



MUSIC @ SAINT BARTHOLOMEW'S

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APRIL 2018



WELCOME!

It is incredible how time flies; despite the best of intentions it has once again been almost two years since the last issue of *Music @ Saint Bartholomew's* went to press. As usual, an enormous amount has happened over that time.

In May 2017, we bid a fond farewell to the elder statesman of our choir, Bobby Barden, who decided to hang up his cassock for good after an incredible seventy-five years of stalwart service. We presented him with a certificate from the RSCM at a special ceremony, during which the vicar made clear that his “singing in the choir will for ever be part of the life and fabric of this church”. Bobby continues to sing with us in a slightly less formal fashion from the congregation, and we want him to know that he will always be welcome to join us in the stalls.

On a happier note, the girls' choir has just returned from an extremely successful trip to Vienna, their third visit to mainland Europe since the choir was inaugurated by then-director Malcolm Wisener in 2003. The tour had a lot in common with Venice (2010) and Prague (2013); it featured top quality singing in spectacular locations, great food and camaraderie, and bitterly cold weather – can we do the next one in the summer please, Mr. Russcher?

The music at our church has an annual running cost in the region of €60,000 – a figure that would be substantially higher were it not for the many people who volunteer their time and skills at no cost. If you have an idea for a fundraising event, and better yet, if you're prepared to run it – please do get in touch. Additionally, we are actively seeking to increase the number of people contributing to our “Friends of the Choir” scheme which is used solely for the maintenance of our choirs and musical tradition. For further details, please see our web site.

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Submissions

Submissions for future issues of this magazine and all enquiries about advertising should be sent to the editor.

Friends of the Choir

This magazine is sent by post to friends of the choir; for further details, contact Megan MacCausland on 01-6688522 or admin@stbartholomews.ie.

Future events

A full schedule of services and events is available on the diary page of the parish web site, located at <http://www.stbartholomews.ie/>.

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NEW FACES

Over the last two years we have welcomed nine boys and seven girls to our choirs.

The new boys are Eugene Lowe, Haris Nasickyte, Conall O’Kelly,

James O’Kelly, Cathal Kennedy, Enzo Pires, Juzé Pires, Ishvar Raj Anand, and Aadi Verma. The new girls are Willow Bardin, Cleo Hennigan, Cristina Johnstone, Maude Kinlay,

Zoe Maguire, Eleanor Selby, and Beth Williams.

We would like to thank them for contributing their time and talents towards the music and liturgy at Saint Bartholomew’s.

JUNIOR GIRLS’ CHOIR

January 2017 saw the inauguration of the junior girls’ choir. This group is solely for girls in primary school to not only gain experience for joining the senior girls’ choir further down the track, but also to have an enjoyable time learning how to use their voices in a choral setting. The girls

receive expert tuition on vocal technique from Anúna’s highly acclaimed soprano Lucy Champion before being shipped over to Andrew Johnstone, who concentrates on their music theory. At the end of each session, they attend the beginning of the senior girls’ rehearsal, where they

practice the Evensong repertoire. Both girls’ choirs then come together for an Evensong service once a month. The junior girls are a wonderful addition to the other choral groups at Saint Bartholomew’s and we look forward to nurturing their skills in the years to come.



CHORAL SCHOLARS

In September 2016 we introduced a choral scholarship scheme, intended as a way for young singers to gain experience with the demanding repertoire in our church and to enhance their skills for use in the wider musical world.

Fergal Cooke, Elias Dempsey, Luke O'Reilly, and Rachel Spratt were awarded the honour of being the first group of scholars, conveniently forming an SATB quartet that is now the backbone of the choir at Evensong. They spent their first term finding their feet and learning

how to hold a line independent of other singers. Their first independently sung Evensong service was 12 February 2017, where they performed canticles by Thomas Morley and Thomas Tallis's anthem, *If ye love me*. Since then, the scholars have sung a number of full Evensong services on their own and continue to go from strength to strength.

We lost Fergal to the call of Edinburgh in September 2017, but we were delighted to appoint Mazzy Ronaldson to the group in January this year. On Ash

Wednesday, they sang the solo quartet in Allegri's setting of the *Miserere* with Mazzy flawlessly hitting the top Cs every time, and on the second Sunday in Lent the choral scholars of Sandford Parish Church joined our scholars at Evensong to sing Gibbons's *Second Service*. Jack Oades has recently joined the group as our replacement tenor and hopes to balance his duties as organ scholar of Saint Patrick's Cathedral with singing for us at Evensong. The future is bright for these young singers.

CHORAL CLERKS

Over the last few years a number of our longest-serving adult singers have had to either eliminate or scale back their involvement with Saint Bartholomew's. This has led to a vicious circle, as those that remain can become frustrated when the calibre of our music inevitably suffers. To resolve this issue we

have introduced the Choral Clerks scheme, where one singer per part is paid a stipend to form the foundation of the choir at Sunday morning and feast day Eucharists throughout the church year. In September 2017 Robin Heather, Emmet Kiberd, and Killian Rogan were appointed as bass, tenor and alto choral

clerks respectively. Emmet has since emigrated to the United Kingdom, but Robin and Killian continue to provide excellent support and stability to the back rows of the choir. We would like to increase the number of appointments in the future pending suitable funding – if you can help, please get in touch.

CONCERTS

Two Christmas concerts and a summer concert have come and gone since the last issue of this magazine was published.

Tim Thurston once again charismatically presented our Christmas concerts, entertaining the audiences with his superb selection of readings and poetry. For Christmas 2016, our boys, girls, sopranos, and altos were joined by the phenomenal harpist Dianne Marshall for a performance of Benjamin Britten's *Ceremony of Carols*. This challenging work

is a masterpiece of twentieth century choral music and was (mostly!) received well by the audience.

In 2017, we decided to perform our Christmas concert twice in succession because previous years' concerts always sold out; in 2016, it sold out a full two weeks before show time! The more conventional selection of carols for 2017 consisted of crowd favourites such as *The Holly* and *the Ivy*, *Masters in this Hall*, and John Rutter's arrangement of *The Twelve Days of Christmas*, the lat-

ter livened up considerably by Tim's reading of poor Emily's increasingly anguished avian woes.

The decision to perform the concert on two nights was the right one: not only have we successfully increased our audience base, but now those audiences can have a bit more elbow room! The Christmas concert is one of Saint Bartholomew's cornerstone annual events, and we are grateful that the demand is there for it to expand and grow in the years to come.



COME AND SING CRUCIFIXION

During Holy Week in April 2017, we were delighted to welcome a large number of singers, both young and old, to Saint Bartholomew's Church to sing The Crucifixion by John Stainer. This piece, also known as A Meditation on the Sacred Passion of the Holy Redeemer, was composed in 1887 with texts written by W. J. Sparrow Simpson. The work was intended to fit the scope of most parish church choirs. It was scored for SATB

choir and organ, and it also features solos for tenor and bass. Whilst not performed all that often in Ireland, it is a popular work and contains the well known Victorian classic anthem, God so Loved the World.

We were delighted to have Tristan Russcher as the director and Andrew Johnstone playing the organ. The soloists were Mark Bowyer (tenor) and Robin Heather (bass), both of whom had previously sung the solos in their respec-

tive churches almost thirty years prior! It was great to see a cohort of young singers along with some regular Come and Sing attendees, who are always supportive of these events.

Special thanks go to Tristan, Andrew, Robin, and Mark, as well as to everyone who joined in the singing and those who came simply to listen. We are most grateful to Saint Bartholomew's for their continued support of RSCM Ireland.



GIRLS' CHOIR TRIP TO VIENNA

Last December, our girls and men embarked upon an adventure to Austria to participate in the Vienna International Advent Singing Festival. It had been four years since the group had been on their last tour (Prague, December 2013) and since it had been such a positive experience, we decided to take on another European capital city. Meeting at the Aer Lingus check-in desk at 5:00am was painful but the group was nonetheless in very good spirits! After arriving in Vienna, our

coach whisked us away to the four-star ARCOTEL Kaiserwasser, located on the Danube River just on the outskirts of the city. The metro station was just across the road from the hotel and allowed us quick access to the city centre to warm up with some Glühwein and pretzels.

The following morning, we were treated to a guided coach and walking tour of the city in which we visited a range of sites, from the historic and state-ly Hofburg Palace to the modern and outrageously

coloured Hundertwasser House. We ate lunch at the Rathauskeller, a majestically cavernous upscale restaurant beneath the town hall in the city centre. There was plenty of free time in the afternoon to browse the famous Viennese Christmas markets before our first musical appointment that evening when the group entertained the market crowds in front of the spectacular Schönbrunn Palace with a collection of Christmas carols.

We had a free day on



Saturday, and most of us used it to further explore the city and immerse ourselves in its culture. Many of the girls went ice skating, while others took in various museums, operas, coffeehouses, and architecturally decadent churches. One of the highlights of the trip was that evening's group dinner in Gumpoldskirchen, a small wine village to the south of Vienna. The restaurant was nicknamed "Gunther Fox's" by the group, as its ambiance was very reminiscent of Dublin's Johnnie Fox's, right down to the fiddler and accordion player who entertained us (not to mention the restaurant staff who looked on in amusement as we raucously sung along!). Halfway through the meal, we were delighted to hear similarly enthusiastic singing emanating from another dining room, and soon enough we were joined by Corul Dorulet, a choir based near Cluj-Napoca, Romania, that was also participating in the festival. What followed was an impromptu (and loud!) singing session. The language barrier didn't matter—the room was all

smiles, laughter, and two groups bonding through a shared love of music. The energy from that dinner followed us on the coach back to the city, where one can only imagine what was going through our coach driver's head—surely that drive was made at a slightly higher decibel level than he was used to!

On Sunday, we enjoyed performing on three separate occasions. Our first destination was the Katholische Kirche Altlerchenfeld, where we sang Mozart (of course—one cannot do a singing tour in Vienna without a little Mozart!) at High Mass and enjoyed bathing in an eight-second acoustic from the choir gallery at the west end. In the afternoon we gave a half-hour performance to an audience of over one thousand people in the Rathaus, which is perhaps one of the most magnificent venues in which we've ever performed. The room was the definition of palatial—curved, gilded ceilings; intricately carved archways; balconies overlooking it all, and about twenty chandeliers! Our final act

was joining with the other choirs in the festival to sing *Ode an die Freude* before the mayor of Vienna—or at least, that was our final "official" performance. At a reception afterwards, we once again found ourselves in the company of Corul Dorulet, where we couldn't help but pick up where we'd left off the night before.

We returned to Dublin on the Monday before Christmas, just in time to prepare ourselves for our own Christmas services in Saint Bartholomew's. In all, the tour was a wonderful experience, and we give our most sincere thanks to everyone who helped organise it. Thank you also to our chaperones and, of course, thank you to the girls and men of the choir, who continue to enrich our musical tradition and reputation. Vienna's renowned role in the history of music certainly makes it difficult to name a more appropriate city in which we could have celebrated choral music at Christmastime. We hope to visit another European destination (did someone say Cluj-Napoca?) in the not-too-distant future.



VIENNA - IN THEIR OWN WORDS



It seems apt that during some of Ireland's coldest weather in years, I would be writing about the girls' choir trip to Vienna in December. Despite the freezing churches, somewhat awkward Christmas fair concerts, and shocking snow globe prices, our time in Vienna was incredible and managed to bring

the choir even closer together.

We stayed in a gorgeous hotel, complete with a giant gingerbread house and edible Christmas tree decorations in the lobby. Food would come to be a common theme throughout the Vienna trip, as we indulged in schnitzel the size of my face and junk food that was uncharacteristically cheap for Vienna.

Our schedule was kindly organised so that we would have a lot of time to explore the wonderful city of Vienna. A personal favourite outing of mine was trekking out to the House

of Music. It took what felt like a million trains and a fair walk to get there, meaning we were all flexing our amateur dramatics in who was the most tired or thirsty, but the museum itself had us all dumbfounded. You have not lived until you've seen Tristan conducting a philharmonic orchestra simulation!

This trip to Vienna was amazing. I hope we can all 'skrrt' back there soon.

A huge thank you to the girls, men, supervisors, Father Andrew (the real MVP) and, of course, Tristan.

What I loved most about the Vienna trip, obviously apart from our delightful singing, was the amount of time we had to experience the city when we were not singing. We could go anywhere! We could go out and explore the beautiful city that is Vienna or we could just stay at the hotel and enjoy its many amenities. Of all our activities,

what I loved most was the ice skating. It was an amazing scene. Just picture fairy lights everywhere, a giant snow globe, picturesque market stalls, the gorgeous smell of the Viennese hotdogs, and Santa playing Christmas songs on the saxophone. It was an all around amazing trip and I would like to thank Tristan for providing us



with this fantastic opportunity. I honestly don't think I could've had more fun if I tried.

The most memorable part of the trip for me was the visit we made to a quaint Viennese restaurant, where the Romanian choir were also going to be eating (a welcome surprise!).

It was roughly a one hour drive to the restaurant, and although everyone was tired, it was a nice outing for the whole group and we were all looking forward to it. The small village we arrived in was beautiful, and the backdrop of the countryside wasn't bad ei-

ther! When we entered the restaurant I immediately felt welcomed, as the owners were so friendly and the live music was very uplifting. Although the food was delicious, the real highlight of the evening for me was when we got to listen to the Romanian choir sing their beautiful music, and it was nice to see a bit of their culture. We even got to sing along! We then sang our most beloved songs for them, including Have Yourself a Merry Little Christ-



mas, and it was very warming to see two choirs of very different backgrounds be connected by a love of music. The night continued with more music and laughs and everyone went home singing and smiling!





Overall, it's clear that the whole choir had an absolutely incredible trip in Vienna and I don't think

any of us were able to thank Tristan enough for all that he planned and organised for us, from organising a whole day for us to go ice skating, sightseeing and walking around the Christmas markets, to getting a big group of us on and off the metro without losing anyone, which was a big accomplishment in itself. We were able to fit so much

into the days we had, from performing in the cathedral for its Sunday morning service to visiting the winery, visiting the music museum nearby, and lots of sightseeing led by our designated Austrian. It was an unforgettable trip for everyone and a huge thanks is needed for Tristan for all that he does for us.



Thanks to our designated Austrian, Philippe, all forty or so choristers made it back happily and safely after five days spent merrily browsing around the gorgeous Viennese Christmas markets and bursting into a choral singing battle in the middle of a restaurant. A trip to the House of Music of Vienna was a real treat, where we got to show off our superior music skills such as playing “Doe a Deer” on the piano

stairs, conducting the Viennese Philharmonic Orchestra, and enjoying some remixed Mozart tunes.

An attempt to show our gratitude to our beloved Tristan involved various drinking vessels and some chocolates; however, we found it impossible to express sufficiently how much we appreciate his thumbs up at the end of our cacophonous Christmas carols. Needless to say, a nightly Bible study ses-



sion and a strict lights-out-by-seven rule alongside the early morning yoga kept us all sprightly and on top form for our busy days...



Our trip to Vienna was amazing. I have never been

to such a stunning city. Everything was so clean and the architecture was so alternative to anything I've ever seen before. My favourite parts by far were the Christmas markets and the ice skating. The markets had such a warm, Christmas vibe to them and got us all into the Christmas

spirit. The ice skating was a lot of fun. The track itself was like a maze, nothing like any of the ice rinks here. I loved how different and big it was. The trip was definitely the best fun I've had in a long time and I'd definitely revisit the city at Christmastime again.

Vienna was one of the most enjoyable experiences in my life, from the music to the architecture and sightseeing and, of course, singing Christmas songs all through the night! I learnt lots about Vienna's

history through our guided tour and I learnt even more about Vienna's historical churches and world famous composers! Many memories were made in Vienna, definitely looking forward to our next trip!





THROUGH THE EYES OF A SUPERVISOR

I had the arduous duty of acting as a supervisor and extra singer on the recent girls' choir tour to Vienna. How tiresome it was to stroll the Viennese markets with their picture-perfect Victoriana, fragrant with cinnamon and Glühwein and aglow with imperial Austrian cheer. Supervising duties included keeping track of fleet-footed Dublin shopaholic teenagers. It was like herding cats as they hot-footed it between oversized pretzel stalls, tasteful impossible-to-carry glass bauble sellers, and purveyors of bratwurst disgustingly but deliciously stuffed with a melted substance in some way related to cheese.

Ice skating along little trails in the shadow of the monumental Vienna City Hall was a delightful precursor to a concert in the same City Hall whose grandiose ballrooms resembled a scene from Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* or something out of J. K. Rowling's imagination. Chandeliers of priceless blown glass dangled above our heads atmos-

pherically as we performed our programme, the scraggly teenagers angelically clad in Saint Bart's green. Andrew Johnstone accompanied us rapturously upon the apparently mythical Bösendorfer piano. "Each time you play bass note, it's like breaking up a piece of chocolate," said Andrew later, with an uncharacteristically far-off look in his eye.

Other highlights included singing Mozart Mass in an exquisitely ornate and cavernous church, Tristan pausing wistfully between phrases to allow the echo to work its magic. We had the pleasure of visiting an alpine beer hall in a

remote, picture-perfect village on the outskirts of the city. We made every effort to see to it that Tristan quit his job on the coach ride back by giving heartfelt but tone-deaf renditions of a number of favourite Christmas carols, as well as murdering a number of other choral favourites.

Still, he persisted, and his loyal following of usually phone-addicted screenagers, at his behest, sang their hearts out at every concert and acquitted themselves wonderfully.

I suppose if I'm asked again I'll take on the role of supervisor, under duress of course.

Susannah Spratt







BOYS' CHOIR TRIP TO BELFAST

Our boys and men went to Belfast on an overnight trip in May 2017. Saturday morning greeted us with quite a soggy drive up north, but the clouds had begun to lighten as the coach drew closer to the city. Our first stop was a short lunchtime concert at Saint Anne's Cathedral (also called Belfast Cathedral) on Donegall Street, whose stunning acoustic made for an excellent performance of Vivaldi's Gloria. Saint Anne's foundation stone was laid in 1899 and its nave was consecrated five years later. Architect-

urally, it is all high ceilings and swooping stone archways with some interesting local touches here and there, including the Titanic pall: a huge indigo cloth that is hand-embroidered with gold crosses, crescents, and Stars of David to commemorate the 1,517 lives lost in the 1912 tragedy. Saint Anne's is the focal point of the Church of Ireland's presence in Belfast, and it was a privilege to sing in such a renowned location.

Following our performance, we walked to the Park Inn by Radisson, our

rather stylish and sophisticated base camp for the night. Its location directly in the city centre allowed easy access to Belfast's top attractions, and with only one night's stay, it was important to make the most of our time! To that end, we gave ourselves only time enough for check-in and luggage drop off before heading out to Great Victoria Street Station to catch a train to the Titanic Quarter, the city's number one tourist attraction. The boys had ample time to explore the museum and the remains of the utterly mas-



sive berth where the ship was constructed. A few tour participants wandered next door to the S. S. Nomadic, a former tender and the only surviving ship of the White Star Line. It has been restored to its original appearance, complete with trademark orange and black funnel, and operates today as a museum.

Of course, for most of the boys (and adults too, for that matter!), the highlight of Saturday was our group dinner at Nando's, where we took over the entire upper floor and worked diligently to deplete the restaurant's chicken supply. The staff certainly earned their wages that night! It's meals like these that are the true bonding experience for our choristers, allowing them to chat together and share an experience different from the norm. Besides, after so many hours working together to perfect what comes out of our mouths, it's a real treat to let finally loose and stuff ourselves to the brim with peri-peri marinade!

It was back to business on Sunday, however. We returned to Saint Anne's to sing Vierne and Finzi

at the morning Eucharist, joining with the girls and men of their choir. With plenty of free time built into the schedule for that afternoon before our evening service, the trip participants had plenty of options. Some opted for a lazy lunch from one of the many options at the CastleCourt Shopping Centre; others took the touristy route and squeezed in a few more sights. We all met back for the Evensong service at the Parish Church of Saint George on High Street. Unlike Saint Anne's, Saint George's was a small, cosy affair, with its four iconic Corinthian columns outside belying an interior of warm colours, rich paintings, and a choir stall setup reminiscent of our own at Saint Bart's. Saint George's also has quite a remarkable history—it opened in 1816, but it is situated upon an ancient ecclesiastical site dating back over one thousand years. It sustained substantial damage during the Troubles, its storied location unfortunately placing it in the cross hairs of numerous IRA bombings, but it survived and on that Sunday evening it was an

excellent venue to join the parish choir in singing Noble in B minor and Vaughan Williams's Let All the World. It was also a great chance to catch up with David Falconer, a former organist at Saint Bartholomew's who is now Saint George's director of music. After the service, the church was kind enough to provide us with a light supper of hors d'oeuvres and biscuits. Before long, it was time to board the coach for the trek back to Dublin.

The boys and men had a great time in Belfast, and there were many benefits for the boys in particular. Going on trips as a group is one of the most important—and rewarding—things a choir can do. The kids get an opportunity to bond and to work together as a group in ways that aren't possible when we're just doing the normal run of rehearsals. Trips build friendships, create lasting memories, and strengthen Saint Bart's reputable music programme. Our thanks go out to everyone who works to make these trips possible, and we hope to travel again soon.

A CHORISTER'S PERSPECTIVE

Last May, our choir went to Belfast to perform at Saint Anne's Cathedral and Saint George's Church. After we arrived in Belfast, we had our rehearsal at Saint Anne's Cathedral. Then, after the rehearsal was over, we took the train to the Titanic Museum. It was an amazing experience to visit the museum and to learn all about the history of the ship from the time it was built to the time it sank in the North Atlantic Ocean.

After the museum trip, we went to Nando's

for dinner. We all had a great time eating and chatting with each other. It was a lovely night and a fun dinner.

The next day we had breakfast at the hotel and left to Saint Anne's Cathedral for our first performance. After lunch we had our last performance at Saint George's. Finally we had to say goodbye to Belfast and took the bus back to Dublin.

Overall it was an excellent experience for me and it was also my first trip



with the choir. I had a lot of fun and I enjoyed it very much. I have to say thank you to Mr. Russcher for his dedication towards the choir and for bringing us on this great trip.



A SEQUENCE FOR SAINT BARTHOLOMEW

In 2016, our organist Andrew Johnstone began work on a new composition for our patronal festival. Andrew very kindly donated the substantial work to the choir in honour of the church's sesquicentenary celebrations and the premiere was given on Saint Bartholomew's Day, Thursday 24 August, 2017. Entitled Sequence for Saint Bartholomew, the composition is for mixed voices, organ, and carillon. The music of this anthem is based on one of fourteen hymn tunes composed for our church by William H. Vipond Barry, organist and director of the choir from 1884 to 1938. Intended for the hymns Jesu, meek and gentle and Jesu, gentlest Saviour, the tune eventually found a place in the

1960 edition of the Irish Church Hymnal (no. 583, where it is entitled 'St Bartholomew') and, in 1998, on the first CD issued by our choir. Professor N. J. A. Williams's English paraphrase of the medieval sequence proper to Mass on Saint Bartholomew's Day was tailor-made for Vipond Barry's tune, and may be sung to it as a congregational hymn.

Dr. Johnstone expertly weaves Vipond Barry's tune into a composition that bears a passing structural resemblance to Bairstow's famous anthem, Blessed

City, Heavenly 'Salem'. An obligato carillon part is suggested in the score and for the premiere performance we were joined by David O'Shea who, through a combination of counting and ESP, managed to synchronise the church bells with the organ accompaniment in the central section. This superb anthem will be a mainstay in the choral repertoire for years to come and we are immensely thankful to Dr. Johnstone for donating the work to the choir library.

Tristan Russcher



HOW CHURCH MUSIC SURVIVED TUDOR REFORM

Whereas Lutherans can pinpoint their Reformation to the single date of 31 October 1517 when Martin Luther sent his Ninety-Five

Theses to the Archbishop of Mainz, members of the Anglican Communion must look back on a series of administrative and

doctrinal revolutions that took place over decades, if not centuries. During successive Tudor reformations under Henry VIII and his

two Protestant heirs, Edward VI and Elizabeth I, elaborate liturgical music was repeatedly censured by Humanists, Evangelicals, and Puritans. Yet the activity and creativity of Anglican musicians prevailed, quick to recover from mid-seventeenth century deprivations and to draw renewed strength from the Victorian High Church movement. Having just observed the official quincenary of Protestantism, it is worth remarking that the Anglican choral tradition remains, in an increasingly secular world, one of the English Reformation's most enduring outcomes.

The possibility that England's leading mid-Tudor musician, Thomas Tallis, may have lost his job as organist of Dover Priory when that institution was dissolved in 1535 was long thought to be symptomatic of Henry's reforms. If Tallis had to forfeit his livelihood to the king's ruthless suppression of medieval monasticism, then why not also hundreds, if not thousands, of his fellow musicians? Yet the reality was by no means so stark. Although from 1536 to 1540

more than seven hundred religious houses were dissolved, those that had been able to employ paid singers (and that were not in any case statutorily prohibited from using polyphonic music) numbered a mere twenty-six. Of that number, fourteen abbeys were re-founded as diocesan cathedrals; therefore, the choirs lost to Henry's dissolutions cannot have numbered more than twelve. Furthermore, former monastic revenues were generously allocated to the new-foundation cathedrals to support choirs, consisting chiefly of lay singers, that flourish to this day (Marsh 2007, 52–97).

Though the old Latin liturgies were left untouched by Henry's reforms, his reign nonetheless saw the translation into English of both the Bible and the private prayer manual known as the *Primer*. Most significantly from a musical point of view, however, was the introduction of the first order of vernacular public liturgy. In 1544, facing war with France, the king felt that national prayers for victory would be more efficacious if they

were not restricted to Latinists, so he duly sanctioned an English translation of the Litany, then a processional form of service. A setting for five voices 'according to the notes used in the King's Majesty's Chapel' is known to have been printed in London on 26 June and immediately purchased for the choir of Durham Cathedral. No copies of that seminal publication are known to still exist, and the details of its imprint (documented in the early eighteenth century) mention no composer's name. Yet the music it contained was almost certainly the celebrated Five-Part Litany by Tallis, preserved for posterity in later prints and manuscripts (Johnstone 2016).

Later in 1544, in discussing drafts for further vernacular processions, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer, informed the king that "in mine opinion, the song that shall be made thereunto would not be full of notes, but, as near as may be, for every syllable a note, so that it may be sung distinctly and devoutly" (le Huray 1978, 5–6). Though

the drafts came to nothing, Cranmer's words seem to corroborate the Humanist Desiderius Erasmus's objection that "modern church music is so constructed that the congregation cannot hear one distinct word; the choristers themselves do not understand what they are singing, yet according to priests and monks it constitutes the whole of religion: they have so much of it in England that the monks attend to nothing else" (Froude 1894, 116).

Given that polyphony had been used only in a small minority of English abbeys, Erasmus's complaints were clearly far-fetched. There is nonetheless abundant evidence of a widespread distrust of elaborate church music during Edward's reign (1547–1552): edicts proscribing the traditional repertory of votive antiphons; the ascetic adapted plain-

chant of John Merbecke's Book of Common Prayer Noted; the relentlessly syllabic new genre of the Short Service. But this is not the whole story: as well as showing that the syllabic style was not incompatible with musical subtlety, Tallis and his shorter-lived contemporary John Sheppard sometimes set the new prayer book texts on a grand scale, showing too that fugal elements and polychoral effects were not incompatible with verbal clarity (le Huray 1978, 8–9, 22, 198, 205–8).

Queen Mary I's undoing of her half-brother's radical reforms lasted less than six years, yet still allowed her composers to indulge in a final flowering of the Henrician style. Following the accession of her half-sister Elizabeth in 1558, the rapid return from continental exile of an influential body of Protestants brought about an

inevitable reversion to the English prayer book and its music, both plain and fancy. To be sure, Puritanism quickly came to view that music as a "popish abuse", one attack being levelled specifically at the division of cathedral choirs into decani and cantoris halves that "toss the psalms in most places like tennis balls" (Fielde 1572, sig. C3v). But such diatribe was to go unheeded: only a few months into her reign, the queen had decreed that all choral foundations were to continue in their endowments, and that in addition to the liturgical requirements of The Book of Common Prayer, choirs were permitted to sing anthems "in the best sort of melody and music that may be conveniently devised" (Elizabeth I 1559, sig. C4r–v). The last of the Tudor monarchs had safely delivered church music into the new age.

Andrew Johnstone

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