



## ANNUAL BYRD NEWSLETTER

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Editor: Richard Turbet,  
Special Libraries and Archives,  
University of Aberdeen,  
King's College,  
Aberdeen, Scotland,  
AB24 3SW  
Tel +44 (0)1224 274266  
email: libo69t@abdn.ac.uk

### EDITORIAL

Philip Brett died on October 16 2002, the day before his 65<sup>th</sup> birthday. The greatest tragedy is that he lost his life prematurely. An incomparably lesser tragedy, but still a relatively profound one, is his loss to Byrd scholarship. Oliver Neighbour assesses this in the *Newsletter*. It would be presumptuous of me to claim more than the barest acquaintance with Philip. I met him once, about a dozen years ago, at a pub in Norwich. The meeting cannot have gone as well as I had imagined! In subsequent correspondence – sporadic and usually instigated by me – I thought him condescending and suspicious, and I responded with flippancy. Fortunately, since we were both supposed to be batting for the same team, our sporadic exchanges mellowed into something I would dare to describe as warmth. At no time did I waiver from my admiration for his formidable Byrd scholarship, yet one of my treasured recordings is of Philip conducting a performance of Feldman's *Rothko Chapel*. This illustrates the breadth of the man, and the profundity of our loss.

We also mourn the passing of Ted Perry, founder of Hyperion Records, whom we thank for his discs of Byrd's *Marian Gradualia* by the William Byrd Choir under Gavin Turner, and the complete keyboard music played by Davitt Moroney. Both have achieved lavish, sustained and deserved critical acclaim.

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### NEW WRITING

337. Becker, Oscar. *Die englischen Madrigalisten William Byrd, Thomas Morley und John Dowland*. Leipzig: Seidel, 1901. (1901Be)

338. Nitz, Genoveva. *Die Klanglichkeit in der englischen Virginalmusik des 16. Jahrhunderts*. Tutzing: Schneider, 1979. (Münchener Veröffentlichungen zur Musikgeschichte, 27.) Devotes four of ten chapters (III-VI) to Byrd, discussing fantasias, grounds and descriptive music, and comparing him with younger virginalists such as Bull and Gibbons.

339. Neilson, Francis. "William Byrd (1542-1623): 'father of musicke'" *American journal of economics and sociology* 2 (1943): 274-7. Repr. In Neilson, Francis, *The roots of our learning: eleven essays*, New York: Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, 1946, pp.197-204, with slight alterations. (1943Na)

340. Teo, Kenneth S. "Chromaticism in Thomas Weelkes's 1600 collection: possible models".

*Musicology Australia* 13 (1990): 2-14. Note 15, on p.13, supports the attribution of *Vide Domine quoniam* to Byrd.

341. Ackroyd, Peter. *English Music*. London: Hamilton, 1992. Chapter ten of Peter Ackroyd's novel focuses upon Byrd, and during 1996 two excerpts were published in *Early music news*, in nos. 208 pp.14-15 and 212 pp.10-11.

342. Woudhuysen, H.R. "Musical admirers" in *Sir Philip Sidney and the circulation of manuscripts, 1558-1640*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1996, pp.249-57.

Seeks to discover from whom Byrd received manuscript copies of Sidney's poems before their publication.

343. Ashbee, Andrew and Harley, John. *The cheque books of the Chapel Royal, with additional material from the manuscripts of William Lovegrove and Marmaduke Alford*. 2v. Aldershot: Ashgate 2000.

Contains all references to Byrd. These are in the "Old Cheque book" (see index to volume one, p.363). Sets Byrd in the context of the Chapel Royal's activities during the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I.

344. Kilroy, Gerard. "Paper, inke and penne: the literary memoria of the recusant community."

*Downside review* 119 (2001): 95-124.

Useful background, especially to *Why do I use*.

345. Smith, Jeremy. "Print culture and the Elizabethan composer". *Fontes artis musicae* 48 (2001): 156-70.

Pays particular attention to Byrd in this discussion about the new relationship between composers and consumers (and their intermediaries, patrons and printers) during the early development of music printing.

346. Turbet, Richard. "H. B. Collins's editions of Byrd: a supplementary note". *Annual Byrd newsletter* 7 (2001): 6. Further information about the lithographer. (2001Th)

347. Bossy, John. "William Byrd investigated, 1583-84". *Annual Byrd newsletter* 8 (2002): 5-7.

Reveals how seriously Byrd was under suspicion as a collaborator in the treasonable conspiracy known as the Throckmorton Plot. Includes first published transcription of letter to Charles Paget from W:B, thought to be Byrd and probably part of the original dossier against him. (2002Bw)

348. Bowers, Roger. "The Prayer Book and the musicians, 1549-1662". *Cathedral music* (April 2002): 36-44.

Sweeping account of the effect of the *Book of Common Prayer*, especially its rubrics, on music in English cathedrals, with cogent reference to the theological and political thinking behind successive editions and contemporary developments, with several references to Byrd.

349. Harley, John. "Byrd's 'Catholic' anthems".

*Annual Byrd newsletter* 8 (2002): 8-9.

Suggests that some of the texts Byrd selected for his anthems and sacred songs were, like those of some of his motets, covert messages of support to the beleaguered Roman Catholic community in England. (2002Hb)

350. Harley, John. "Byrd's friends the Ropers".

*Annual Byrd newsletter* 8 (2002): 9-10.

Further investigations into Byrd's social connections. (2002Hby)

351. McCarthy, Kerry. "Music for all seasons: the Byrd *Gradualia* revisited". *Sacred music* 129 (2002): 5-12.

Describes the background and structure of the cycle, with some reflections on a series of performances of the twelve principal sets of propers. (2002Mm)

352. Mellers, Wilfrid. "Byrd as Roman-Anglican, Elizabethan-Jacobean, double man: his Mass in five voices (1588) and his psalm-sonet, 'Lullaby, my swete litel baby' (first version for solo voice and viols [1588], second version for a capella voices [1607])", in *Celestial music: some masterpieces of European religious music*, Woodbridge: Boydell, 2002, pp.42-9.

Provocative ideas amidst outdated scholarship.

353. Skinner, David. "A new Elizabethan Keyboard source in the archives of Arundel Castle". *Brio* 39 (2002): 18-23.

Contains fragments of pieces by Ferrabosco (pavan set by William Inghott), Byrd (unique keyboard arrangement of *Ne iriscaris*) and Anon (two dances). (2002Sn)

354. Turbet, Richard. "Ordinary Byrd: masses and preces". *Annual Byrd newsletter* 8 (2002): 4-5.

Poses question as to how Byrd's compositions were performed liturgically during his lifetime. (2002To)

355. Turbet, Richard. "Stopped by the outbreak of war: the Byrd Festival of 1914". *Brio* 39 (2002): 24-25.

Provides all surviving references and documentation.

Corrects footnote 3 in 319. (2002Ts)

356. Turbet, Richard. "Two early printed attributions to Byrd in the Wighton Collection, Dundee".

*Annual Byrd newsletter* 8 (2002) 10-13.

Notes two further appearances of *Non nobis* attributed to Byrd, reproducing one of them, an arrangement by James Oswald, in facsimile. An appendix to the article consists of an edition by Clifford Bartlett [and Brian Clark] of an anthem by James Kempson, c.1780, which begins with a "Canon by W. Bird", *Non nobis* to an English text. (2002Tt)

357. Smith, Jeremy L. *Thomas East and music publishing in Renaissance England*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. Contains a great many references to Byrd.

358. Turbet, Richard. "The unique first edition of Byrd's *Gradualia* in York Minster Library", in *Music librarianship in the United Kingdom: Fifty Years of the United Kingdom Branch of the International Association of Music Libraries*, edited by Richard Turbet. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003, pp.137-40. (2003Tu)

359. Brett, Philip and Smith, Jeremy. 'Computer collation of divergent early prints in The Byrd Edition'.

*Computing in musicology* 12 (2001): 251-60.

360. Kemp, Lindsay. Byrd "the beautiful".

*Gramophone* 75 (September 1997): 22.

Interview with harpsichordist Skip Sempé who explains his passion for Byrd's music and seeks to justify presenting it in unconventional guises.

## REVIEW

*Playing Elizabeth's Tune*, BBC4, 7.30 pm Saturday 8 February, repeated 12.50 am Sunday 9 February 2003.

Green Bay Media's "story of a stubborn genius living a life on the religious edge" was really rather good. The programme sought to explain, in ninety minutes, how Byrd, a "devout Roman Catholic" (for once the knee-jerk epithet is justified) "found favour with the Protestant Elizabeth I". To this end there was a cogent script (I confess an interest here, having been consulted the previous autumn) spoken by Charles Hazlewood, supported by contributions from David Skinner and Dr Christopher Haigh, a Student (i.e. Fellow) of Christ Church, Oxford, who specializes in Tudor religious history. What was said by all was up-to-date and entirely accurate. As a musician, Charles Hazlewood exuded enthusiasm, and the more measured utterances of the two no less committed scholars were a good foil.

Central to the programme was Byrd's music itself, and here the performers were the Tallis Scholars, recorded in Tewkesbury Abbey at the peak of their form. It may not have been authentic, but who is to say that recusant singers never sneaked into a reverberant church and gave forth with a motet? My only reservation is that singing the Magnificat from the *Great Service* with females definitely was inauthentic, and it needed a larger body of singers to do Byrd's scoring full justice. The choice of music deserves nothing short of acclaim. Tantalizing snatches of William's consort and keyboard music were used as continuity, but the pieces selected for the Tallis Scholars to sing were an ideal mixture of the hackneyed and the obscure. My heart sank when they began with a (quite sublime) rendering of *Ave verum corpus*, but thereafter we were treated to *O Lord make Thy servant Elizabeth* (minus Amen), the opening of the *Great Magnificat* (whereupon I am sure I heard a consort of viols play the beginning of *Adoramus te Christe*), *Vigilate*, the opening of *Ne*

*irascaris* and all of *Civitas sancti tui*, back to the Great Magnificat scattering the proud, the first two sections of *Tristitia et anxietas*, then *Diffusa est gratia*, his Latin *Nunc dimittis* and the four-part mass. At the time I was disappointed at the omissions, but in retrospect I understand the need for continuity. Nevertheless it would be exciting to hear the Tallis Scholars perform the climactic final section of *Tristitia*. Their conductor, Peter Philips, seems to have a new-found enthusiasm for Byrd, and during an engaging interview with Charles Hazlewood he gave a fascinating insight into his feelings about *Tristitia* and how to conduct it.

I do hope a proportion of viewers came to Byrd anew. Drs Skinner and Haigh were scholarly and informative without ever talking down to their audience, and any programme whose script refers to Byrd as arguably the greatest composer to have come out of England, is unarguably a very fine programme indeed! RT

#### FORTHCOMING RESEARCH

The American office of Routledge has invited Richard Turbet to compile a revised edition of his *William Byrd: a guide to research*, originally published by Garland in 1987.

The final two volumes of *The Byrd edition* have now been edited. Jeremy L. Smith was responsible for volume 12, consisting of the 1588 collection, and David Mateer for volume 13, the 1589 *Songs*. It is hoped publication will take place over the next two years.

Kerry McCarthy (*vide supra*) is hoping to turn her recent thesis on Byrd and the Roman Catholic liturgy into a book.

Ashgate Publishing now has two monographs on Byrd in preparation. Beside the long-awaited book on his six-part fantasias by Richard Rastall, there is now a study of his modal practice by John Harley.

David Trendell is preparing an article on Byrd's musical recusancy. His recording as conductor of the Choir of King's College, London, on Proudsound PROU CD149 which includes Byrd's *Laetentur coeli* and, finest of all, *Tristitia et anxietas*, has justly received general critical commendation, and was nominated for a *Gramophone* award.

In the final letter I received from Philip Brett, March 8 2002, he stated "I am hoping to turn the extensive prefaces of the *Gradualia* into a small monograph". Joseph Kerman is bringing this project to fruition.

#### SIGNIFICANT NEW RECORDINGS

The contents of an old Vista LP which include three motets sung by Lincoln Cathedral Choir have been reissued as part of the CD entitled *City on a hill*, Cantoris CRC6059. *Senex puerum* a4 and particularly *Sacerdotes domini* are familiar on disc, but *Veni Sancte Spiritus replere* remains the unique recording.

Also reissued on CD is *English polyphonic church music* by Magdalen College Oxford Choir under the late Bernard Rose, now on OxRecs OXCD-5287, a classic recording which contains the elusive *Hodie beata Virgo Maria*.

Nonsuch High School for Girls (Cheam, Surrey, England SM3 8AB) has produced a CD entitled *There is sweet music here* (NON1998) on which the Recorder Ensemble plays the first two fantasias a3 by Byrd. The disc is distributed free of charge.

On Acanthus 94010 David Leigh plays a selection of pieces by Byrd and Tomkins on a Ruckers harpsichord of 1623. The complete works of both composers have been recorded, but this disc, entitled *Farewell delight: Fortune my foe*, volume one in the series "Harpsichords historic, rare and unique" contains a varied selection from the works of each composer.

On *John come kiss me now*, Teldec 0927 42205-2 (Das alte Werk) Andreas Staier plays a varied programme of Byrd's harpsichord music.

On a disc entitled *The Gentlemen of the Chapel Royal*, the Dutch male ensemble The Gents sing just *Ave verum corpus* by Byrd. However, the disc also does more than most to "place" him historically by including lesser-known music of composers to whom he was particularly close: the oldest Ferrabosco (his *Lamentations*), and hitherto unrecorded sacred works by Weelkes, Tomkins and Parsons. It is number CCS 18998 on the Channel Classics label.

On *Vox virginalis* (ATMA Classique ACD2 2197) the Canadian harpsichordist Rachelle Taylor (mentioned in *Miscellany* concerning events in Montreal) includes *Hugh Ashton's ground* and *Fortune* in an anthology from Byrd and his contemporaries which also contains *Bonny sweet Robin*, correctly attributed to Farnaby.

Ars Nova now have their own eponymously named label, and on VANCD-01, conducted by Paul Hillier, they sing *William Byrd: Motets*, which actually contains three church anthems and a secular song, in addition to a range of motets.

#### MISCELLANY

Last year's William Byrd Memorial Concert took "The English in Exile" as its theme. At the annual recital in the Church of SS Peter and Paul, Stondon Massey, given on July 2, the Stondon Singers focused on Dering and William's pupil Philips, and included three items by Byrd: *Ave verum corpus*, *Quomodo cantabimus* and *Ne irascaris*.

On May 11 2002 the recorder consort Cantores ad Portam, directed by David J Smith, performed "Two Plainsong Settings" by Byrd at the Auld Kirk, Forgue, Aberdeenshire. These followed up their performance of reconstructed works featured on the first page of last year's *Newsletter*. They played *Salvator mundi* a4 and verses 4-7 of *Te lucis I*.



During March this year *Ave verum corpus* was in the Classic FM top ten.

During its concert on April 17 1792 the Academy of Ancient Music performed "Canon. Non nobis Domine. Bird."

On BBC Radio 3 on Thursday 20 March, the weekly programme "Music Restored" was devoted to Byrd.

The Music Appeal at Lincoln Cathedral is continuing. These days Lincoln is proud of its greatest musician. Donations can be posted to Cathedral Fundraising, FREEPOST, 4 Priorygate, Lincoln LN2 1BR. So no stamp required! Telephone 01522 535599, fax 01522 540642, e-mail fundraiser@lincolncathedral.com.

The text *Why do I use my paper, ink and pen* is, of course, a bowdlerized and shortened version of the original, to render it publishable, as well as palatable to Protestants. The full text which knowing Roman Catholics would have sung may nowadays be found in *The new Oxford book of sixteenth-century verse* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) edited by Emrys Jones. The poem is attributed to Anon., no. 193, pp.332-7, entitled *Verses made by a Catholic in praise of Campion that was executed at Tyburn for treason, as is made known by the Proclamation*.

Byrd is to be Composer of the Week on BBC Radio 3, November 22-26, 2004.

A reader has asked me what is the significance of the four characters at the head of the 1610 reissue of the *Gradualia*. It is a version of the Tetragrammaton, the four Hebrew letters that transliterate into IAUE or Yahweh.

One tends to think that when it came to early music Britten, unlike Tippett, slammed the brakes on at Purcell. It is therefore gratifying to peruse *Music of forty festivals: a list of works performed at Aldeburgh Festivals from 1948 to 1987*, compiled by Rosamund Strode (Aldeburgh: Aldeburgh Foundation, 1987). Byrd's name heads two columns of vocal and instrumental items, many of them unfamiliar – *Ah golden hairs* – and some of the performances groundbreaking – *My mistress had a little dog*.

Referring back to another of my recent editorials, it is good to see mainstream pianists including Byrd in their programmes. Richard Goode played selections from *My Lady Nevell's Booke* at the International Piano Series in London's Queen Elizabeth Hall on April 27 before launching into Mozart, Beethoven, Debussy and Chopin. It is even better when this occurs beyond England. As part of the series Keltisch Klassisch sponsored by SKSK (Studienhaus für Keltische Sprachen und Kulturen), Byrd's *Callino casturame* was played in Bonn on 13 November 2002 during a programme entitled "Irische Klaviermusik aus drei Jahrhunderte" by Jürgen Plich. Later in the series, his *Gigg* was performed in an arrangement for recorder and harp.

Byrd features, albeit erroneously, in the biography of George Gershwin. The Canadian mezzo Eva Gauthier was an advocate of early music, and the pioneering advocate of the songs of Gershwin. Her breakthrough for Gershwin occurred on November 1 1923 in New York's Aeolian Hall, when her singing of *Swanee*, accompanied by the composer, led to his being accepted as a credible "serious" composer. It has been stated wrongly that she sang a work by Byrd during this recital. However, on January 23 1924 at Jordan Hall she sang what was billed as Byrd's "Cradel Song", accompanied by the pianist Frederic Persson, and six days later at Dominion Methodist Church the same combination performed the same piece in a programme that again included *Swanee* with Gershwin accompanying. Unfortunately the "Cradel Song" is the now discredited *My little sweet darling* (presumably performed from Fellowes's 1922 Stainer and Bell edition which provides a piano accompaniment). Anyway, having published material in the *Newsletter* on Byrd and Bax, and Byrd and Gershwin, the editor is now researching the possibility of an article on Byrd and the Rolling Stones.

During May, June and July of this year, the Canadian scholar and harpsichordist Rachelle Taylor will be performing the complete keyboard works of Byrd at Christ Church Cathedral, Montreal. The Faculty of Music, McGill University, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation launch the musical series on May 3 with lectures followed by two CBC concerts of sacred and secular vocal music. Andrew Carwood and John Harley have been confirmed as participants, and Kenneth Gilbert will be involved. The keyboard cycle begins on Saturday 10 May. Rachelle will play four different instruments: Ruckers harpsichord and muselar, a clavichord and a chamber organ. There will be eleven recitals, presented around a nucleus consisting of the pavans and galliards which unfurl, interspersed with contrasting pieces, in the five recitals beginning at the third recital and ending with the eighth. The series is entitled "Byrd in the hands: the complete keyboard music of William Byrd".

There will be no William Byrd Memorial Concert this year as its normal date clashes with celebrations of the golden jubilee of the Queen's Coronation which involve the Stondon Singers elsewhere in Essex.

The fifth William Byrd Festival took place last year in Portland from August 19 to September 1. The sixth is scheduled for August 19-31, same place.

It was pleasing to hear *Non vos relinquam* during the Enthronement of the Archbishop of Canterbury on February 27.

In volume 16 of *The Byrd edition*, on page 197, there is an extract from a contemporary ballad which seems to refer to the circumstances under which *Look and bow down* was first performed. A reader of *Annual Byrd newsletter* asked me to trace the ballad. It is "A joyful ballad of the royal entrance of Queen Elizabeth into the City of London, the



24<sup>th</sup> of November in the thirty-first year of Her Majesty's reign, to give God praise for the overthrow of the Spaniards, 1588".

There is a pair of corrections to be made in my article "Byrd tercentenary keyboard anthologies: an appendix to Routh" in *Newsletter* 4 (1998) page 11. In the listing for *The Byrd organ book*, item 6, *Captain Piper's pavan* is not the setting in Fitzwilliam but another mentioned by Fellowes on page 214 of *William Byrd*. It is not by Byrd. Item 7, *Piper's galliard*, is neither by nor attributed to Peerson: it is mistakenly attributed to Byrd in its only source.

The following announcement appeared in volume 5 of *The music bulletin* for 1923 (p.64): "All Secretaries have by now received from us circulars of the Byrd Tercentenary Committee...." The *bulletin* was the journal of the old British Music Society, which provided secretarial assistance for the Byrd Tercentenary Committee (for details of which see my *William Byrd: a guide to research*, chapter VIII). Only the York and Belfast branches of the old BMS (a different organization from the current one) survive. It was also noted that the Tercentenary was celebrated at the British Institute of Florence. None of these locations hold records going back to 1923. If anyone knows of the whereabouts of such material I should be most interested and grateful to be informed.

The mighty media mogul who owns King's Music, Clifford "Beaverbrook" Bartlett, has expressed concern that the *Annual Byrd newsletter* should not become too parochially Caledonian because of its editor's place of residence. I therefore have pleasure in reporting two significant performances in Wales. As part of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Fishguard International Music Festival in St David's Cathedral, the Monteverdi Choir sang the Mass for Five Voices, *Vigilate*, *Emerdemus* and *Turn our captivity* on July 20 2002 in a programme entitled "The Glory of English Polyphony 1500-1646". At the same venue on August 5 the National Youth Choir of Wales sang the Kyrie and Sanctus from the Mass à 4 during the National Eisteddfod.

#### A HYMN ATTRIBUTED TO BYRD

The Music Supplement to *Newsletter* 5 (1999), p.12, was a setting of the Gloria entitled *A Hymn* "Set by Mr. Byrd 1570" and published in *Psalms, hymns and anthems, used in the Chapel of the Hospital for the Maintenance & Education of Exposed & Deserted Young Children* (London, 1774), pp.32-33. As I observed in the introduction, this work for "Duett & Chorus" is patently early Baroque. While preparing it for publication Clifford Bartlett suggested it could be by a musician with the same surname. This is credible, as interest in Byrd at this time was at its nadir, and the compilers of this single source, confronted with just the surname and ignorant about musical style, plumped for the only "ancient" composer of that name whom they knew.

Although Byrd or Bird was not an uncommon surname in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, only William is known as a composer. However, this statement

requires qualification. In his "New light on William Byrd" (*Music & letters* 79 (1998), pp.475-88) John Harley demonstrates that *Preces Deo fundamus* was composed by a namesake who was a wait of Cambridge. And now a candidate has emerged for *A Hymn*. In 'A good Quire of voices': *the provision of choral music at St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, and Eton College, c.1640-1733* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), p.224, Keri Dexter lists a "clerk" named William Bird. No date of birth is given, but his career began in 1675, he married first in 1677, and died in 1687. Someone flourishing during these dates could, judging by the style and competence of *A Hymn*, be the composer. In the absence of any other candidate, and acknowledging that no works by Bird are known to survive and that the composer of *A Hymn* might be neither Byrd nor Bird, William Bird (fl. 1675-87) emerges as, if not a credible candidate, at least a suggestion. And perhaps 1570 was a misprint for 1670: "Set by Mr. Byrd 1670" would, as the saying goes, explain everything – nearly. RT

#### MEANINGS

*An occasional column in which people from the world of music describe what the music of William Byrd means to them. This year sees the golden jubilee of the United Kingdom (from 2002 the United Kingdom and Ireland) Branch of the International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres, known as IAML(UK) and subsequently IAML(UK & Irl). It is a thriving and energetic organization which endeavours to support music libraries and bibliographical research in what is becoming an increasingly unsympathetic cultural and political environment. Biannually it publishes Brio, a consistently excellent journal (which Clifford Bartlett used to edit) which has included some significant articles about Byrd by various authors. The Branch awards the annual C. B. Oldman Prize for the year's best book of music librarianship, bibliography or reference. Susi Woodhouse of Resource: The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries, is the latest in a line of superb presidents.*

Easter Sunday: I cannot think of a more fitting day upon which to be penning this short paragraph. I was flattered and frightened when Richard Turbet asked me if I would "write something" for the 2003 *Annual Byrd newsletter* in my capacity as President of the IAML(UK & Irl) Branch in this its Golden Jubilee year. Flattered because, well, I'd not be human otherwise, would I? And frightened because it is many years since I gained my (very) modest knowledge of Byrd's music. However, nothing daunted, and a little homework later, I find myself re-discovering treasures and pleasures aplenty.

My very first brush with the music of Byrd was at the tender age of 12 or 13 at school in Somerset where, as member of the Junior Choir, we sang an arrangement for female voices of "Though Amaryllis Dance in Green" from the *Psalms, Sonnets and Songs* of 1588. Even then, I remember I was fascinated by the rhythms and the flow of the vocal lines. Undergraduate days brought closer acquaintance and a more considered appreciation – I still treasure the copy of *My Ladye Nevills Booke* given to me as a twenty-first birthday present.

How could I have so shamefully neglected such glorious music for so long? It may be a cliché, but Byrd is for me the epitome of the Elizabethan Age, conjuring up that unique era in our history of creative abundance in art, architecture, literature and music. Elegance of vocal line, the delicious soaring inevitability of the ebb and flow of the counterpoint spiced with occasional delectable harmonic scrunches all contributing to the beauty of the overall shape of his compositions whether the great Masses or the many smaller-scale works. Breathtaking. *Susi Woodhouse*

## RECORD REVIEWS

### Byrd Edition 8

*Cantiones Sacrae 1589 & Propers for the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary* The Cardinall's Music, Andrew Carwood & David Skinner, Gaudeamus CD GAU 309, 70' 35"

Volume 8 of the *Gaudeamus William Byrd Edition* (as it is now styled) follows the programming model of its immediate predecessor, and presents the remaining eight components of the 1589 *Cantiones Sacrae* in two groups of four, surrounding another set of Propers, these being for the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This time, however, we are given an additional antiphon and processional, and two further post-Communion antiphons; though texts and provenance are supplied, there is no further explanation of these pieces. It seems a shame that the opportunity was not taken to expand (or judiciously reprint) Andrew Carwood's notes on the Propers from previous releases; perhaps the assumption is that most purchasers will already have one such earlier release, but there is plenty of space in the booklet taken up with details of other (admittedly admirable) CDs that could have been used more helpfully.

To describe the musical content of the CD as 'more of the same' is not to appear dismissive, but more a comment on the continuing standards of performance and revelations of musical composition. David Skinner reminds us that this is troubled music for troubled times, and perhaps it should not make for comfortable listening from a twenty-first century armchair. Questions of blend and pacing (as mentioned in previous reviews) remain: sometimes one yearns for a slower tempo, which might let the music speak for itself more naturally, and there is a general sense of relentlessness which, though it may be appropriate for each piece taken individually, becomes rather too insistent on protracted listening. The *Vigilate*, for example, clocks in at 4' 32", some 45 seconds faster than New College's less frenetic version; in compensation, however, the clarity of the individual voices gives a sharper sense of the musical part writing than is evident in the general wash of sound given to the larger choir, which even at its slower speed sounds none too secure. Some relief comes, as the notes point out, with the signs of hope offered in the last two pieces of the collection, and the introduction of the soprano voice in *Laetentur caeli* closes the disc on a resounding high.

The transition from ASV to Sanctuary has brought a

slightly-changed birthdate ("1535/40?" for "c. 1535/40" – house-style or new information? – and has introduced a new design on the CD itself, but appears otherwise to have had no ill effect, so we can look forward with continued confidence to future releases in this rewarding and revealing series.

*Neil Swindells*

### Chains of Gold

"...in chains of gold..." Dunedin Consort, Delphian DCD 34008.

In recent years the Dunedin Consort, based in Edinburgh, has emerged beside Cappella Nova, from Glasgow, as Scotland's leading performers of early choral music. Their latest disc is of sacred Latin music by Byrd and Tallis, interspersed with keyboard pieces of a holy bent. The centrepiece of the album is Byrd's mass for five voices, and his surrounding motets are *Laetentur coeli*, the Marian *Gaudeamus omnes*, and *Iustorum animae*. One of the Consort's founders was the soprano Susan Hamilton, and her clear and steady voice is much in evidence, supported by the mezzo Clare Wilkinson, tenors Ashley Tunnell and Warren Trevelyan-Jones, and bass Matthew Brook. The performances throughout are fine. *Laetentur* positively dances, and there is good differentiation between the full and verse sections, despite there only being one singer to a part. *Gaudeamus* is taken at quite a lick, faster than the older recorded versions by the William Byrd Choir and Chanticleer, but after the initial shock, subsequent hearings confirmed that all Byrd's finer details are intact. *Iustorum* is the last item and despite a slightly odd balance to the final chord this is an outstanding performance. It remains to discuss the mass, the movements of which are interspersed with plainsong. It is a good mainstream performance just lacking that final spark which would make it an irresistible recommendation rather than a safe one. Strangely, whereas there are a few recordings of the four-part mass which possess this elusive spark, there is no version of the five-part mass by a chamber choir which stands out. (Nothing rivals the recording by the Choir of St John's College, Cambridge, under the late George Guest; and though it is true that to the best of our knowledge Byrd composed for a small group of mixed voices, we are not in a position to state that his masses were NEVER sung in his own day by male choirs of recusant boys and men in resonant acoustics.) Nevertheless the Dunedin Consort sing it as well as anybody else. There is just a hint of tiredness in the *Agnus* where two or three isolated voices are not on top of the note but there is a prevailing sense of the fragility of contemporary Roman Catholic worship, a combination of the serenity of the liturgy and the anxiety that the service could be interrupted by the authorities at any moment. The two longer movements, particularly the *Gloria*, are taken briskly, and the other three more contemplatively. The recording is less kind to the males than to the females. More weight for the mellifluous bass would have given certain passages and individual chords more solidity, and perhaps allowed more individuality for the two capable tenors. As it is,

Hamilton's enchanting soprano tends to dominate without even trying – she comes over as the ultimate ensemble singer – and in Clare Wilkinson we have the consummate early music mezzo-cum-contralto whose voice is perfectly suited to this repertory; I first became aware of her talent on a disc by the Trinity Consort and it is no surprise whatever to see her performing with the finest ensembles in Scotland and England (perhaps even on a future "Byrd Edition"?). Turning briefly to Tallis: *O nata lux, Salvator mundi II* and *O sacrum convivium* are all beautifully sung, though the last is too fast for my taste. John Kitchen plays Byrd's Prelude in C (BK 24) and *Clarifica me pater III* immaculately, likewise Tallis's two settings of *Veni redemptor*. The Dunedin Consort has its place in Byrd folklore for giving the first performance (in February 2000) of Warwick Edwards's reconstruction of the MS setting of *Domine exaudi*. It is a shame they eschewed what would have been a coup in not recording it and scooping The Cardinal's Musick, who will be including it on a "Byrd Edition" in the near future. Nevertheless they have produced a fine disc which can be warmly recommended. RT

**"WILLIAM BYRDE'S EXCELLENT ANTIPHONE":  
SAMUEL WESLEY'S PROJECTED EDITION OF  
SELECTIONS FROM GRADUALIA**

Philip Olleson

As Richard Turbet has shown, the fortunes of Byrd's music in England in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were at a particularly low ebb, with only a very few pieces known and fewer still publicly performed.<sup>1</sup> Not surprisingly, the Latin church music fared particularly badly: the only items published under Byrd's name during the period were *O Lord, turn and Bow thine ear*, contrafacta of *Ne irascaris* and its second part *Civitas sancti tui*, which were included in the second volume (1768) of Boyce's *Cathedral Music*. To these must be added one plagiarism: *Emendemus in melius* appeared (as *Lord, how long wilt thou be angry*) in *Cathedral Music in Score Composed by Dr. William Hayes* (Oxford, 1795).<sup>2</sup> In addition, Hawkins included *Venite exultemus* from Book II of *Gradualia* and *Diliges Dominum* from *Cantiones, quae ab argumento sacrae vocantur* as examples in his *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music* (1776).

This state of affairs was, of course, to change in the course of the nineteenth century as part of a generally increased interest in the music of the past and the concomitant rise of musical scholarship. Of crucial importance in mid-century England were the activities of the Musical Antiquarian Society. Founded in 1840 for "the publication of scarce and valuable works by the early English composers", the Society included Byrd in its earliest volumes with an edition by Edward F. Rimbault of the *Mass for five voices* in 1841 and one by William Horsley of the 1589 *Cantiones sacrae* in the following year. Other early volumes included piano parts for these two publications, and in 1847, the penultimate year of the Society's existence, an edition by Rimbault of *Parthenia*.<sup>3</sup>

But these ground-breaking events, usually considered to mark the beginning of the revival of interest in Byrd's music, were very nearly preceded fifteen years earlier by an edition of selections from *Gradualia* by Samuel Wesley which only failed because of a lack of forward planning on Wesley's part and a consequent lack of sufficient funds to pay his engraver.

The background to Wesley's projected edition goes back to late 1824, when the University of Cambridge set up a committee to decide on the possible publication of selections from the large collection of music manuscripts of music bequeathed to them by Richard Fitzwilliam, seventh Viscount Fitzwilliam (1754-1816). Hearing of this, Wesley's friend and colleague Vincent Novello wrote to the committee to offer his assistance. He made a brief visit to Cambridge in the Christmas vacation, drew up an outline catalogue, and proposed three ways in which selections could be published, each involving a different degree of involvement and financial commitment for the University. On 18 March 1825 the Senate considered his proposals and immediately decided to grant him permission to publish any parts of the collection that he should think fit, but at his own expense, and at his own risk.

Novello wasted no time in making a start on his edition. He visited Cambridge in early April,<sup>4</sup> and must have made a number of further visits later in the year in order to transcribe the vast amount of music that he included in his five large volumes of selections. On one of these trips, in late July and early August, he was accompanied by Wesley. His first volume, consisting of sacred choral works by Italian composers, almost all from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and with instrumental accompaniment, was published in December 1825 or very early in 1826, and the remaining four volumes appeared at intervals later in the same year.<sup>5</sup>

It did not take long for Novello to see that the Fitzwilliam collection contained far more riches than could be included in his own selection. Soon, with characteristic generosity, he was urging Wesley to approach the University for permission to make a selection of his own, as a result of which Wesley appears to have made his initial approaches to the University in April or May. Obtaining the necessary permission was not as straightforward as might at first have appeared, however, and it was not until well into the following year, after much delicate negotiation with the authorities and many setbacks, that it was granted. The details do not concern us here, but one outcome was a serious quarrel in early 1826 between Wesley and Novello which led to a total cessation of communication between them for over four years.<sup>6</sup>

Although the crucial permission took time to appear, it is clear that Wesley was sufficiently confident in the summer of 1825 of obtaining it to invest a good deal of time and effort in exploring the Fitzwilliam collection on his own account, making two extended visits to Cambridge, one in late June and early July and the other the one in late July and early August already mentioned. It was probably during one or other of these visits that he made the crucial discovery of a manuscript volume in score of motets by Byrd, and it may have been then that



he transcribed it, in whole or part. There is no mention of music by Byrd in Wesley's letter of 1 August to his son Samuel Sebastian, in which he stated merely that the manuscripts that he was copying were "likely to turn to excellent Account", but on 14 September, well after his return to London, he was able to remark in the postscript of a letter to Novello that he had had "a rich treat in chewing the cud of old Byrde's minims", adding that they were "full of my own errors & heresies according to his holiness Pope Horsley".<sup>7</sup> This characteristic side-swipe at Horsley referred to the criticisms that Horsley had made of some of the harmonies in Wesley's *A Morning and Evening Service* in his hostile review in the *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review* the previous April, for which he earned Wesley's undying enmity.<sup>8</sup>

On 1 March 1826, the Senate finally granted Wesley the long-awaited permission to publish his own volume of selections. His performing commitments detained him in London for most of the rest of the month, but on 27 March he was finally able to visit Cambridge, returning on 3 April. On the following day, he wrote to his friend Robert Glenn to report that he had been "very busily, but very pleasantly employed, having met the most flattering encouragement towards my intended publication of Wm Byrde's excellent Antiphones".<sup>9</sup> It is clear that around this time a printed prospectus for the edition, which was to be published by subscription, also appeared, but no copies are known to have survived.

Further references to the edition appear in Wesley's letters later in 1826. In one of 27 April to his sister Sarah, he was at pains to point out to her the incorrectness of a rumour that she had heard that he was expecting to receive more than £300 from his edition; on the contrary, he would consider himself fortunate to receive a third as much.<sup>10</sup> In a further letter to her seven weeks later, he agreed to her proposal that he should put any monies received from subscriptions that she managed to secure towards the payment of a long-overdue bill to his wine-merchant.<sup>11</sup> And on 19 December he wrote to Thomas Jackson, the editor of the *Methodist Magazine* to ask that copies of the proposals should be inserted in a forthcoming number.<sup>12</sup>

From this point, there are no further mentions of the progress of the edition. In May 1830, however, Wesley wrote to his friend Joseph Payne Street, the secretary of the Madrigal Society, with an explanation of what had happened to it and a plea that the Madrigal Society should take over the project themselves. After some preliminary remarks about his financial difficulties over the years and his gratitude to Street for his assistance and support, he came to the point:

It has long been a Matter of Regret that hitherto the 15 fine Latin Anthems of Byrde, which I transcribed from the Fitzwilliam Collection have not (as announced) been ushered into the musical World: a numerous List of Subscribers' names has long appeared, both in the Library and at several of the principal Music Shops, and nine of the Plates have been already engraven: as not a single shilling has been advanced from any Quarter in Aid of the Work's Completion, and as I have always

found musical Engravers not a little importunate for ready Money, without which they will hardly budge an Inch, also having omitted to mention in the printed Proposals that a Publication of that Extent required some auxiliary Encouragement in the necessary Expenses incurred by the Editor, it is not a little mortifying to reflect that a Work which must remain as a lasting Monument of the profound Skill & Learning of our Countryman has been withholden from the publick Eye & Ear by an Obstacle which in the outset of the Business might have been obviated without Difficulty, but as the Time elapsed since its Commencement, has been very considerable (it having been announced in the year 1826) it is now not easy to renew that lively Interest which seemed so general when the Design was first made known.

I have stated the Position of these Facts to several of the principal Music Sellers: they all acknowledge that the MS. is a Treasure, not only in Regard to its intrinsic Worth, but also the Impossibility of obtaining a Copy by any other mode than that in which I did, viz., by the Grant of a Grace from the University, *no easy Acquisition*: but they hesitate to undertake *on their own Account*, what they are pleased to term *so heavy* a Work (they mean as to Extent, not *Stile*,) but this seems no very solid Objection, inasmuch as it will not extend beyond 80 Pages. I offered to make over the Amount of the Subscriptions now to be received, & there are full 200 names already on the List, in all, *even now*.

The "Cantiones Sacrae" of Byrde are I believe among your Madrigal Collection [i.e. the collection of the Madrigal Society], & I presume occasionally performed at the Meetings: now I submit to you whether it were an improper Proposal to turn over the Work to the Management of the Society, upon a certain Consideration, rendering the whole of it their exclusive Property? It would certainly pay them well.<sup>13</sup>

Street's reply to this letter is not preserved, and it is evident that Wesley's proposal came to nothing.

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The manuscript from which Wesley made his transcriptions is a volume of twenty-two folios in score, dating (according to the Fitzwilliam's catalogue) from around 1740, inscribed simply 'Guglielmo Byrde', and bearing the signature "R. Fitzwilliam 1771".<sup>14</sup> Nothing is known about its earlier provenance. It contains twenty-one items, all in four parts: the first nineteen items (i.e. all the four-part pieces) from Book II of *Gradualia*, *Quotiescunque manducabitis* from Book I, and one piece (*Quia illic interrogaverunt nos*) which is not by Byrd at all but is a four-part section from Victoria's eight-part motet *Super flumina Babylonis*.<sup>15</sup> Wesley's transcriptions are now at the British Library, where they form part of the large collection of letters and music manuscripts bequeathed by his daughter Eliza in 1896, and where they are unfortunately miscatalogued as being by Wesley himself.<sup>16</sup> Although Wesley's manuscript does not contain all the items in the Fitzwilliam manuscript, there can be no doubt that he originally transcribed the whole of it, and that some portions, the largest containing the whole of the first item (*Puer natus est nobis*) and the greater part of the second (*Viderunt omnes fines terra*) have subsequently been lost.

catalogue has proved on occasion to be a trap for the unwary. In the first (1907) edition of his *A History of Music in England*, Ernest Walker singled out *O magnum mysterium*, *O admirabile commercium* and *O quam suavis est* in his enthusiastic discussion of Wesley's Latin sacred music, including a music example from *O magnum mysterium* and remarking that whereas these motets "do not show the superabundant vigour and modern vitality of the three motets by which alone Wesley is known", nonetheless "nothing by any other Englishman since the days of Byrd is so full of that sort of dim, introspective, tender austerity that marks the great masterpieces of the old Catholic composers".<sup>17</sup> This purple passage also appeared in the second edition of 1924, but was omitted from the third edition of 1952, extensively revised by J. A. Westrup. In 1927, Gustav Holst, perhaps swayed by Walker's encomium, prepared an edition of "O magnum mysterium" under Wesley's name. It was printed and on the verge of being published until one of Holst's pupils pointed out the true identity of its composer, whereupon it was rapidly withdrawn. More recently, Denis Stevens has published an edition of "Hodie Christus natus est" under the same misapprehension.<sup>19</sup>

Three points remain to be clarified and expanded from Wesley's letter to Street. The first concerns his reference to *Cantiones Sacrae* being in the library of the Madrigal Society. This is tantalizing, but an examination of the holdings of the Madrigal Society now in the British Library has failed to bear out the truth of Wesley's assertion, and Wesley may have been mistaken on this point. On the other hand, the Madrigal Society may at this time have already possessed copies in score of both books of *Gradualia*, made in or around 1780 by "Mr Danby" – presumably the Roman Catholic church musician and composer John Danby (c.1757-97) – from materials in the possession of Hawkins;<sup>20</sup> if so, Wesley was obviously unaware of the fact. The second concerns the discrepancy between the "fifteen motets" that Wesley claimed in his letter to Street to have transcribed and the twenty-one items that he actually did transcribe. This is hard to explain except in terms of a lapse of memory on Wesley's part. The third concerns Wesley's remarks about the projected size of the publication. In his letter to Street, Wesley stated that it would amount to no more than eighty pages, that nine plates had already been engraved, and that at the time of writing, over four years on from the original call for subscriptions, he still had the names of more than two hundred subscribers. It is interesting to note that Wesley's manuscript is marked up in pencil with system- and page-divisions. From these it is clear that the volume was planned as a folio, and that publication of all twenty-one items would have taken considerably more than the eighty pages specified by Wesley. In fact, this number of pages would have included only the first eighteen items in the manuscript (i.e. the first eighteen items in Book II of *Gradualia*). Whether it was these that Wesley was intending to publish, or whether he had in mind a different, and smaller, selection from his transcriptions, is impossible at this stage to determine. But

leaving aside the question of exactly which and how many items Wesley was intending to publish, it is clear that had the edition materialized, it would have been a large and important one, with an initial intended print-run of perhaps three hundred copies, and that therefore the level of interest in Byrd at this time was evidently greater than has previously been supposed.

1. Richard Turbet, "The Fall and Rise of William Byrd, 1623-1900" in Chris Banks, Arthur Searle, and Malcolm Turner, *Sundry sort of Music Books: Essays on the British Library Collections, presented to O. W. Neighbour on his 70th Birthday*, London, 1993, 119-28, particularly pp. 120-5. See also Richard Turbet, "Byrd throughout all Generations", *Cathedral Music* 35 (1992), 19-24.
2. *Ibid.*, 120, 121.
3. Richard Turbet, "The Musical Antiquarian Society", *Brio* 29 (1992), 13-20; Richard Turbet, "Horsley's 1842 Edition of Byrd and its Infamous Introduction", *British Music* 14 (1992), 36-46.
4. See Wesley to Novello, 12 [April 1825] in Philip Olleson, *The Letters of Samuel Wesley: Professional and Social Correspondence, 1797-1837* (Oxford, 2001), 361; Michael Kassler and Philip Olleson, *Samuel Wesley (1766-1837): A Sourcebook* (Aldershot, 2001), 414. Full texts or summaries of all other letters from Wesley cited here can also be found in these two publications.
5. *The Fitzwilliam Music, being a Collection of Sacred Pieces, selected from Manuscripts of Italian Composers in the Fitzwilliam Museum*, 5 vols, London, [1825-6]. The Preface is dated December 1825. The complete set presented by Novello to the Fitzwilliam Museum bears a statement of presentation in his hand dated 1826. The first volume was reviewed in *Harmonicon* 3 (February 1826), 32-4. For a listing of the contents of the full set, see Grove<sup>13</sup>, under "Fitzwilliam".
6. Philip Olleson, *The Letters of Samuel Wesley*, xlviii-lix; Philip Olleson, *Samuel Wesley: The Man and his Music* (Woodbridge, forthcoming, 2003).
7. Wesley to Novello, 14 September [1825].
8. *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review* 7 (1826), 95-101.
9. Wesley to Glenn, 4 April 1826.
10. Wesley to Sarah Wesley, 27 April [1826].
11. Wesley to Sarah Wesley, 14 June [1826].
12. Wesley to Jackson, 19 December 1826.
13. Wesley to Street, 25 May 1830. This letter was first printed in *Musical Times* 64 (1923), 567.
14. Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, MS MUS 114; see J. A. Fuller Maitland and A. H. Mann, *Catalogue of the Music in the Fitzwilliam Museum*, Cambridge (London, 1893), 58-9.
15. As far as is known, this is the only manuscript (Wesley's transcription apart) in which this ascription of authorship is made.
16. London, British Library, Add. MS 35001, items 4-21, fols. 86-144<sup>r</sup>. See Augustus Hughes-Hughes, *Catalogue of the Manuscript Music in the British Museum*, 3 vols (London, 1906-9), i, 345-6.
17. Ernest Walker, *A History of Music in England* (Oxford, 1907), 241-2.
18. "O magnum mysterium". A Christmas motet by S. Wesley. English words by J. M. Joseph (*Stainer and Bell's Church Choir Library*, No. 330) (London, 1927). A copy is in the British Library (shelfmark F.1137.b), and is included in the entry for Samuel Wesley in *The Catalogue of Printed Music in the British Museum until 1980* (62 vols, London, 1987) in the category of 'Doubtful and Supposititious Works'. See also Michael Short, *Gustav Holst: The Man and his Music* (Oxford, 1990), 261.
19. Broude Bros, New York, 1984.
20. British Library, MADSOC C28 and C29.

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*Next year's Annual Byrd Newsletter will be the last. I had already been pondering editorial retirement and Clifford's announcement in last month's editorial that EMR in its present form would end with Issue 100 provided my cue. The final Newsletter will appear (a month early) in May 2004. If you wish to contribute, please contact me now.*

RT

*One possible topic for an article is the extent to which earlier editors, like Wesley, were content to copy a secondary MS score rather than work from primary partbooks.*

CB

# WILLIAM BYRD'S LULLABY: AN EXAMPLE OF CONTEMPORARY INTABULATION

Stewart McCoy

William Byrd did not compose music for the lute himself, but some of his contemporaries made arrangements (or intabulations) of his music. The extant intabulations for lute solo made by Francis Cutting and others were published in 1973, collected and edited by Nigel North.<sup>1</sup> More recently, those by Francis Cutting (and those presumed to be by Cutting) appeared in Jan Burgers' collected edition of Cutting's lute music.<sup>2</sup> Both editors provide tablature; some of North's pieces are in facsimile. Both editors also provide a transcription into staff notation; the only noticeable difference is that North halves note values, whereas Burgers keeps them the same as the original.

## Music by Byrd set for lute solo by Cutting

*Lullaby* (Cu, Dd. 9.33, 4v-5r): North No. 1, Burgers No. 49  
*Pavana Bray* (William Barley, *A New Booke of Tabliture* (London, 1596): North No. 2a, Burgers No. 21a  
*Pavana Bray* (Cu Dd. 9.33, 12v-13r): North No. 2b, Burgers No. 21b

## Music by Byrd set anonymously for lute solo

*Pavan* (*Welde Lute Book*, f. 7v): North No. 3  
*Pavan* (Cu Dd. 9.33, ff. 35v-36r): North No. 4  
*Pavan* (*Welde Lute Book*, f. 8r): North No. 5a, Burgers No. 54  
*Pavan* (Cu Dd. 9.33, ff. 59v-60r): North No. 5b  
*Pavan* (Cu Dd. 2.11, f. 101v): North No. 5c  
*My Lord Willoughby's Welcome Home* (Lbl Egerton 2046, 33v): North No. 6.  
*The Woods so Wild* (Ge, Euing MS 25): North No. 7, Burgers No. 55.

Of these, Burgers thinks the *Pavan* on f. 8r of *Welde* is probably by Cutting; North and Burgers both think that *The Woods so Wild* is probably by Cutting.

A huge amount of Byrd's music was intabulated by or for Edward Paston. Five lute books survive from his library, but they tend to be ignored by musicologists, because the intabulations are incomplete: the lute only ever plays the lowest parts, and the highest voice is left for a singer. Yet they are extremely important sources, and one of his lute books, *Lbl Add 31992*, is the largest single collection of Byrd's music and includes consort songs not known elsewhere. Transcriptions of a few of these intabulations by Byrd and others may turn up in an appendix, but otherwise there is no modern edition of them.<sup>3</sup> In fact it has been shown that Paston must have had at least 40 solo intabulations by Byrd and others in books which are now lost.

The tablature of those solos was used to create some of the song accompaniments in *Lbl Add MS 29246*, and it is possible to work backwards from those accompaniments to reconstruct the lost solos. They must have been literal

intabulations devoid of divisions and ornamentation.<sup>4</sup> Apart from the Paston manuscripts, the only source containing music by Byrd arranged as a lute song with tablature is *Lbl Add 15117: Oh God, but God* (f. 19v) and *Oh God, give ear* (f. 7v).<sup>5</sup>

It is likely that Francis Cutting's exemplar for his lute solo arrangement of Byrd's *Lullaby* was the original consort song in C minor, not the version for five voices in D minor published in *Psalmes, Sonets and songs of sadnes* (London, 1588), and not an arrangement for keyboard. It seems that Nigel North was unaware of the consort song, since he does not include manuscript sources of it in his list of sources. He adds missing notes to his transcription of the lute solo, thinking that Cutting might have overlooked them; they are certainly present in the D minor version, but they are not in the earlier consort-song setting in C minor.<sup>6</sup> Jan Burgers also seems to have been unaware of the consort-song setting in C minor. He writes, "The model of this lute setting in G minor is William Byrd's five part song 'Lullaby, my sweet little baby' in D minor, published in 1588 ..." <sup>7</sup> It is significant that Cutting's intabulation matches the long notes of the viols, not the notes repeated for the sake of the words in the D minor version. Notes longer than a semibreve are automatically re-iterated, but that is to compensate for the lute's lack of sustaining power.

Cutting's setting of *Lullaby* is more or less a literal intabulation. It includes as much as possible of all five voices, without the addition of divisions or ornaments, and occasionally fills out chords with extra notes. Creating such an intabulation is for the most part a simple, mechanical exercise, and the intabulator needs only concern himself with ensuring that the piece is playable on the lute. His first decision is to decide which key is most suitable. Cutting transposes the music to G minor – down a fourth from C minor, or down a fifth from D minor as North and Burgers have it. (Tablature, of course, does not denote pitch, but to avoid confusion I shall follow the modern convention, and refer to the pitch of notes in Cutting's intabulation in terms of a lute in g'.) The overall range after transposition is C - d", which comfortably goes no higher than the 7th fret, but loses a few low C's below the range of Cutting's 7-course lute.

Intabulating a masque dance or a lute ayre is likely to produce a satisfactory lute solo, since the music consists of a distinct melodic line with an accompaniment. Polyphony, such as Byrd's consort songs, works less well, because individual melodic lines are lost as they merge into each other on the same instrument, sometimes even crossing each other, and unhappy consecutive fifths and octaves may emerge. Nigel North describes Cutting's *Lullaby* as "not particularly successful, as the 'first singing part' [voice II of V] tends to get lost on the lute." True, that voice part does occasionally vanish into mid-texture obscurity, but this does not detract from the overall musical effect. It certainly did not seem to bother Cutting.

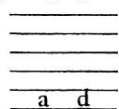


Loyalty to the composer's original intentions may be our ideal today, but Byrd's contemporaries had different ideas. They were quite content to adapt Byrd's music to suit their own requirements, even if that meant altering it drastically. For example, Edward Paston's intabulations of Byrd's consort songs in *Lbl Add 31992* are for solo voice and lute. The lute plays the lowest four parts, and the singer sings the highest part, whether or not that top part was originally the one intended to be sung. Sometimes when the singer does not sing the highest part, Paston has the singer's part marked in the tablature with dots, which would allow the lutenist to sing along too. In fact, unlike some other Pastonised consort songs of this type, *Lullaby* works very well with the highest voice sung.

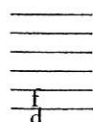
If North was worried about the first singing part getting lost, he should have looked at *Och MS 439*, page 82, where it vanishes altogether.<sup>8</sup> This manuscript is a later source, and contains solo songs with bass, presumably to be played by a lute or theorbo. This setting of *Lullaby* appears to have been taken from the D minor version, and is reduced to just two parts: treble and bass. It is the top voice which survives – the equivalent of the old treble viol part – not the first singing part. *Lullaby* is not the only part-song reduced to two parts in this manuscript. There are six others by Byrd:

In fields abroad (p. 54)  
 Constant Penelope (p. 58)  
 Lord, in thy wrath (p. 84)  
 My mind to me a kingdom is (p. 102)  
 My soul oppressed (p. 104)  
 Though Amaryllis dance in green (p. 105).

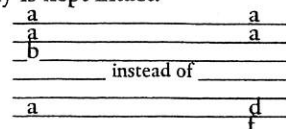
It is not always possible for every note to be played by the lute, so the intabulator has to decide what to cut out. There is a natural hierarchy, with the highest two parts and the bass taking precedence over the two tenor viol parts, which are often no more than *parties de remplissage*. If the tenors transcend that function, and have an important melodic line, that line should be preserved. With all five parts on one instrument, vertical considerations (harmony) start to outweigh horizontal ones (melody). It is important to preserve notes which complete the harmony, but notes not essential for defining the harmony may be discarded. Where the tenor 2 part is close to the bass, the two parts sometimes vie for the same pair of strings. The notes G and B flat, for example, would normally be played on the sixth course.



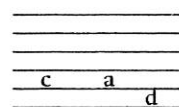
If you really wanted both notes at that pitch, you would have to play the G as a stopped note at the 5th fret of the 7th course, which is very much more awkward than playing it as the open 6th course.



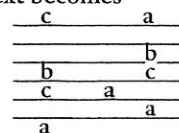
Cutting is faced with this problem in bar 12.<sup>9</sup> He cannot remove the B flat altogether, because he needs it to clarify that the chord is G minor. So he transposes it up an octave, and frees the 6th course for the low G. It is easy to play, the open bass strings add extra resonance, and the harmony is kept intact:



In this case it really does not matter too much at which octave the tenor note is heard. Its function is merely harmonic. However, Cutting does the same thing at bar 40,<sup>10</sup> where the upward transposition makes a mockery of Tenor 2's melodic line (d, c, B flat):



in context becomes



Instead of falling by a tone, Tenor 2 now jumps up a 7th and ends up above Tenor 1. The polyphony is apparently shot to pieces.

Before dismissing Cutting as an incompetent hack, one would do well to remember how the lute was tuned in Elizabethan England. The average text book will give:

g' d' a f c G

with the option of a 7th course tuned to D. Yet it is not that simple. Lute strings come in pairs, like on a mandoline, and you pluck both strings of a pair (course) as if they were one. Usually (but not always) the first course was just a single string, not a pair. Most significant is the tuning of the lowest four courses, which would have been in octaves. A more accurate description of the tuning would be:

g' d' d' a a f f c' c g G,

with the option of a 7th course tuned to d D.

Modern transcriptions of lute tablature do not normally take octave stringing into account. As far as I can see North and Burgers ignore it in their transcriptions. That is perfectly reasonable, because as often as not the effect of octave stringing is no more than pulling out a four-foot stop on the organ. The high octave notes add extra colour to the tone, but we do not normally hear them as notes in their own right. However, there are times when octave stringing on a lute has important implications with regard to voice-leading, and we do hear those high notes as part of a melody. In the example above, we will not be disturbed by the awkward leap of a 7th, because that c (as in tablature) will also sound an octave higher as c'. So instead of hearing the interval of an upward 7th (c - b flat), we hear a falling 2nd (c' - b flat) instead. What looks clumsy on the page will sound perfectly fine.

There is a rather nice instance of octave stringing saving the day in bar 38." A chord of five notes is required, but Cutting intabulates only four of them:

a  
a  
a  
c

North spotted that f' (lute pitch) from the highest part had been omitted, and so in his transcription he suggests adding it in. North is one of the world's foremost lute players, and so I am sure he would smile at his mistake: f' is played at d2 (i.e. 3rd fret, 2nd course), but to do so would mean losing d' (a2), because both notes cannot be played simultaneously on the same string. Yet Francis Cutting knew what he was doing, because that missing f' is there all the time, sounding as the upper octave of the open 4th course (a4). Ironically North's transcription reflects the sound we hear, but it needed a footnote to explain why.

Where parts imitate each other at the same pitch, they can cancel each other out, so that two interesting melodies which overlap each other can produce a boring repetition of the same chord. For example, in bars 15-6<sup>12</sup> Tenor 2 and the Bass get in each other's way. The Bass has

c a d c a | c d a

Tenor 2 comes in a couple of notes later with

c a d | c a c

The problems start in the second bar. The Bass G (a6) needs to be held into the second bar as far as A (c6), but Tenor 2 comes crashing in with B flat (d6). Both parts then play A (c6), which is amicable enough, but then they want to play different notes on the same course: Bass B flat (d6) and Tenor 2 G (a6). At the start of the second bar Cutting gives preference to Tenor 2: for him, preserving its falling scale is more important than holding on to the Bass's G. For the clash at the 3rd event of the second bar Cutting favours the Bass B flat, if only to avoid having two consecutive G's at the 3rd and 4th event. His compromise manages to maintain the independent character of each part, yet the music flows as if there is just one continuous melodic line in the bass:

c a c a | d c d a

With the upper parts added, Cutting's tablature becomes:

a d c a a d  
f d b a | c c  
a e c c a c | c c  
c e c a c d c a | d c d a

When melodic lines are played on four separate instruments (viols), their independence is assured, but on just one instrument (lute) they fuse into one. In the example above, the two highest parts run into each other to

produce what sounds like a descending scale of nine notes (including c1 tied from the previous bar) running through the texture:

[c] a d c a | d b a | c

Cutting also tinkers with the texture, adding a note (e4) at the 3rd event and taking away another (c4) two events later.

It is interesting to compare Cutting's intabulation with Paston's,<sup>13</sup> bearing in mind that Paston does not include the highest part (treble viol), maintains the original key of C minor, and uses Italian tablature instead of French:

3-2-0 0-2-3-0  
2-2-0 2-2-0 2-2-2  
1-0 3 3-3  
3-1-0 1-1  
0 0

Paston's intabulations are nearly always as literal as possible. He might re-iterate notes to compensate for the lute's lack of sustain, but unlike Cutting, he does not fill out the texture with notes which were not in the original, and he omits notes only where he has to. Where the Tenor 2 and Bass parts run into each other, he gives full prominence to the Bass, re-iterating the Bass tied note at the start of his third bar. So what does he do about Tenor 2? He needs an e flat somewhere, so he simply transposes that note up an octave to the 1st fret, 2nd course, to complete the harmony.

Paston's reluctance to fill out chords makes me think that Philip Brett's edition is not quite right at the end of the Lullaby's first section (see bars 24-26 of *The Byrd Edition*, vol. 16, p 120).<sup>14</sup> Cutting busies himself with thickening the texture, so that the dominant and tonic chords are filled out to six notes apiece. His version ends this section with

d c a f e c e a  
a d b f d c  
a c e c e c  
d a c c a

Paston, on the other hand, seems to deviate from his literal intabulating, because he adds a b flat to create a kind of English cadence. The chord before it is filled out with an a natural:

3-5 0  
2-4 2-2 2  
1-3 1-3 3  
3-1 0-0 3-2  
0 0 0

What is going on? Why should Paston deviate from his policy of intabulating exactly what is in his exemplar, and now apparently copy Cutting's practice of filling out the texture? According to Brett's critical commentary,<sup>15</sup> the Dow part-books (which are the only complete source of the consort song version)<sup>16</sup> lack the semibreve g in bar 25 of Tenor 2. Brett has added it in to make the notes in bar 25 add up, but it looks a bit suspicious to me, duplicating the Bass's semibreve g, and producing a sparse chord with

three G's (g + g + g'). I notice that just before this, Tenor 2 has three minims: a flat, b flat, and g. My guess is that Dow's exemplar (or a source preceding it somewhere in the stemma) had these three notes twice. The copyist's eye skipped from the first group of three notes to the second, and so accidentally omitted three notes. Anyone who has copied music by hand will know how easy it is to do that. I surmise, therefore, that Tenor 2 should have four minims in bar 25: g, a natural, b flat and g, confirmed by Paston's tablature. Out of curiosity I looked to see what Byrd had in his vocal re-working of *Lullaby*, printed in *Psalmes, Sonets, & songs of sadnes* (London, 1588). Sure enough, there were the missing notes – a natural and b flat – confirmed by Paston, but lost by Dow.

An example of where intabulation results in consecutives comes in bar 24 quoted above. Cutting's intabulation produces:

c			a	c	
d	d	b	a	d	b
a	d		a	c	
		c	d		

with consecutive fifths and octaves between the 5th and 6th events.

Unfortunately we rely on sources which happened to have survived over the years, but it does seem surprising that so little of Byrd's music was arranged for solo lute. Paston's lost solos give us a glimpse at what may have once existed, and suggest that the lute was deemed a suitable medium for Byrd's music. Since North's edition was published, another tablature source has been identified: Byrd's Fantasy a4 No. 17 has been discovered in the Hirsch Lute Book.<sup>18</sup> This is a complete intabulation, unlike Paston's,<sup>19</sup> which, of course, has the top voice missing, to be sol-fa-ed (or sung from memory) by the singer.<sup>20</sup>

1) Nigel North (ed.), *William Byrd Music for the Lute 6*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1973).

2) Francis Cutting, *Collected Lute Music*, transcribed and edited by Jan W. J. Burgers (Lübeck: Tree Edition, 2002).

3) One exception is Stewart McCoy, "Lost Lute Solos Revealed in a Paston Manuscript", *The Lute* vol. XXVI, Part 1 (1986), pp. 21-39, which includes Paston's setting of Byrd's Fantasy a3 No. 2, together with a reconstruction of the lost solo exemplar.

4) McCoy, *op. cit.*

5) Facsimile edn: Elise Bickford Jorgens (ed.), *English Song 1600-1675*, Vol. 1 *British Library Manuscripts, Part 1* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc, 1986).

6) North, *op. cit.*, bars 30 and 34.

7) Burgers, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

8) Facsimile edn: Elise Bickford Jorgens (ed.), *English Song 1600-1675*, Vol. 6 *Manuscripts at Oxford, Part 1* (New York: Garland Publishing Inc, 1987).

9) Byrd, *William Madrigals, songs and canons*, ed. Philip Brett. *The Byrd Edition*, 16. London: Stainer and Bell, 1976, pp. 138-143, bar 12.; North, *op. cit.*, bar 11.

10) Brett, *op. cit.*, bar 40; North, *op. cit.*, bar 39.

11) Brett, *op. cit.*, bar 38; North, *op. cit.*, bar 37; 7th event in each.

12) Brett, *op. cit.*, bars 15-6; North, *op. cit.*, bars 14-5.

13) *Lbl Add.* 31992, ff. 21v-22r.

14) Brett, *op. cit.*, bars 24-6; North, *op. cit.*, bars 23-5.

15) Brett, *op. cit.*, p. 195

16) *Och Music MSS 984-8*: a set of part-books compiled by Robert Dow between 1581 and 1588.

17) William Byrd, *Psalmes, Sonets, & songs of sadnes* (London, 1588), No. 15.

18) *Lbl MS Hirsch M 1353*, f. 21v; facsimile edn: Robert Spencer (ed.), *The Hirsch Lute Book*, Musical Sources 21 (Clarabrick: Boethius Press, 1982).

19) *Lbl Add.* MS 29246, 41v-42r.

20) For information on the singing of fantasies to the lute, see Stewart McCoy, "Edward Paston and the Textless Lute-song", *Early Music* vol. XVI (May 1987), pp. 221-7.

*My apologies for the makeshift lute tablature. Stewart offered written or typeset examples to be pasted in, but since rhythm did not seem to be of the essence, we have retained the qwerty-type version of his emailed text.*

CB

## LOOK AND BOW DOWN: A 21ST CENTURY COMPOSITIONAL RESPONSE

Alan Charlton

*Composer Alan Charlton reflects on how he approached the task of composing a work based on the surviving fragments of Byrd's consort song Look and Bow Down*

Composition briefs can frequently be a source of great frustration for a composer where, say, the funding for the commissioned work or the reason for its performance is dependent upon using material or ideas that are either unstimulating to a composer or completely antithetical to their stylistic or aesthetic standpoint. My commission to write *Look and Bow Down*, however, was one of those enviable occasions where the brief for the composition was stimulating in every respect. The piece was to be composed for Christ's Hospital's 450th anniversary concert at the Barbican on 25 March 2003, to be performed by the school's chamber choir, an orchestra comprising past and present instrumentalists from the school and professional vocal soloists, conducted by Bruce Grindlay, Director of Music at Christ's Hospital, who had also commissioned the work. The only stipulation was that the piece had to use in some way the surviving three musical fragments from Byrd's song, *Look and bow down*.

As a starting point I was given the three published fragments of Byrd's song, *Look and bow down*, from the Byrd Edition. The published fragments contain the openings of each of the three verses of *Look and bow down*, a setting of the *Song on the Armada Victory* of Elizabeth I, first sung by Christ's Hospital choristers during her procession to the Armada thanksgiving service at St Paul's Cathedral in December 1588. At this stage, both I and the commissioners were unaware of the existence of the lute tablature version of *Look and bow down* in the British Library, a fact which undoubtedly had a huge effect on the brief of the commission, the compositional approach I adopted and the nature of the final piece. Through the reworking of the Byrd material for Christ's Hospital performers, the commission not only fulfilled an invaluable function in terms of providing school musicians with specially composed music to mark an anniversary, but it was also to be based on rich musical material, full of historical resonance both in terms of the school's history and current events, and which deserved to have a public airing.



### *Finding a context in which to place the Byrd material*

As my starting point was in the form of three intriguing fragments, that as far as I knew were all that survived of *Look and bow down*, I felt that the best way to elicit a fresh and genuine musical response to the Byrd material and to allow it to gain a new lease of life in its own right, was to avoid engaging in unnecessary scholarship that might hinder my own compositional process. I therefore chose not to research, say, the stylistic conventions of Byrd and his contemporaries, the form of the consort song nor the performance conditions of its first airing. As a composer, the best way I felt I could do justice to the material was to treat it as I would any other piece of raw compositional material. My central aim was that, in order to give the material the respect its quality deserved, a full quotation of the fragments should form both the musical and dramatic climax of the work and that, for this to be achieved, the whole work should be infused with material derived from the Byrd in some way.

Imagining the personal situation in which Byrd might have found himself at the time of his composition of *Look and bow down*, I felt it reasonable to suppose that he may not have wholeheartedly supported the sentiments expressed by Elizabeth I's poem and the defeat of the Armada. As a devout Catholic, his position as a composer in Elizabeth's court required great tact and diplomacy and presumably a situation like this, in which he was required to set to music an ode that gloats over the Catholic defeat, would have troubled his conscience considerably. With this in mind, I resolved that when the quotation appeared its interpretation should be ambiguous.

The tub-thumping language of Elizabeth's poem *Look and bow down* seemed to be the key to setting up such a climax. The defeat of the Armada was Elizabeth's greatest achievement and one of the defining moments of British history, but her ecstatic celebration of this moment, encapsulated in the poem, could also be thought of as marking the beginning of her transformation from her pre-Armada status as a "queen of the people" who had very recently walked amongst her troops at Tilbury, to a more distant and increasingly vain figure, perhaps cultivating and wallowing in an image of her own glory and perceived closeness to God. Despite the monumental nature of Elizabeth's victory, the inflammatory text of *Look and bow down* now possesses a vulgarity which, set at face value, would have had unfortunate resonances with the rhetoric surrounding recent events in the Middle East, possibly inappropriate for a celebratory concert that in the end took place during the first week of the war with Iraq.

I therefore sought to put Elizabeth's poem in a context where another side, that of the personal human consequences of war, was introduced to counterbalance the self-proclaimed heroism of politicians. I found this in the poems of the Second World War poet, Keith Douglas (1920-44), which were particularly apt since Douglas had attended Christ's Hospital from 1931-38. Parallels abounded in the poetry of both characters, notably because both their

lives and indeed literary development had been so definitively shaped by first the threat and then the experience of war. From their earliest poems, both figures sense a coming struggle, which becomes more specific and more real as their lives progress. Elizabeth sees a Catholic alliance gradually materialise against her sparked off by the move of Mary Queen of Scots into England and hastened by her execution, while Keith Douglas witnesses the steady growth of fascism and the rearmament of Germany that resulted in the Second World War and his untimely death in 1944, three days after the Normandy Landings. Douglas's poetry reaches its maturity only with his experience of war in North Africa, the lyricism of his youthful works being superseded by a modernist, observational or "extrospective" approach.

Against the backdrop of mounting uncertainty over the looming war with Iraq, I decided to make the piece an account, in general terms, of the course of war, from its early foreboding and escalating build-up through to the actual conflict itself, the moment of victory and the aftermath. I chose appropriate poems from the corresponding stages in Elizabeth and Keith Douglas's own experiences of war, with these characters being represented by a mezzo-soprano and a tenor respectively.

To punctuate and clarify this structure, and to provide a catalyst for the development of the two characters, I also selected appropriate texts for the chorus: a remarkable prediction in Latin by the fifteenth century astronomer Regiomontanus for catastrophe and the decline of an empire in the year 1588, the year of the Armada; and the text from the latter stages of the Bayeux Tapestry, which, with its brutal medieval Latin and plain, stark description perfectly conveys the violence of war. After the denouement of the battle, the choir sings the complete harmonisation of the William Byrd fragments, the climax of the work, set to the text of *Look and bow down*, linked together by virtuosic solo passages from Elizabeth.

The texts of the work, which runs continuously for 27 minutes, thus ensue as follows:

- Part I: Short orchestral introduction (based on the Byrd fragments) leading into Douglas *Youth*; Elizabeth *The Doubt of Future Foes*; Elizabeth/Douglas *On Leaving School*.
- Part II: Chorus: Regiomontanus *Ad mille exactos* (based on the Byrd fragments); Douglas *Dejection*; Elizabeth *Speech to the Troops at Tilbury*.
- Part III: Chorus: Text from Bayeux Tapestry (*Hic exeunt de navibus to ad prelium contra anglorum exercitum*); Douglas *Actors Waiting on the Wings of Europe*; Chorus Bayeux Tapestry (*Hic ceciderunt Lweine to end*) (setting of Elizabeth's poem); Choir: extract from *Youth*: 'You will come back again and dream'
- Part IV: Choir: *Look and Bow Down* (quotation of the Byrd fragments); Elizabeth *Look and bow down*

### *Structural influence of the Byrd fragments*

Besides influencing the dramatic structure of the work, the Byrd material also exert considerable formal control. I tried to mirror the three-verse structure of Byrd's *Look and bow down* in my own piece: three different battles are referred to (The Norman Conquest, the Defeat of the Armada and the Normandy Landings of the Second World War), three different vocal forces are represented (Elizabeth, Douglas and the chorus) with three different vocal styles (ornamented, lyrical and declamatory respectively). Each of the four parts is further subdivided into three parts and the more explicit quotes from the Byrd appear three times (in the orchestral introduction, the first choral entry and after the climax of the battle scene).

I arranged these appearances of the Byrd material to suggest that it was being 'composed' into its original form during the course of the piece, being most fragmentary in the introduction, in a more developed form in the first choral statement and in its final, most authentic state when the quotation of the fragments appears, reflecting also the gradual materialisation of war.

The extent to which each of the three vocal forces draw on the fragments is also significant: the chorus is the most strictly tied to it, while the Douglas material uses smaller fragments from it in a much freer way. Elizabeth, however does not use the fragments until her moment of victory, where she adds a virtuoso countermelody over the chorus's statement of the three fragments. This perhaps suggests that Elizabeth has appropriated material from Keith Douglas to serve her own expressive requirements, which maybe parallels Elizabeth's occasional use of William Byrd's compositional skills as a propaganda tool.

### *Stylistic integration*

In many ways the material of the music contained within the published Byrd fragments is not an obvious starting point for a contemporary musical work. At first glance it appears to lack the striking memorability and character typical of the central material of a large scale work, while by today's standards its triadic language and standard harmonic progressions, particularly in the first two fragments, seem far too conservative for integration into most contemporary harmonic idioms except as a quotation.

One contemporary approach to using of this sort of fragmentary material, and one that is especially prevalent at the moment, would be to juxtapose, superimpose, enrich, undermine or comment upon the Byrd with music of a stylistically contradictory nature, an idea that has been very effectively exploited in many postmodern works since the 1960s, from Peter Maxwell Davies to Thomas Adès. Another method could be to subject the material to some sort of schematically controlled transformation to generate harmonic, melodic, rhythmic or structural material of a contemporary sounding nature. A minimalist slant focusing on salient details of the material

might also prove effective. If the complete version of *Look and bow down* were to be used instead of the fragments, one or more of the parts could be used as the basis for a cantus firmus or variation-based composition.

My approach was to absorb the language of the Byrd contained within the fragments into my own language. This technique is not without precedent, of course, and the consequent allusions it conjured up to the sound worlds of Tudor revivalists such as Tippett and Vaughan Williams were helpful in recreating the 1930s and 40s feel of the Keith Douglas poetry and strengthening the link between Elizabeth I and Keith Douglas. This treatment of the Byrd material was possible since my language already possessed many similarities with Byrd, paradoxically acquired through exposure to Tudor-influenced composers such as Tippett and Britten. My harmonic writing is not particularly dense, with a typical chordal unit consisting of between 2 and 5 different pitches, and although my language does not generally incorporate conventional major and minor triads, nevertheless, Byrdian characteristics of strong voice-leading and part-writing, frequent imitation and a free-flowing rhythmic counterpoint that weakens the barline and negates periodicity, have always featured in my music to some extent.

The incorporation of the Byrd in this way also had good practical benefits. Since I had decided to give the clearest statements of the Byrd material to the choir, its more conventional harmonic language would clarify the choir's role as an entity separate from the individual worlds of Elizabeth and Keith Douglas. Also the use of a more broadly tonal and rhythmically simplified language, particularly in the choral writing aided the performance of the work by school performers. Finally, considering what I expected would be an audience generally unfamiliar with contemporary musical idioms, in the final performance, the more tonal moments would provide comprehensible anchor points with respect to which the progress of the rest of the work could be followed.

### *Treatment of the Byrd material*

Although I knew the quotation of the Byrd was to form the climax of the work, I had to devise material from it on which to base the rest of the piece. My approach was to derive a pool of small fragments from within the Byrd and draw on them freely in a motivic way, combining them both with each other and with material unrelated to the Byrd.

I also identified harmonic moments in the Byrd which seemed most closely related to my style: the remarkable bass line of the first half of bar 4 of the third section, "Tis Joseph's herd" provided ideas for several moments (eg. *Example 1*, bars 20-23), and imparted a generally slithering, semitonal nature for other parts of the work. The progression of a G minor chord followed by a major chord in bar 5 of the first fragment suggested major/minor harmonic material such as at the close of the first section of the work (*Example 2*, bars 152-3, *Example 6*, bars 712-715, 783-4, etc.)

The opening of the third fragment, with its implied parallel fifths proved the most fertile material. Not only did it have the most striking shape (which meant that it could be explored much more while still being recognisable), its two part construction gave it great harmonic flexibility and provided an escape from the predominantly triadic sound of the rest of the material. I used the opening of this idea frequently as a head motif (Example 3), as part of a richer imitative texture (Example 4, bars 107-118), superimposed on other ideas (Example 1, bars 152-155), rhythmically varied or melodically elaborated (Example 5, bars 279-280), with its shape preserved but the intervals changed (Example 2, bars 146-151), and used motivically to build extended climactic lines (Example 5, bars 277-278).

The main quotation of the Byrd fragments demanded some adjustment. Since it formed the climax, the Byrd quotes had to appear in appropriately strong parts of the vocal registers, as its original pitch is at the bottom end of many registers in a straight vocal arrangement. I also needed to set the words of *Look and Bow Down* to the music of the original instrumental accompaniment, which transferred surprisingly well despite the occasions where an extra note is added for a single beat (for example first fragment, bar 7, 3rd beat) and where a fragment comes to an abrupt end. Since the quotation of the fragments appeared at a point in the piece where it was essential to maintain momentum, I welded the fragments together with virtuosic solo lines from Elizabeth, and maintained a feeling of tonal flux by transposing the fragments into E minor, A minor and B flat minor respectively. For a comparison of this passage with the published Byrd fragments, see Example 6.

#### Conclusion

The privilege of working with the material from William Byrd's *Look and bow down* was an invaluable one for me, for as well as introducing me to material that was musically rewarding in its own right, it also opened up a number of fertile new avenues for future exploration in my own music. The most significant departure for me was to work with initial musical material that was both traditional and outside the boundaries of my usual language, as opposed to material that had been freshly composed within my own idiom. This forced me to address new ways of identifying and developing material that has been immensely beneficial to my both compositional technique and my musical language. I can only hope that this experience may help to contribute towards a greater awareness of the richness and historical significance of these wonderful fragments

*Look and Bow Down* was first performed at by Christ's Hospital Orchestra and Schola Cantorum at The Barbican on 25 March 2003 conducted by Bruce Grindlay, with soloists Eleanor Meynell (Soprano) and John Bowley (Tenor). Further information on *Look and Bow Down*, and extracts from the recording of the concert can be found at [www.alancharlton.com](http://www.alancharlton.com)

## Alan Charlton

### Choral Works

#### **Look and Bow Down (2003)**

Tenor, mezzo-soprano, SATB chorus, chamber orchestra, 27'

#### **Earth, Sweet Earth (1998)**

SATB chorus and strings (54321), 18'

Winner of 'Première' Composers Competition for William Byrd Singers, 1998

#### **A Solis Ortus Cardine (1999)**

SATB, 4'

Second prize in 2001 European Composition Competition for Cathedral Choirs

#### **Te Lucis Ante Terminum (2001)**

ATB, 2'

#### **Jubilate Deo (2002/3)**

SATB chorus and organ or brass (4 tpts, 3 tbns, tba) and organ, 5'

further details and recordings at:

[www.alancharlton.com](http://www.alancharlton.com)

or contact:

[alancharlton@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:alancharlton@ukonline.co.uk)

c/o 34 Palmerston Street,  
Bedford MK41 7SE  
(+44) (0)1234-267803

We were hoping to print a facsimile of the extant lute accompaniment of *Look and bow down* from British Library Add, MS 31992, but have run out of space. If anyone would like to make a complete transcription and add the music of the missing part for the Christ's Hospital choristers, King's Music will publish it and try to secure a performance. Copies of the MS (in Italian tablature) and text are available on request. CB



Example 1: Charlton, *Look and Bow Down*, bars 20-27

Subito Meno Mosso  
(♩ = c.92)

Example 2: Charlton: *Look and Bow Down*, bars 146-155

Example 3: Charlton, *Look and Bow Down*, bars 127-134

Tempo Primo

Example 4: Charlton, *Look and Bow Down*, bars 99-126

Example 5: Charlton, *Look and Bow Down* bars 277-281

Example 6: Alan Charlton: *Look and Bow Down*, vocal score, bars 708 to 753

Perc./Pno

708 *ff* *fff* *f* *J = c. 92* *Brass* *solo tenor walks offstage*

Pno. *ff* *con ped.*

Orch. Tutti

712 *ff*

M-S. *f* *trionphante* (Elizabeth I) *Look, look,*

S. *ff* *Look and bow down Thine ear, Thine ear O Lord. Look, look and bow down*

A. *ff* *Look and bow down Thine ear O Lord. From Thy bright sphere be - hold and see*

T. *ff* *Look and bow down, and bow down Thine ear O Lord. From Thy bright sphere be - hold and see*

B. *ff* *Look and bow down, bow down Thine ear O Lord. From From Thy bright sphere be - hold and see*

Byrd Original - First Part (note values doubled) *Look, look and bow down*

Pno. *p*

725 *f* *5* *f* *f*

M-S. *look, look and bow down. Be hold and see Thy hand - maid and thy han - di - work, a mongst thy*

S. *f* *Look and bow down thine*

A. *f* *Look and bow*

T. *f* *Bow down thine*

B. *f* *Bow down thine*

Byrd Original - Second Part (note values doubled)

Pno. *p*

732

M.S. priests, of - fe - ring to thee zeal, zeal for in - cense, rea - ching, rea - ching the skies my -

S. O Lord be - hold and see thy hand - maid

A. ear O Lord. Be - hold and see thy hand - maid

T. down thine ear O Lord see, O Lord thy hand - maid

B. ear O Lord. Be - hold and see, see thy hand maid

Pno.

739

M.S. self and scepter sa - cri - fice,

S. From thy bright sphere

A. From thy bright sphere be hold and see thy

T. From thy bright sphere be - hold and see thy

B. From thy bright sphere be - hold and see thy

Pno. Byrd Original - Third Part (note values doubled) This Jo - seph's Lord and Is -

747

M.S. My. soul as - cend as -

S. — be - hold and see.

A. — hand - maid and thy han - di - work.

T. — hand - maid and thy han - di - work.

B. hand - maid and thy han - di - work.

Pno. — ra - el's God, The *mf* *legato* *f p* con ped.



## PHILIP BRETT, 1937–2002

It is natural and inevitable that the names of those whose discoveries have radically affected our knowledge of a subject, or whose interpretations have by their evident rightness become absorbed into our understanding of it, should quickly fade. The generation of scholars who have brought Bach research to its present point are not, for instance, perpetually in our minds whenever we engage with the music. So there can be no better way of honouring Philip Brett's memory in these columns than simply to recall the extent to which his work on Byrd has put us in his debt.

In the late 1950s, when Brett began studying Byrd's songs under Thurston Dart's direction, the consort song repertory was still not well understood. The confusion began with Byrd's publication in 1588 and 1589 of a large number of his consort songs in fully texted versions. They had made their twentieth-century bow in that guise in Fellowes's *English Madrigal School* and were generally thought of (and not always well thought of) as madrigals. Over the years Arkwright, Dent and indeed Fellowes himself had mentioned their history, but the revival of viol playing had not progressed far enough to create much demand for songs with viol accompaniment. Peter Warlock's excellent edition of 22 miscellaneous Elizabethan consort songs was out of print, and Fellowes's recent Byrd volumes of songs from manuscript (15 and 16) were untrustworthy both textually and in questions of ascription. Only Kerman's as yet unpublished dissertation on the English madrigal offered fresh thinking.

Brett had thus many tasks before him. He needed to make a new assessment of the large number of manuscript sources (a discovery with far-reaching implications for Byrd was that many had been commissioned by Edward Paston, who evidently had connections with Sir Philip Sidney's circle and knew Byrd personally). On this basis Brett surveyed the whole surviving song repertory of the time, transcribed the greater part of it, studied its relation to the early verse anthem, traced its role in the theatre, at court and as private recreation, and in due course edited a comprehensive collection of consort songs for *Musica Britannica*. All this provided a background against which the variety and originality of Byrd's long cultivation of the genre could stand out in strong relief. Moreover the corpus of songs presented by Brett in the *Byrd Edition* was much changed. He recovered from manuscript and edited the original consort versions of 25 of the songs that Byrd had published as partsongs, and printed 41 never published by the composer. In reaching this total he dropped eight songs that Fellowes had accepted but added 13 new ones, ten of them anonyma from the Paston manuscripts.

He drew his evidence for these ascriptions partly from his understanding of the sources and partly from style, presenting it in detail in his dissertation *The Songs of William Byrd*, and more succinctly in the edition itself. Stylistic evidence is often dismissed as inadmissible, but here it shows itself a great deal more secure than that of many a scribe; after reading Brett's dissertation John Stevens remarked that he had never believed style capable of proving anything until then. Several of the finest new songs contain allusions that place them in the period of the *Gradualia*, where they appear completely at home. In restoring them to the canon Brett was

not merely importing more of the same, welcome as that might have been, but filling the long gap between Byrd's collections of 1589 and 1611. As a result the unbroken continuity of an important strand in the composer's total output became clear for the first time.

In last December's issue of *Early Music Review* Richard Rastall laments Brett's failure to write his book on Byrd's songs, services and anthems, and it is indeed a thousand pities that he never brought his thorough scholarship and rare musical perceptiveness to bear on the whole vernacular repertory. However, it is good to know that he saw his other great Byrd project, the *Byrd Edition*, through to a conclusion; the last two volumes (12 and 13) have been finished. The volumes he chose to edit himself were those devoted to consort songs from manuscript and the Roman rite. No models for the masses had previously been noticed, but Brett demonstrated that Byrd had taken Taverner's *Mean Mass* as the starting-point for his four-part setting, and that the very personal lyrical quality in all three masses derived ultimately from the extravagant linear writing typified in Taverner's earlier music.

Brett's insights in the five prefaces to his *Gradualia* volumes were of a different kind. Following on from Kerman's work he uncovered further important influences behind Byrd's elaborate liturgical undertaking. The composer had almost certainly used a Gradual printed by Giunta in Venice to plan his work; the Turbae choruses were based on the Roman version of the chant codified by Giovanni Guidetti in a publication of 1586; versions of certain texts that differ from the readings in the Breviary were taken from the Primer, the likely source for a number of pieces; the militant Catholic commentary in the Rheims-Douai English bible was shown to cast light on the powerful political motivation behind the whole enterprise; the unacknowledged presence of the votive mass of the Blessed Sacrament, parts of it placed immediately before the Easter mass, betrayed the influence of the Jesuit Forty Hours Devotion, known to have been observed by English Jesuits. In fact, in common with other recent studies Brett's makes it increasingly plain that Byrd was not only catering for the needs of English Catholics loyal to the Crown, such as his patrons and friends the Petres, but was strongly in sympathy and to some considerable degree involved with the Jesuit missionaries bent on reconverting the country. The situation becomes no easier to imagine. He seems to have survived interrogation and constant surveillance relatively easily; perhaps the authorities didn't take him very seriously.

Over the years I followed Brett's work on 16th- and 17th-century English music, and specially on Byrd, as he wrote it, and I referred to it often. Yet returning to it over a short period for the purpose of this note – to the dissertation, the articles, the editions and their prefaces and textual commentaries – I was struck once again by the combination of scope and depth: the grasp of social background, religious politics, poetry and liturgy on the one hand, and of sixteenth-century musical techniques and Byrd's own characteristic usages on the other. A brief account can touch on only a few of his topics, but whatever his subject his treatment was always enormously enriched by this widely ranging yet detailed backing. Although we shall have nothing more from him, readers are likely to find in his writing not only much to be reminded of but much still to discover.

Oliver Neighbour