two or more steps beyond their diapason, but one should take care that the parts can be sung comfortably, and that they not exceed in their extremes the tenth or eleventh note, for then they would become forced, tiring, and difficult to sing.” (Giuseffo Zarlino, *Le Istitutioni harmoniche*, 1558. Translation from *The Art of Counterpoint*, translated by Guy A. Marco and Claude V. Palisca, New York, 1976, pp. 92-3.)

28 Bowers 1995, pp. 39-43.

29 In the Peterhouse repertoire, in 32 of the 34 pieces notated in standard clefs the contratenor is written in c4.

30 Smaller compasses are found in pieces written “for means” (i.e. without trebles) or “for men” (i.e. without trebles or means) and in the two pieces composed by musicians from the continent (Jacquet of Mantua and ?Lupus Hellinck, both identified by the Peterhouse scribe as “Lupus Italus”). Continental boys were typically not required to sing in the higher English treble range. The treble of Tallis’s *Ave rose sine spinis* touches high A just once in its last few measures to achieve a 24-note compass—perhaps the indiscretion of a young composer.

31 The *Missa Surrexit pastor bonus* by the continental musician “Lupus Italus” is also written in high clefs.

### High-clef notation of the English five-part voice distribution.



transpose a fourth (or, more rarely, a fifth) up or down from their customary singing pitch. Transposed down a fourth, the compass of the *Missa Regnum mundi* looks just like that of a work notated in ordinary clefs, from F to f; the *Missa Spes nostra* lies a semitone lower, from E to e". Transposed up a fourth, the five parts of the *Missa Inclina cor meum* lie precisely in the customary ranges of music notated in ordinary clefs, from G to f".

Although disagreement seems to persist among musicologists (rarely among professional performers) about the transposition of high and low clef music, it is amply and unambiguously documented from the later sixteenth century onwards<sup>32</sup> and numerous instances of high and low clef notation exist dating back at least as far as the mid-fifteenth century, the generation of Johannes Ockeghem. To the oft-ventured arguments that high-clef music is intended to sound high and low-clef music low, or that the composers

were taking advantage of some sort of unusual voice type, the Peterhouse repertoire— a sample of 56 works with complete treble and bass parts—provides a decisive counter-argument. If music written in high clefs or low clefs was meant to be sung at written pitch, if such high or low voices really existed and were, indeed, so common that seven pieces out of 56 employ the "high treble" (but without ordinary basses) and eleven the "low bass" (but without ordinary trebles), then surely some enterprising composer would have seized on the opportunity to combine high, low, and normal ranges into an extended compass, but there is *not one single example* among these works of a piece with a 25-note compass from bass F to high B-flat (combining the normal bass with a supposed "high treble") or a 24-note-compass from low D to treble F (combining the normal treble with a supposed "low bass"), let alone of one combining all these supposed voices for a piece with a truly spectacular compass from low D

### Low-clef notation of the English five-part voice distribution.



to high B-flat. The situation is the same in the Eton choirbook, compiled c. 1500.<sup>33</sup> Added to the abundant and unambiguous documentation of transposition, this fact ought to put to rest any notions of "high trebles" or "low basses." Of course there must have been the occasional singer with an unusually high or low range, but the norms were the same for centuries before and remained so for centuries afterwards.



### Pronunciation

Up until the twentieth century, Latin was pronounced basically like the vernacular tongue and sounded quite different from place to place across Europe. Erasmus (a witness from the time of the Peterhouse music) describes how the French used their peculiar "u" in Latin and modified Latin accentuation to suit their own proclivities; Germans confused "b" and "p"; Spaniards were unable to distinguish between "b" and "v." When the French ambassador addressed the Emperor Maximilian in Latin at a banquet, the Italians thought he was speaking French. The German who replied was even less comprehensible, and a Danish orator might as well have been speaking Scots, for all Erasmus could understand.

We employ a pronunciation corresponding to what we know of English Latin from the

32 See Andrew Parrott, "Transposition in Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610*," *Early music* 12 (1984): 490-516; Patrizio Barbieri, "Chiavette and modal transposition in Italian practice (c. 1500-1837)," *Recercare* 3 (1991): 5-79; Jeffrey Kurtzman, *The Monteverdi Vespers of 1610* (1999), ch. 17; Parrott, "Monteverdi: onwards and downwards," *Early music* 32 (2004): 303-317; Andrew Johnstone, "High clefs in composition and performance," *Early music* 34 (2006): 29-53.

33 Of 46 pieces that survive complete in Eton, there are 18 pieces notated with g2 clef on the top part and F4 on the bottom (g2...F4) and compasses of 21-23 notes, six pieces notated with c1...F4 with compasses of 21-22 notes, and nine in high clefs (g1 on top, c4, c5, or F3 on the bottom) with compasses of 21-22 notes. One piece appears to be for means on the top part (c2...F4), with a compass of 18 notes, and twelve are for men's broken voices only, with compasses of 14-15 notes. No piece, not even Wylynyson's nine-voice *Salve regina*, exceeds a compass of 23 notes.

early sixteenth century.<sup>34</sup> It should be stressed that any such attempt is highly experimental, for definitive reconstruction of the sound of 16th-century Latin is, of course, impossible. Our hope is that the unexpected sounds of “vernacular” Latin, as opposed to the bland, vaguely Italianate sounds of modern “Church Latin,” lend the music a particular, local flavor, draw attention to the texts, and make Latin sound more like a real language and less like a succession of attractive but not especially meaningful vowels. Fortunately for us, English Latin is a sort of native tongue for Americans, for it resembles how we might pronounce Latin if we were to apply the vowels and consonants of our own English to it.



## Rhetoric and performance style

Early 16th-century singers were expected to express the text clearly and to respond to the rhetorical opportunities offered by text and music, rather than simply building a sonic edifice of beautiful but undifferentiated sound.<sup>35</sup>

Thus...to be regarded as of the highest judgment are those who, in singing, put all their effort into expressing the words well, when they are of substance, and who make the music accompany them in such a way that the words are the masters, accompanied by servants so as to appear more honorable; not creating the affects and the meanings from the music, but rather creating the music from the meanings and the affects...

Vincenzo Calmeta, *Vita del facondo poeta volgare Serafino Aquilano* (1504)<sup>36</sup>

Thomas More's *Utopia* of 1516 conveys a similar attitude:

For all their musike...dothe so resemble and expresse naturall affections, the sound and tune is so applied and made agreable to the thinge, that whether it bee a prayer, or els a dytty of gladnes, of patience, of trouble, of mournynge, or of anger: the fassion of the melodye dothe so represente the meaning of the thing, that it doth wonderfullye move, stirre, pearce, and enflame the hearers myndes.

Sir Thomas More, *Utopia* (1516), Bk. II

And Morley echoed the sentiment in 1597:

[Singers] ought to studie howe to vowell and sing cleane, expressing their wordes with devotion and passion, whereby to draw the hearer as it were in chaines of gold by the eares to the consideration of holie things.<sup>37</sup>

Nicola Vicentino, in his *L'antica musica ridotta alla moderna prattica* of 1555, describes some of the methods that may be used to achieve the desired effect and draws a parallel with the techniques used by an orator:

Sometimes a composition is performed according to a certain method that cannot be written down, such as uttering softly and loudly or fast and slow, or changing the measure [i.e. tempo] in keeping with the words, so as to show the effects of the passions and the harmony... The measure should change according to the words, now slower and now faster...

The experience of the orator can be instructive, if you observe the technique he follows in his oration. For he speaks now loud and now soft, now slow and now fast, thus greatly moving his listeners. This technique of changing the tempo has a powerful effect on the soul... If the orator moves listeners with the devices described above, how much greater and more powerful will be the effect of well-coordinated music recited with the same devices, but now accompanied by harmony.

Nicola Vicentino, *L'antica musica ridotta alla moderna prattica* (1555)<sup>38</sup>

34 Our attempt is informed especially by Harold Copeman's *Singing in Latin* (Oxford, 1990) and *Singing Early Music*, edited by Timothy McGee (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1996).

35 A fine study of rhetoric in pre-Reformation antiphons is David John Allinson, "The rhetoric of devotion: some neglected elements in the context of the early Tudor votive antiphon" (PhD. diss., University of Exeter, 1998).

36 Translation slightly modified from Anne Smith, *The performance of 16th-century music* (2011), p. 103, where the original Italian is also quoted.

37 Morley 1597, p. 179.

38 Cited in Smith 2011, pp. 107-8; translation by Maria Rika Maniates in *Ancient music adapted to modern practice* (1996), pp. 301-2. Further source material about rhetorical performance in the sixteenth century may be found in chapter 7 of Smith's book. I also benefitted from private conversations on the topic with the late Bruce Haynes, always generous in sharing his ideas and research in advance of publication.



We have felt free to experiment with tempo and dynamics in the manner suggested by Vincentino, as well as taking care to sing melodies in ways that convey the rhythm and contour of the words and the structure and meaning of the text. Of course, there is a basic difference between the rhetorical purpose of an antiphon addressed to Mary and the ritual function of the Mass, and within the Mass itself there is a great difference between the movements with regard to amount of text: the Gloria is quite wordy and the Credo more so, while the Sanctus and Agnus dei have very short texts. Nevertheless, in these Masses the Gloria and Credo tend to be more or less the

same length as the Sanctus and Agnus dei; in fact, in all four Masses recorded in this set the Sanctus is the longest movement of the four. Thus the word setting is relatively terse in the Credo, whereas in the Sanctus bars and bars on end are sung on a single syllable in a luxuriant outpouring of melisma. But because the beginning of each phrase is set syllabically, or nearly so, it is possible for every single word of the Mass to be understood by the listener. In these last moments of English medieval catholicism a polyphonic Mass can both instruct and provide unbounded spiritual delight.

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Blue Heron has been acclaimed by *The Boston Globe* as “one of the Boston music community’s indispensables” and hailed by Alex Ross in *The New Yorker* for its “expressive intensity.” Committed to vivid live performance informed by the study of original source materials and historical performance practices, Blue Heron ranges over a wide repertoire from plainchant to new music, with particular specialties in 15th-century Franco-Flemish polyphony and early 16th-century English sacred music. Founded in 1999, Blue Heron presents a concert series in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and has appeared at the Boston Early Music Festival; in New York City at Music Before 1800, The Cloisters (Metropolitan Museum of Art), and the 92nd Street Y; at the Library of Congress, the National Gallery of Art, and Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, D.C.; at the Berkeley Early Music Festival; at Yale University; and in Chicago, Cleveland, Kansas City, Milwaukee, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Providence, St. Louis, San Luis Obispo, and Seattle. The ensemble has also performed in the UK at both Peterhouse and Trinity College in Cambridge and at Lambeth Palace Library, at the London residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Blue Heron has been in residence at the Center for Early Music Studies at Boston University and at Boston College, and has enjoyed collaborations with A Far Cry, Dark Horse Consort, Les Délices, Parthenia, Piffaro, and Ensemble

Plus Ultra. In 2015 the ensemble embarked on *Ockeghem@600*, a multi-season project to perform the complete works of Johannes Ockeghem (c. 1420-1497). The project will wind up around 2021, in time to commemorate the composer’s circa-600th birthday.

Blue Heron’s first CD, featuring music by Guillaume Du Fay, was released in 2007. In 2010 the ensemble inaugurated a 5-CD series of *Music from the Peterhouse Partbooks*, including many world premiere recordings of works copied c. 1540 for Canterbury Cathedral. The fifth CD in the series (2017) was awarded the prestigious 2018 Gramophone Classical Music Award for Early Music, the first ever won by a North American ensemble in the award’s 41-year-history. Blue Heron’s recordings also include a CD of plainchant and polyphony to accompany Thomas Forrest Kelly’s book *Capturing Music: The Story of Notation* and the live recording *Christmas in Medieval England*. Jessie Ann Owens (UC Davis) and Blue Heron won the 2015 Noah Greenberg Award from the American Musicological Society to support a world premiere recording of Cipriano de Rore’s *I madrigali a cinque voci* (1542), to be released in fall 2019. Recordings of the complete songs and motets of Johannes Ockeghem are also in the works.

[www.blueheron.org](http://www.blueheron.org)

## SCOTT METCALFE

Scott Metcalfe has gained wide recognition as one of North America's leading specialists in music from the fifteenth through seventeenth centuries and beyond. Musical and artistic director of Blue Heron, he has also been music director of New York City's Green Mountain Project (Jolle Greenleaf, artistic director) and a guest director of TENET (New York), the Handel & Haydn Society (Boston), Emmanuel Music (Boston), the Tudor Choir and Seattle Baroque, Pacific Baroque Orchestra (Vancouver, BC), Quire Cleveland, the Dryden Ensemble (Princeton, NJ), and Early Music America's Young Performers Festival Ensemble. Metcalfe also enjoys a career as a baroque violinist, playing with Les Délices (dir. Debra Nagy), Montreal Baroque (dir. Eric Milnes), and other ensembles. He taught vocal ensemble repertoire and performance practice at Boston University from 2006-2015 and has also been a member of the visiting faculty at Harvard University, Oberlin Conservatory, and Boston Conservatory. He is the author of two chapters in a forthcoming book about music at Peterhouse, has edited a motet by Francisco de Peñalosa and songs from the Leuven Chansonier, and is preparing a new edition of the songs of Gilles Binchois. He holds degrees from Brown University and Harvard University.



## NICK SANDON

Nick Sandon spent his early childhood in a Georgian rectory hidden away in the Kentish Downs, and has always wondered why that ideal existence had to end. Never having met another child, he found the society of his peers at the local primary school utterly alien. Secondary education in Canterbury was more congenial although the school was ill-equipped to foster the passion for music that gripped him in early adolescence: he taught himself to sight-read at the piano, composed music of outstanding ineptitude and derivativeness, and considered himself a consummate artist. All but one of the universities at which he contemplated studying music declined his proposal to join them, but with great perspicacity Birmingham University admitted him, gave him a scholarship and in 1970 awarded him a B.Mus. degree with first-class honours. During his time there the staff of the Music Department offered further proof of their acumen by persuading him that he had no future as a composer but might find a niche in academe. He embarked upon doctoral research into the music of Ockeghem, but this was cut short by his appointment in 1971 to a lectureship in music at Exeter University. Research became a lesser priority for a few years, and when it resumed in the mid-1970s it was on a new project that has engaged him ever since and that he now feels he was born

to undertake: the origins and implications of the Peterhouse Henrician partbooks and their music. His doctoral thesis was accepted in 1983 and in 1992 he began to publish his restorations of the incomplete Peterhouse compositions. In 1986 he became Professor of Music at University College, Cork, where for the first and so far only time in his life he heard English universally spoken with finesse. In 1993 he returned to Exeter as Professor of Music, to be appalled by what he found to have happened to English society and tertiary education during his Irish sojourn. He retired in 2003 and with his wife Virginia (for whose understanding and sharp editorial eyes he is ever grateful) spent the next thirteen years in *France profonde*, a tailor-made environment for the study of Tudor church music; they now live in East Devon. His secondary topic of research is the Use of Salisbury, the paramount liturgy of late medieval England. Other publications include *The Oxford Anthology of Medieval Music* and *John Sheppard: Masses*; broadcasts include the series of liturgical reconstructions *The Octave of the Nativity* and *Trinity Sunday at Worcester Cathedral* for BBC Radio Three. He is General Editor of the early music publisher Antico Edition. He enjoys cricket (now alas vicariously) and gardening, and has found the transition from Young Turk to Old Berk disquietingly easy.

**Ave Maria, dive matris Anne** filia unica.  
Ave Maria, que peperisti puerum virili sine semine.  
Ave Maria, Jesum tuum filium lactasti sacro ubere.  
Ave Maria, ipsum alluisti tua super genua.

Ave Maria, tres vidisti magos offerentes munera.  
Ave Maria, Egyptum fugiens petisti angeli per  
monita.  
Ave Maria, quesisti tuam sobolem magna cum  
mestitia.  
Ave Maria, in templo reperisti docentem evangelia.  
Conserva tuos famulos hec per tua merita,  
et perduc eos ad celos cum celesti gloria,  
psallentes et omnes hoc Ave Maria. Amen.

**Magnificat** anima mea dominum,  
et exultavit spiritus meus in deo salutari meo.  
Quia respexit humilitatem ancille sue:  
ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes  
generationes.  
Quia fecit michi magna qui potens est,  
et sanctum nomen ejus.  
Et misericordia ejus a progenie in progenies  
timentibus eum.  
Fecit potentiam in brachio suo:  
dispersit superbos mente cordis sui.  
Deposuit potentes de sede  
et exaltavit humiles.  
Esurientes implevit bonis,  
et divites dimisit inanes.  
Suscepit Israel puerum suum,  
recordatus misericordie sue.  
Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros,  
Abraham et semini ejus in secula.  
Gloria patri et filio et spiritui sancto.  
Sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper:  
et in secula seculorum. Amen.

Hail, Mary, only daughter of the blessed mother Anne.  
Hail, Mary, who brought forth a child without the  
seed of man.  
Hail, Mary: you nourished Jesus your son at your  
sacred breast.  
Hail, Mary: you washed him in your lap.  
Hail, Mary: you saw three wise men bringing gifts.  
Hail, Mary: fleeing, you set out for Egypt, through the  
angel's warning.  
Hail, Mary: you sought your child with great sorrow.  
Hail, Mary: you found him in the temple teaching  
the Gospels.  
Preserve your servants through these your merits,  
and lead them to the heavens with celestial glory,  
all singing this "Hail, Mary." Amen.

My soul magnifies the Lord,  
and my spirit has rejoiced in God my savior.  
For he has regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden:  
behold, henceforth all generations shall call me  
blessed.  
For he that is mighty has made me great,  
and holy is his name.  
And his mercy from generation to generation  
is on them that fear him.  
He has shown strength with his arm: he has scattered  
the proud in the imagination of their hearts.  
He has put down the mighty from their seat  
and exalted the humble.  
The hungry he has filled with good things,  
and the rich he has sent empty away.  
He has helped his servant Israel,  
in remembrance of his mercy.  
As it was promised to our forefathers,  
Abraham and his seed forever.  
Glory be to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and forever shall be,  
world without end. Amen.

### **Gaude virgo mater Christi**

que per aurem concepisti  
Gabriele nuncio.  
Gaude, quia Deo plena  
peperisti sine pena  
cum pudoris lilio.  
Gaude, quia tui nati  
quem dolebas mortem pati  
fulget resurrectio.  
Gaude Christo ascendente  
et in celo te vidente  
motu fertur proprio.  
Gaude, quod post ipsum scandis  
et est honor tibi grandis  
in celi palatio,  
Ubi fructus ventris tui  
per te detur nobis frui  
in perhenni gaudio.  
O Maria virgo mater redemptoris nostri:  
O Maria virgo nobilissima que jam regnas cum angelis,  
coronata in gloria: ibi nostri memor esto.  
O virgo sanctissima, funde preces tu pro nobis  
ut possimus illic tuo sociari collegio. Amen.

### **Quales sumus, O miseri,**

properantes ad portas inferi,  
quadruidani fetentes,  
ut te laudare presumamus,  
O Maria, cum sciamus  
non audiri delinquentes?  
Sed in arcto constituti,  
in labore lateris et luti,  
insudantes gemiscimus.  
Consolatricem miserorum  
et refectricem laborum,  
te deposcimus

ut oculos misericordes  
ad nos convertas et sordes  
peccatorum amoveas,  
scelerumque soluto vecte,

Rejoice, O virgin mother of Christ,  
who conceived through the ear  
by the message of Gabriel.  
Rejoice, for being filled with God  
you brought forth without travail,  
with the lily of chastity.  
Rejoice, for there shines forth  
the resurrection of your son,  
whom you saw suffer death.  
Rejoice, Christ having ascended,  
and your having seen him in heaven,  
moved, it is said, by his own will.  
Rejoice, for after this you ascended,  
and great honor is paid to you  
in the palace of heaven,  
Where the fruit of your womb  
through you is given to us to enjoy  
in everlasting felicity.  
O Mary, virgin mother of our savior,  
O Mary, most noble virgin who now reigns with the angels,  
crowned in glory: be mindful of us there.  
O most holy virgin, pour out your prayers for us,  
so that we may be able to join your company in that  
place. Amen.

What are we, O wretches,  
hurrying to the gates of hell,  
stinking within four days,  
that we dare to praise you,  
O Mary, since we know  
that offenders are not fit to be heard?

But, closely confined,  
toiling with bricks and clay,  
sweating, we groan.  
We beg you, the comforter  
of the wretched  
and refresher of labors,

That you will turn your merciful eyes  
towards us and remove  
the stains of sinners,  
and not despise the worms

Jesum sequentes recte  
vermiculos ne despicias.

Israel celum non respicit;  
nam terrena pulvis perficit;  
hinc desperans confunditur.  
Quare pro nobis deprecare  
ad hunc qui lapides mutare  
in Abraham filios dicitur

ut Israel oculos erigat  
ad celum et deum sitiatis  
sicut cervus aquarum fontes,  
ut, de Pharaonis imperio  
erepti tandem durissimo,  
mare transeamus insontes.

Et, licet hostes seviant,  
hos Maria non operiant,  
[*lacuna*] O domina,  
sed sevitiam removeant,  
ut ereptos hos deleant  
claustra tunc infernalium.

Et sic, virtutibus fecundi,  
ad celestia mente mundi  
properemus, O Maria,  
ut post finem vite, jocundi  
Christo juncti, letabundi  
una cantemus alleluia.

**Ave Maria, ancilla trinitatis** humillima.

Ave Maria, preelecta dei patris filia  
sublimissima.

Ave Maria, sponsa spiritus sancti amabilissima.

Ave Maria, mater domini nostri Jesu Christi dignissima.

Ave Maria, soror angelorum pulcherrima.

Ave Maria, promissa prophetarum desideratissima.

Ave Maria, regina patriarcharum gloriosissima.

Ave Maria, magistra evangelistarum veracissima.

Ave Maria, doctrix apostolorum sapientissima.

Ave Maria, confortatrix martyrum validissima.

Ave Maria, fons et plenitudo confessorum suavissima.

rightly following Jesus  
when the bolt of sins has been shot.

Israel does not look towards heaven,  
and (since dust is the fate of earthly things),  
it is thrown into despair.  
Intercede therefore for us  
with him who is said to turn stones  
into sons of Abraham,

So that Israel may raise her eyes  
to heaven and thirst for God  
"as the hart pants after the water-brooks,"  
and so that we, snatched at last  
from the most cruel tyranny of Pharaoh,  
may cross the sea without harm.

And, although enemies rage,  
let the seas not conceal them,  
[*lacuna*] O Lady,  
but wash away their fury,  
so that then the confines of hell  
may destroy these plunderers.

And thus, rich in virtue,  
may we hasten to heaven  
with a pure mind, O Mary,  
so that after life's end,  
happily united with Christ,  
as one we may sing "Alleluia."

Hail, Mary, most humble handmaid of the Trinity.

Hail, Mary, most exalted chosen daughter of God  
the Father.

Hail, Mary, most loving bride of the Holy Spirit.

Hail, Mary, most worthy mother of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Hail, Mary, most comely sister of the angels.

Hail, Mary, most longed-for promise of the prophets.

Hail, Mary, most glorious queen of the patriarchs.

Hail, Mary, most truthful lady of the evangelists.

Hail, Mary, most wise teacher of the apostles.

Hail, Mary, most potent comforter of martyrs.

Hail, Mary, sweetest fount and source of plenty for  
confessors.

Ave Maria, honor et festivitas virginum jocundissima.  
Ave Maria, consolatrix vivorum et mortuorum  
promptissima.

Mecum sis in omnibus tribulationibus et angustiis  
meis materna pietate, et in hora mortis mee suscipe  
animam meam et offer illam dulcissimo filio tuo  
Jesu, cum omnibus qui se nostris commendaverunt  
orationibus. Amen.

Hail, Mary, most joyful reward and object of celebra-  
tion for virgins.  
Hail, Mary, most ready consoler of living and dead.

Be with me in all my troubles and perils with your  
motherly affection, and in the hour of my death  
receive my soul and present it to your most sweet  
son Jesus, together with all who have commended  
themselves to our prayers. Amen.

## VOLUME 2

### SANCTAE MARGARETAE VIRGINIS ET MARTYRIS

*Introitus*

**Me expectaverunt peccatores** ut perderent  
me: testimonia tua, Domine, intellexi. Omnis  
consummationis vidi finem, latum mandatum  
tuum nimis.

*Ps.* Beati immaculati in via: qui ambulant in lege  
Domini.

Gloria patri et filio et spiritui sancto: sicut erat in prin-  
cipio et nunc et semper, et in secula seculorum.  
Amen.

**Kyrieleyson.** Christeleyson. Kyrieleyson.

**Gloria** in excelsis deo, et in terra pax hominibus bone  
voluntatis. Laudamus te. Benedicimus te. Adora-  
mus te. Glorificamus te. Gratias agimus tibi propter  
magnam gloriam tuam. Domine deus, rex celestis,  
deus pater omnipotens. Domine fili unigenite, Jesu  
Christe. Domine deus, agnus dei, filius patris. Qui tollis  
peccata mundi, miserere nobis. Qui tollis peccata  
mundi, suscipe deprecationem nostram. Qui sedes  
ad dexteram patris, miserere nobis. Quoniam tu solus  
sanctus, tu solus dominus, tu solus altissimus, Jesu  
Christe, cum sancto spiritu in gloria dei patris. Amen.

### ST MARGARET, VIRGIN AND MARTYR

*Introit*

The wicked have waited for me to destroy me: I will  
consider your testimonies, O Lord. I have seen an  
end of all perfection, but your commandment is  
exceeding broad.

*Ps.* Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in  
the law of the Lord.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the  
Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and  
ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to all  
of good will. We praise you. We bless you. We adore  
you. We glorify you. We give thanks to you for your  
great glory. Lord God, heavenly king, almighty God the  
Father. Lord Jesus Christ, only begotten Son. Lord God,  
lamb of God, Son of the Father. Who takes away the  
sins of the world, have mercy on us. Who takes away  
the sins of the world, receive our prayer. Who sits at  
the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you  
alone are holy, you alone are the Lord, the Most High,  
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in the glory of God the  
Father. Amen.

*Graduale*

**Specie tua** et pulchritudine tua: intende prospere et regna.

V. Propter veritatem et mansuetudinem et iusticiam: et deducet te mirabiliter dextera tua.

**Alleluia.** Veni electa mea et ponam te in thronam meum: quia concupivit rex speciem tuam.

**Credo** in unum deum, patrem omnipotentem, factorem celi et terre, visibilium omnium et invisibilium. Et in unum dominum Jesum Christum, filium dei unigenitum: et ex patre natum ante omnia secula. Deum de deo, lumen de lumine, deum verum de deo vero. Genitum non factum, consubstantialem patri: per quem omnia facta sunt. Et incarnatus est de spiritu sancto ex Maria virgine: et homo factus est. Crucifixus etiam pro nobis sub Pontio Pilato: passus et sepultus est. Et resurrexit tertia die secundum scripturas. Et ascendit in celum: sedet ad dexteram patris. Et iterum venturus est cum gloria iudicare vivos et mortuos: cujus regni non erit finis. Amen.

*Offertorium*

**Offerentur regi virgines:** proxime eius offerentur tibi in leticia et exultatione, adducentur in templum regi domino.

**Sanctus,** sanctus, sanctus, dominus deus sabaoth. Pleni sunt celi et terra gloria tua. Osanna in excelsis. Benedictus qui venit in nomine domini. Osanna in excelsis.

**Agnus dei,** qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.

Agnus dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.

Agnus dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem.

*Gradual*

In your comeliness and beauty, hearken, prosper and reign.

V. Because of truth and meekness and justice: and your right hand shall lead you wondrously.

Alleluia. Come, my chosen one, and I will place you on my throne: for the king has desired your beauty.

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God. Begotten, not made; of one being with the Father, through whom all things are made. He was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and was made man. He was crucified for our sake under Pontius Pilate, died, and was buried. On the third day he rose again, in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge both the living and the dead, and his kingdom shall have no end. Amen.

*Offertory*

The virgins shall be offered to the king: her companions shall be offered to you with gladness and rejoicing: they shall be led into the temple, to the Lord, the king.

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

*Communio*

**Feci iudicium et iustitiam,** Domine: non calumniatur michi superbi: ad omnia mandata tua dirigebar: omnem viam iniquitatis odio habui.

**Ite missa est.** Deo gratias.

**Salve regina,** mater misericordie, vita dulcedo et spes nostra, salve. Ad te clamamus exules filii Eve. Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes in hac lacrimarum valle. Eya ergo, advocata nostra, illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte, et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui, nobis post hoc exilium ostende.

Virgo mater ecclesie,  
Eterna porta glorie,  
Esto nobis refugium  
Apud patrem et filium.

O clemens.

Virgo clemens, virgo pia,  
Virgo dulcis, O Maria,  
Exaudi preces omnium  
Ad te pie clamantium.

O pia.

Funde preces tuo nato  
Crucifixo, vulnerato,  
Et pro nobis flagellato,  
Spinis puncto, felle potato.

O dulcis Maria, salve.

*Communion*

I have wrought judgement and justice, O Lord: let me not be oppressed by the haughty. I have been guided by all your commandments: and I have hated every false way.

Go, it is finished. Thanks be to God.

Hayle, quene, mother of mercy, our lyfe, our swetenes, our hope, all hayle. Unto thee do we crye, whyche are the banyshed chylidren of Eva. Unto thee do we syghe, wepyng & waylyng in this vale of lamentacyon. Come of therefore, our patronesse. Caste upon us those pytefull iyes of thyne. And after this our banyshe ment, shewe unto us the blessed fruite of thy wombe Jesu.

Virgin mother of the congregacion  
Gate of glory that never is donn  
Be for us a reconciliacion  
Unto the father and the sonne.

O mercyfull.

Virgin mercifull, virgin holy  
O swete virgin, o blessed Mary  
Hear theyr prayers graciously  
Whiche crye and call unto thee.

O holy.

Praye for us unto thy sonne,  
Wounded and crucified for us all  
And sore turmented with flagellation  
Crowned with thorne, & fedde with gall.

O swete Mary, [hayle].

*This Prymer in Englyshe and in Laten*  
(Robert Redman: London, 1537)



**Ave Maria.****AVE fuit prima salus**

Qua vincitur hostis malus;  
Remordet culpa noxia;  
Juva nos. Ave Maria.

MARIA dum salutaris  
Ab angelo sic vocaris  
Nomen tuum demonia  
Repellit. Ave Maria.

GRACIA sancti spiritus  
Fecundavit te penitus;  
Graciarum nunc premia  
Da nobis. Ave Maria.

PLENA tu es virtutibus  
Pro cunctis celi civibus;  
Virtutes et auxilia  
Presta nunc. Ave Maria.

DOMINUS ab inicio  
Destinavit te filio;  
Tu es mater et filia  
Prefelix. Ave Maria.

TECUM letantur angeli  
Et exultant archangeli,  
Celi celorum curia,  
O dulcis. Ave Maria.

BENEDICTA semper iris  
In terris et in superis;  
Tibi nullus in gloria  
Compar est. Ave Maria.

TU cum deo coronaris  
Et veniam servis paris;  
Fac nobis detur venia  
Precibus. Ave Maria.

IN gentes movent prelia,  
Mundus, caro et demonia;  
Sed defende nos, O pia,  
O clemens. Ave Maria.

Hail, Mary.

HAIL was the first greeting  
through which the wicked enemy was overcome;  
loathsome sin gnaws away [at us];  
help us. Hail, Mary.

MARY: such art thou called  
while thou art greeted by the angel;  
thy name puts demons  
to flight. Hail, Mary.

GRACE of the Holy Spirit  
made thee fruitful deep within;  
give us now the gifts  
of graces. Hail, Mary.

FULL art thou with virtues  
more than all the citizens of heaven;  
now bring virtue and support  
[to us]. Hail, Mary.

THE LORD destined thee  
for a son from the beginning;  
thou art a most fortunate mother  
and daughter. Hail, Mary.

WITH THEE angels rejoice  
and archangels exult;  
the courtiers of the heaven of heavens,  
O sweet one. Hail, Mary.

BLESSED wilt thou ever be  
on earth and on high;  
none is like to thee  
in glory. Hail, Mary.

THOU ART crowned together with God  
and thou dost acquire pardon for [thy] servants;  
to obtain by thy prayers that pardon be granted  
to us. Hail, Mary.

AMONG mankind prowl conflict,  
worldly distraction, fleshly desires and demons;  
defend us, however, O dutiful one,  
O merciful one. Hail, Mary.

MULIERIBUS omnibus  
Repleris summis opibus;  
Reple nos tua gracia.  
Ave Maria. Ave Maria.

ET post partum velut prius  
Virgo manens et filius  
Descendit sicut pluvia  
In vellus. Ave Maria.

BENEDICTUS sit filius  
Adjutor et propicius;  
Adjutrix et propicia  
Sis nobis. Ave Maria.

FRUCTUS tuus tam amavit  
Quod in te nos desponsavit  
Ut parentum obprobria  
Deleret. Ave Maria.

VENTRIS claustrum bajulavit  
Jesum qui nos sorde lavit;  
Hunc exores voce pia  
Pro nobis. Ave Maria.

TUI viroris speculum  
Clarifica hoc seculum;  
Viciorum flagicia  
Purga nos. Ave Maria.

JESUS salvator filius  
Perducat nos superius  
Ubi regnas in gloria  
Meritibus. Ave Maria.

AMEN est finis salutis;  
Vocem aperiens mutis  
Celi portas et gaudia  
Aperi nobis. Ave Maria.

Ascribed to Jacopone da Todi (c. 1230-1306).

WOMEN all thou dost surpass  
in being filled with supreme influence;  
fill us with thy grace.  
Hail, Mary. Hail, Mary.

AND thou remaining a virgin  
after the birth just as before, and the son  
came down like dew  
upon a fleece. Hail, Mary.

BLESSED BE thy son,  
a propitious helper;  
be thou a propitious helper  
to us. Hail, Mary.

THE FRUIT of thee loved so greatly  
that in thee he espoused us  
so that he might wipe away the fault  
of our forefathers. Hail, Mary.

The cloister OF THE WOMB bare  
Jesus who cleansed us of uncleanness;  
may thou prevail upon him with a devout voice  
on our behalf. Hail, Mary.

May the mirror of the fertility OF THEE  
reflect light upon the world;  
cleanse us of the disgrace  
of sins. Hail, Mary.

JESUS the son, the savior:  
may he lead us through on high  
where thou reignest in glory  
through thy merits. Hail, Mary.

AMEN is the end of the greeting;  
opening thy mouth for those who have no voice,  
open the gates and joys of heaven  
to us. Hail, Mary.

"The rather convoluted English of the translation attempts to reproduce an essential feature of the Latin by placing the words of the angelic salutation (printed in capitals) at or near the beginning of each stanza." (Nick Sandon, *Antico Edition RCM108*, pp. viii-ix)

*(Kyrie VII) Cunctipotens genitor*

**Cunctipotens genitor** Deus omni creator eleyson.  
Fons et origo boni pie luxque perhennis eleyson.  
Salvificet pietas tua nos bone rector eleyson.

Christe Dei splendor virtus patrisque sophia eleyson.  
Plasmatis humani factor, lapsi reperator eleyson.  
Ne tua damnetur, Jesu, factura benigne eleyson.

Amborum sacrum spiramen, nexus amorque eleyson.  
Procedens fomes vite fons purificans vis eleyson.  
Purgator culpe, venie largitor optime, offensas dele,  
sacro nos munere reple, spiritus alme eleyson.

**Gloria** [see above]

**Credo** [see above]

**Sanctus** [see above]

**Agnus dei** [see above]

## VOLUME 4

**Ave cujus conceptio,**  
Solemni plena gaudio,  
Celestia terrestria  
Nova replet letitia.

Ave cujus nativitas  
Nostra fuit solemnitas,  
Ut lucifer lux oriens  
Ipsium solem preveniens.

Ave pia humilitas,  
Sine viro fecunditas,  
Cujus annuntiatio  
Nostra fuit redemptio.

God, almighty father, creator of all, have mercy.  
Fount and kindly source of good, eternal light, have mercy.  
Benevolent ruler, may thy goodness save us, have mercy.

O Christ, splendor of God, strength and wisdom of  
the Father, have mercy. O thou that takest human  
form, restorer of the fallen, have mercy. Lest thy  
works perish, O Jesus, generously have mercy.

O spirit, sacred vessel of both [father and son] and  
bond of love, have mercy. O kindling fire, fount of life  
and purifying force, have mercy. O cleanser of guilt,  
best bestower of pardon, wipe out our offenses, fill us  
with thy sacred gift, O nourishing spirit, have mercy.

Hail, thou whose Conception,  
filled with devout joy,  
makes heaven and earth  
replete with a new gladness.

Hail, thou whose Nativity  
was our celebration,  
like the morning star, a dawning light  
preceding the sun itself.

Hail, thou humble obedience,  
fertility without man's intervention,  
whose Annunciation  
was our redemption.

Ave vera virginitas,  
Immaculata castitas,  
Cujus purificatio  
Nostra fuit purgatio.

Ave plena in omnibus  
Angelicis virtutibus,  
Cujus fuit assumptio  
Nostra glorificatio.

*(Kyrie I) Deus creator omnium*

**Deus creator omnium** tu theos ymon nostri pie  
eleyson.

Tibi laudes conjubilantes regum rex Christe oramus  
te eleyson.

Laus virtus pax et imperium cui est semper sine fine  
eleyson.

Christe rex unice patris almi nate coeterne eleyson.  
Qui perditum hominem salvasti de morte reddens  
vite eleyson.

Ne pereant pascue oves tue Jesu pastor bone  
eleyson.

Consolator spiritus supplices ymas te exoramus  
eleyson.

Virtus nostra domine atque salus nostra in eternum  
eleyson.

Summe Deus et une vite dona nobis tribue misertus  
nostrique tu digneris eleyson.

**Gloria** [see above]

**Credo** [see above]

**Sanctus** [see above]

**Agnus dei** [see above]

Hail, thou true virginity,  
spotless chastity,  
whose Purification  
was our purgation.

Hail, thou filled with all  
angelic virtues,  
whose Assumption  
was our glorification.

O God, creator of all things, thou our merciful God,  
have mercy.

Singing your praises, O Christ, king of kings, we pray  
to thee, have mercy.

Praise, power, peace, and dominion to him who is  
forever without end: have mercy.

O Christ, sole king, born coeternal with the forgiving  
father, have mercy.

Thou who saved lost humanity, giving life for death,  
have mercy.

Lest your pastured sheep should perish, O Jesus,  
good shepherd, have mercy.

Consoler of suppliant spirits below, we beseech  
thee, have mercy.

Our strength, O Lord, and our salvation in eternity,  
have mercy.

Highest and only God, grant us life, the gift of com-  
passion to those whom you favor: have mercy.

**Stabat mater dolorosa**

Juxta crucem lacrimosa,  
Dum pendebat filius,  
Cuius animam gementem,  
Contristantem et dolentem  
Pertransiuit gladius.

O quam tristis et afflicta  
Fuit illa benedicta  
Mater unigeniti,  
Que merebat et dolebat  
Dum videbat et gerebat  
Penas nati incliti.

Quis est homo qui non fletet  
Matrem Christi si videret  
In tanto supplicio?  
Quis non potest contristari  
Matrem Christi contemplari  
Dolentem cum filio?

Eya mater, fons amoris  
Me sentire vim doloris  
Fac, ut tecum lugeam.  
Fac ut ardeat cor meum  
In amando Christum deum  
Ut illi complaceam.

Stabat mater rubens rosa  
Juxta crucem lachrimosa  
Videns ferre criminosa  
Nullo reum crimine.  
Et dum stetit generosa  
Juxta natum dolorosa  
Plebs tunc clamat clamorosa,  
"Crucifige, crucifige!"

O quam gravis illa pena  
Tibi virgo pene plena,  
Commemorans preamena  
Jam versa in mesticiam.  
Color rose non est inventus

The grieving mother  
stood beside the doleful cross  
while her son hung there,  
and the sword went through  
her weeping soul,  
sorrowing and lamenting.

Oh, how sad and afflicted  
was that blessed mother  
of the only-begotten,  
who sorrowed and lamented  
while she saw and experienced  
the sufferings of her illustrious son.

Who is the man who would not weep  
if he saw the mother of Christ  
in such great anguish?  
Who would not be moved to compassion  
if he beheld the mother of Christ  
grieving with her son?

Ah, mother, fount of love,  
make me feel the force of grief  
so that I may mourn with thee.  
Make my heart take fire  
in loving Christ the God  
that I may be pleasing to him.

The mother stood, blushing red,  
beside the dolorous cross,  
watching him borne in ignominy  
who was guilty of no crime.  
And while the noble woman stood there  
beside her suffering son,  
the people cried out clamorously,  
"Crucify, crucify!"

Oh, how intense was that grief  
to thee, maiden full of sorrows,  
remembering great happiness  
now turned into sorrow.  
No natural complexion was found

In te mater dum detentus  
Stabat natus sic contentus  
Ad debellandum Sathanam.

Per hec nata preamata  
Natum tuum qui peccata  
Dele cuncta perpetrata  
Deprecare dulciflue,  
Ut nostra tergens ingrata  
In nobis plantet firme grata,  
Per quem dando prelibata  
Prestet eterna requie.

Amen.

**Exultet in hac die fidelium ecclesia**

In qua angelis est leticia.  
Alleluia consonet plebs anglica.

Augustinus en transiuit  
Et cum Christo semper vivit.  
Alleluia consonet plebs anglica.

Jam beatus semper euge  
Super pauca fidelissime.  
Alleluia consonet plebs anglica.

Ave nostrum ave dulce desiderium:  
Pro servis tuis ora dominum.  
Alleluia.

**Ave Maria, mater dei**, regina celi, domina mundi,  
imperatrix inferni. Miserere nostri et totius populi  
christiani, et ne permittas nos mortaliter peccare, sed  
tuam sanctissimam voluntatem adimplere. Amen.

in thee, mother, while fixed there  
thy son stood, thus intent  
on doing battle with Satan.

For this reason, most beloved daughter,  
in sweet-flowing words beseech  
thy son, that he will cancel all sins  
that have been committed,  
so that, wiping away our unworthiness,  
he may plant worthiness firmly within us,  
and by giving us this aforesaid gift  
may bestow everlasting repose.

Amen.

**VOLUME 5**

Let the church of the faithful rejoice on this day  
on which the angels are joyful.  
Let the English people together sing Alleluia.

Behold, Augustine has made the crossing  
and lives with Christ for ever.  
Let the English people together sing Alleluia.

Now the blessed one hears, "Well done,  
Thou most faithful over small things."  
Let the English people together sing Alleluia.

Hail, O thou our sweet desire:  
pray God on behalf of thy servants.  
Alleluia.

Hail Mary, mother of God, queen of heaven, lady  
of the world, empress of hell. Have mercy on us  
and the whole Christian people, and do not let us  
commit mortal sin, but let us fulfill thy most holy  
will. Amen.

**Ve nobis miseris**, quia cum ad peccata commissa inspicimus et supplicia intelligimus que pro his pati debemus, non parvum timorem habemus.

Quid ergo? Remanebimus quasi desperati? sine consilio? sine adiutorio?

Non! Sed ad te, fontem pietatis et misericordie, Jesu Christe, currimus et festinamus, in quo jam tot et tantos peccatores absolutos vidimus et agnoscimus.

Obsecramus te igitur, domine deus noster, da nobis gratiam tuam, ut a vitiis et a morte anime resurgentes in virtutibus semper floreamus et in soliditate fidei ambulemus, ut que sursum sunt queramus et sapiamus, non que super terram.

Tibi gratias agimus, bone Jesu, pro inceptis in nobis gratie tue donis, que deprecamur ut misericorditer perficias nosque in viam salutis dirigas.

Per tue claritatis virtutem purga animas nostras a tenebris peccatorum, et per eandem virtutem in die universalis resurrectionis caro nostra resurgat ad gloriam, ut in futura resurrectione delicatam tuam invocationem gaudenter cum electis tuis audiamus te dicente, "Venite benedicti patris mei, percipite regnum quod vobis paratum est ab origine mundi." Amen.

Woe to us wretches, for when we consider the sins that we have committed and understand the torments that we are doomed to suffer for them, we have no small fear.

What then? Shall we remain as if without hope? without counsel? without help?

No! On the contrary, we run and hasten to thee, O Jesus Christ, fount of love and mercy in which we have already seen and recognized so many and great sinners absolved.

We therefore pray thee, O Lord our God, grant us thy grace, so that rising from sins and death of the soul we may always abound in virtues and walk in firmness of faith, so that we may seek and be aware of the things that are above, not those on earth.

We give thee thanks, O good Jesus, for the gifts of thy grace begun in us, which we beg that thou wilt mercifully complete and guide us in the way of salvation.

Through the strength of thy brightness make our souls clean of the darkness of sins, and through the same strength let our flesh arise to glory on the day of the universal resurrection, so that in the resurrection to come we with thy chosen people may joyfully hear thy delectable invitation as thou sayest, "Come, ye blessed of my father, take possession of the kingdom that was prepared for you from the beginning of the world." Amen.

*(Kyrie IX) Orbis factor*

**Orbis factor** rex eterne eleyson.  
Pietatis fons immense eleyson.  
Noxas omnes nostras pelle eleyson.

Christe qui lux es mundi dator vite eleyson.  
Arte lesos demonis intuere eleyson.  
Conservans te credentes confirmansque eleyson.

Patrem tuum teque flamen utrorumque eleyson.  
Deum scimus unum atque trinum esse eleyson.  
Clemens nobis assis Paraclite ut vivamus in te eleyson.

**Gloria** [see above]

**Credo** [see above]

**Sanctus** [see above]

**Agnus dei** [see above]

World-creator, eternal King, have mercy.  
Immeasurable fountain of kindness, have mercy.  
Take away all our faults, have mercy.

Christ, who art light of the world, life-giver, have mercy.  
Behold the wounds caused by demonic arts, have mercy.  
Preserving and strengthening thy believers, have mercy.

O Spirit of both thee and thy Father, have mercy.  
We know God to be one and three, have mercy.  
O merciful Holy Spirit, be with us, that we may live in thee, have mercy.

The Latin texts follow the spelling of the performing editions, which is mainly the late medieval spelling of the Peterhouse Henrician partbooks; this chiefly means that the diphthongs *ae* and *oe* are replaced by *e*.

Translations © Nick Sandon 2018, except translations of Vol. 2 and *Ave cujus conceptio* and *Stabat mater* (Vol. 4) © Scott Metcalfe 2018.

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### **Blue Heron's Peterhouse Partners**

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## ABOUT THE COVERS

Each of our covers alludes to the music recorded within. The five-armed sea star on the cover of the boxed set refers to the five CDs in the set and to the Blessed Virgin Mary, *Stella maris*, to whom most of the antiphons in the Peterhouse partbooks are addressed. Vol. 1 of the series features a seascape, similarly honoring Mary, Star of the Sea: the disc contains four Marian antiphons and a setting of the Marian canticle *Magnificat*. The claw on the cover of Vol. 2 suggests the monstrous talons of the dragon that swallowed St Margaret, for whose feast Ludford may have composed the *Missa Regnum mundi*. The fleece on the cover of Vol. 3 recalls the eleventh stanza of *Ave fuit prima salus*, citing Psalm 71 (Vulgate), which borrowed the image from the story of Gideon's

fleece in Judges 6. The trillium of Vol. 4 evokes the Trinity, for whose feast the *Missa Spes nostra* appears to have been composed. And the cover of Vol. 5 features three Red-billed choughs, also known as Cornish choughs or simply choughs: *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*, a bird in the crow family. The Red-billed chough is linked to Saint Thomas Becket, whose coat of arms has borne three choughs on a silver field since at least the fourteenth century, and the three choughs also appear in the arms of places associated with him, notably the city of Canterbury, for whose cathedral—in which Becket was murdered on December 29th, 1170—the Peterhouse partbooks were copied in 1540.



Canterbury's Coat of Arms

*"Argent Three Cornish Choughs Two and one Sable Beaked and Legged Gules on a Chief of the Last a Leopard Passant Gardant Or"*

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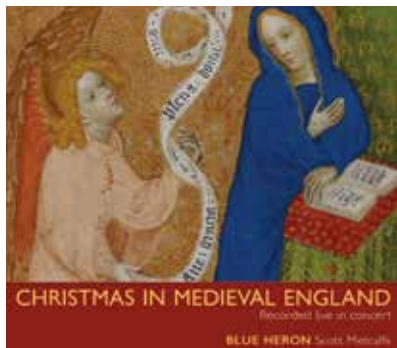
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Members of Blue Heron outside Peterhouse chapel on October 6, 2017.  
L to R: Owen McIntosh, Martin Near, Mark Sprinkle, Scott Metcalfe,  
Teresa Wakim, Paul Guttery, Margot Rood, Jason McStoats, David McFerrin,  
Pamela Dellal, Michael Barrett, Steven Hrycelak. (Photo by John Yannis)