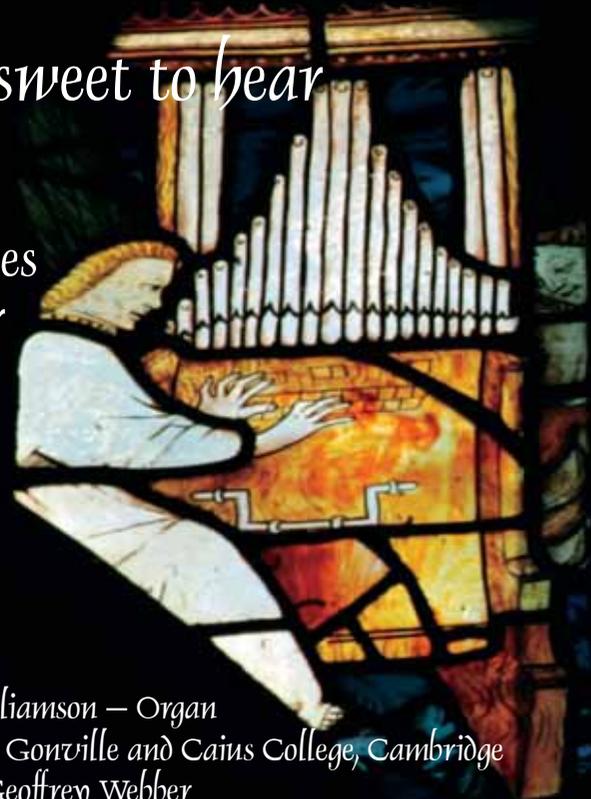




More sweet to hear

*Organs
and Voices
of Tudor
England*



*Magnus Williamson – Organ
The Choir of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge
directed by Geoffrey Webber*

And, so that young men as much as maidens, and old men as well as children, might praise the Lord of Heaven and praise him in the height – not merely in drumming and dancing, but with strings and pipe, and pipes of organs moreover, as well as with well-tuned cymbals – he had a pair of organs made whereof (it was thought) an example more beautiful to behold, more sweet to hear, and more ingenious in its construction could not readily be found in any monastery throughout the whole realm.

Item ut haberent tam juvenes quam virgines, quam senes etiam simul cum junioribus, etsi non in tympano et choro, in cordis tamen et organo, in organorumque fistulis, velut in simbalis bene sonantibus, laudare Dominum de celis et collaudare eum in excelsis, fieri fecit quoddam par organorum quo aut visu pulchrius, aut auditu suavius, aut curiosum magis in opere, non putatur posse de facili in aliquo monasterio infra totum regnum reperiri.

One of England's premier Benedictine monasteries, St Albans Abbey enjoyed a late flowering of its intellectual and devotional life, exemplified by the abbacy of John Wheathampstead. The mid-fifteenth-century chronicler of St Albans commemorated the purchase of an organ for the then princely sum of £50, one of many good works accomplished by Abbot Wheathampstead in the 1450s. With ringing – and only partially apposite – quotations from two psalms sung daily within the abbey's liturgy, the chronicler reveals to us a late-medieval worshipper's ideal church organ: a fitting visual adornment to the abbey's physical fabric, a sonorous stimulant to devotion, an exemplar of human ingenuity and a symbol of divine order.

Although very costly and volubly memorialised, Wheathampstead's organ was in other ways unremarkable. Many hundreds of instruments were built during the later middle ages, not only in monastic churches of most sizes and descriptions, but in cathedrals, collegiate churches and chapels, the households of the wealthier magnates, and many of England's 10,000-odd parish churches. An increasingly ubiquitous culture of liturgical embellishment, combined with the changing technology of organ-making, ensured

Editions used in this recording

John Caldwell (ed.), *Early Tudor Organ Music, I: Music for the Office*, Early English Church Music 6 (London: Stainer & Bell/British Academy, 1965) (tracks 1, 2 and 3); Denis Stevens (ed.), *Early Tudor Organ Music, II: Music for the Mass*, EECM 10 (London, 1967) (track 4); Denis Stevens (ed.), *The Mulliner Book*, Musica Britannica 1 (London: Stainer & Bell/Royal Musical Association, 2/1954) (tracks 3, 6, 9–13, 15); John Caldwell (ed.), *Tudor Keyboard Music c. 1520–80*, MB 66 (London: Stainer & Bell/Musica Britannica Trust, 1995) (tracks 5, 7–8, 14–15); Robin Langley (ed.), *English Organ Music, 7: The Duet Repertoire 1530–1830* (London: Novello, 1988) (tracks 16 and 20). Magnus Williamson prepared faburden and chant verses in consultation with John Caldwell (track 1) and John Harper (tracks 2–3), as well as metrical psalm verses (track 15). Andrew Johnstone provided an edition of William Byrd's *Second Service* based on John Barnard's *First Book of Selected Church Music* of 1641 and the contemporaneous *Batten Organ Book* (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Tenbury 791). Thomas Morley's *Out of the deep* was sung in an edition prepared by Geoffrey Webber; this edition uses the organ part as found in Christ Church, Oxford, MS 6 (which also contains the part for "Teach me, O Lord") and contains a hypothetical reconstruction of the chorus parts in four parts rather than five.

Acknowledgements

The Master and Fellows of St John's College, Cambridge for use of the Chapel on 27th & 28th June 2005.

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<http://www.earlyorgans.org.uk/> & <http://www.rco.org.uk/>
Martin Goetze and Dominic Gwynn for the organ photographs and diagrams, and their support during the recording. <http://www.goetzegwynn.co.uk/>

Cover photographs depict stained glass windows made in the mid-fifteenth century by the king's glazier, John Prudde, for the Beauchamp Chapel at St Mary's Collegiate Church, Warwick; photography by **John McQueen** (courtesy of the Royal College of Organists)

Photograph of Geoffrey Webber by Yao Liang.

The Wetheringsett Organ (by Martin Goetze and Dominic Gwynn, 2002)

Stop list:	Basses (wood, C–f#)	10'
	Regal	5'
	Principal	5'
	Principal	5'
	Octave	2½'
	Octave	2½'
	Fifteenth	1¼'

Key compass: C–a2 (46 notes), corresponding both to the number of grooves in the Wetheringsett soundboard and the compass of the surviving music.

Pitch: Based on the dummy pipes of the 1630 organ by Dallam now at Stanford on Avon, Northamptonshire (the earliest unaltered English pipes in existence), which are about 1½ semitones above A440 at ‘choir’ pitch (a perfect fourth higher than sounding pitch).

Tuning: As recommended by Arnolt Schlick in his *Spiegel der Orgelmacher* published in Heidelberg in 1511.

The Wingfield Organ (by Martin Goetze and Dominic Gwynn, 2001)

Stop list:	Principal	5'
	Principal	2½'
	Principal	2½'
	Octave	1¼'
	Octave	1¼'

The pipes are all open, and made of oak. The five-foot principal has no slider, but the other four ranks can all be drawn separately. The pitch and scaling of the stops are indicated by the spacing and the toe-hole sizes on the old soundboard.

Key compass: F–a² without g^{#2} (40 notes), corresponding to the number of grooves in the Wingfield soundboard.

Pitch: As for the Wetheringsett Organ.

Tuning: A modification of the Erlangen tuning, a Pythagorean tuning system, based on pure fifths.

that the later middle ages witnessed an almost exponential growth in the number of instruments being built. Smaller key-sizes and more sophisticated mechanisms enabled organists to develop an increasingly idiomatic and virtuosic repertory by 1500.

The Early English Organ Project

Although historians have long been aware of the importance of the organ within the late-medieval English church, little is known of the music played upon the instrument before the sixteenth century. The sound of the early English organ has been equally difficult to determine: perhaps unsurprisingly Tudor organ music remains relatively unfamiliar to listeners and performers. No organ built in England before the later seventeenth century survives in anything approaching a playable state. The aim of the *Early English Organ Project* has been to use what little remains by way of physical evidence to reconstruct two organs of c. 1530, and so to help revive this largely lost tradition.

The evidence in question is a pair of soundboards – central components within any organ, and hence essential clues as to its layout, size, pipework and likely sonority. The larger of the two soundboards was discovered in a farmhouse at Wetheringsett in Suffolk, where conversion work in 1977 revealed a strange-looking door with rows of holes on one side and grooves on the other. The organbuilder, Noël Mander, recognised this as an organ soundboard of great age, constructed from four pieces of Baltic oak. A second soundboard, made from a single piece of walnut, was rediscovered in 1995 by another organbuilder, Dominic Gwynn, elsewhere in Suffolk; although it had occasionally been seen and described between the 1790s and the 1950s, it had seemed lost until Gwynn stumbled upon it almost by chance in the churchyard coffin-house of St Andrew’s church, Wingfield.

Both soundboards probably date from around 1530 or soon after; they are thus the sole vestiges of pre-Reformation English organ-building save for an empty, if exceptionally

fine, organ-case at Old Radnor; by happy coincidence they are also coeval with one of the most fertile periods of organ composition in English history. These archaeological re-discoveries corroborate the archival evidence provided by two well-known contracts, for the organ made by Anthony Duddyngton for All Hallows by the Tower in London in 1519, and the one by John Howe and John Clymmowe for Holy Trinity in Coventry in 1526. The discoveries aroused the interest of a group of people assembled under the chairmanship of the late Michael Bowers, who formed the *Early English Organ Project*, and who raised money for the reconstruction of two organs, using copies of the two soundboards as their starting-points. Much of the research undertaken as part of the project was guided by Professor John Harper of the University of Wales in Bangor, Director General of the Royal School of Church Music, and historian of music and liturgy in the English church.

Research into the construction and specifications of the organs was carried out by the organ builders Martin Goetze and Dominic Gwynn, who built the two instruments in 2001 and 2002. The problem for the organbuilders was not just to interpret and copy the soundboards themselves, but to choose models for those elements of the organs not provided by the English evidence. The soundboards gave the number of channels, sliders (or stops), layout of pipes, including the pipe front, and a good idea of the stoplist and pipe scales, from the space allocated to the pipes. The overall size gave the plan of the organ, and the position of the front pipe holes gave some idea of the appearance. From the shape and distribution of pipe holes, for instance, Goetze and Gwynn determined that the Wetheringsett pipes were nearly all made of metal, whereas wooden pipework was used more extensively in the Wingfield instrument. This accounts for the clearly differentiated tonal qualities of the two instruments which can be heard on this recording.

The two soundboards also give reliable indications of the compass of each instrument, an important factor in determining the relationship between the instruments and the surviving musical repertory. The Wetheringsett organ had forty-six keys, which matches

19. Out of the deep have I called to thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice.
 O let thine ears consider well: the voice of my complaint.
 If thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss: O Lord, who may abide it?
 For there is mercy with thee: therefore shalt thou be feared.
 I look for the Lord; my soul doth wait for him: in his word is my trust.
 My soul flyeth unto the Lord: before the morning watch, I say, before the morning watch.
 O Israel trust in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy: and with him is plenteous redemption.
 And he shall redeem Israel: from all his sins.
 Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost;
 As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen
 Psalm 130

So come I to thy mercy gate, where mercy doth abound,
 Requiring mercy for my sin, to heal my deadly wound.
 O Lord I need not to repeat what I do beg or crave,
 Thou know'st, O Lord, before I ask, the thing that I would have.
 Mercy, good Lord, mercy I ask: this is the total sum;
 For mercy, Lord, is all my suit: Lord, let thy mercy come!

Text by John Marckant (d. 1586 or earlier), in *The Whole Booke of Psalmes* (London: John Day, 1562: STC 2430), pp. [xliiii–xliv]. Text in parentheses is omitted here.

17. Teach me O Lord, the way of thy statutes: and I shall keep it unto the end.
 Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law: yea, I shall keep it with my whole heart.
 Make me to go in the path of thy commandements: for therein is my desire.
 Incline my heart unto thy testimonies: and not to covetousness.
 O turn away mine eyes, lest they behold vanity: and quicken thou me in thy way.
 O stablish thy word in thy servant: that I may fear thee.
 Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost;
 As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen
 Psalm 119, verses 33–8

18. My soul doth magnify the Lord: and my spirit rejoiceth in God my Saviour.
 For he hath regarded: the lowliness of his handmaiden.
 For behold, from henceforth: all generations shall call me blessed.
 For he that is mighty hath magnified me: and holy is his Name.
 And his mercy is on them that fear him: throughout all generations.
 He hath shewed strength with his arm:
 he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
 He hath put down the mighty from their seat: and hath exalted the humble and meek.
 He hath filled the hungry with good things: and the rich he hath sent empty away.
 He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel: as he promised to our forefathers,
 Abraham and his seed, for ever.
 Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost;
 As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen
 St Luke 1, verses 46–55

the description of Clymmowe's Coventry organ (which had 27 naturals and 19 sharps) and which suggests a key compass of C (or 'double C fa ut') to a2. The presence of forty grooves in the Wingfield soundboard suggests a smaller instrument with a shorter compass, from F to a² (without g^{#2}). Both organs were based on a pitch-standard just over seven semitones higher than modern concert pitch (with a C pipe five feet long), with five-foot ranks forming the principal chorus for both instruments; the Wetheringsett organ also had a nineteen-note rank of 'basses', or 10-foot pipes, which sounded an octave below the principal rank, but which would appear to have sounded only in the lower octave-and-a-half of the keyboard, played by the left hand.

Times and Seasons: pre-Reformation English organ music

The organ was used selectively within the late-medieval liturgy: at principal services on certain grades of feast-day, during the votive mass of the Virgin Mary, and to dignify occasional ceremonies such as royal and episcopal entries or popular festivities. No sources of keyboard music survive in England before the reign of Henry VIII, save for the mid-fourteenth-century Robertsbridge Codex (which contains secular French, not sacred English music) and an early-fifteenth-century fragment (whose contents can only tenuously be associated with the keyboard). This obscures much of the history of the pre-Reformation organ, in terms of evolving repertoires, playing styles, technical developments and ritual uses. Musicians had probably begun to regard the organ as a polyphonic replacement for human voices by 1400, rather than (or as well as) a monophonic accompaniment to sung chant, although we cannot be sure when, where or how this first took place.

By the mid-fifteenth century, however, the organ was fast emerging as a solo instrument. In continental Europe, the Faenza Codex (c. 1420) and the Buxheim Orgelbuch (c. 1470) provide emphatic evidence of a growing culture of specialised keyboard virtuosity. Although no comparable English sources survive, we can be quite sure that organ-playing was becoming increasingly skilled and specialised. Henry Abyndon, perhaps



Wetheringsett Organ

14. Be light and glad, in God rejoice,
Which is our strength and stay:
Be joyful and lift up your voice
To Jacob's God, I say.

Blow as it were in the new moon,
With trumpets of the best:
As it is used to be done,
At any solemn feast.

Prepare your instruments so meet,
Some joyful psalm to sing;
Strike up with harp and lute so sweet,
On every pleasant string.

For this is unto Israel,
A statute and a trade:
A law that must be kept full well,
Which Jacob's God hath made.

Metrical translation of Psalm 81 by John Hopkins (d. 1570), in *The Whole Booke of Psalmes* (London: John Day, 1562: STC 2430), pp. 201–4: verses 1–4 of 18.

15. The Lamentation of a Sinner

O Lord turn not away thy face from him that lieth prostrate:
Lamenting for his sinful life before thy mercy gate:
Which gate thou openest wide to those that do lament their sin;
Shut not that gate against me Lord, but let me enter in.

[O Lord, thou know'st what things be past, and eke the things that be,
Thou know'st also what is to come: nothing is hid from thee.
Before the heavens and earth were made thou know'st what things were then,
As all things else that have been since, among the sons of men.]

And call me not to mine accompts, how I have lived here:
For then I know right well (O Lord) how vile I shall appear.
I need not to confess my life, I am sure thou couldst tell:
What I have been, and what I am, I know thou know'st it well.

O Lord thou know'st what things be past, and eke the things that be,
Thou know'st also what is to come, nothing is hid from thee.
Before the heav'ns and earth were made thou know'st what things were then,
As all things else that have been since, among the sons of men.

7. Vaine all our lyfe we spend in vaine;
 Vaine is the will of our intent,
 Vaine is the will that we have ment,
 Our tyme in vaine now have we spent;
 From vaine to gaine wee most relent,
 Yet painfull paine we must frequent,
 Such is the cost of all our paine,
 But labour lost and spent in vaine.

Anon (c. 1550): York, Minster Library, MS M 91 (S), ff. 41v–43

9. *Fond youth is a bubble (Purge me, O Lord)*. No sixteenth-century version survives of this evidently secular text. A contrafactum survives, however, in a sixteenth-century set of partbooks with the following devotional text:

*Purge me, O Lord, from all my sin.
 And save thou me by faith from ill,
 That I may rest and dwell with thee
 Upon thy holy blessed hill.*

Anon. (c. 1550): British Library, Additional MSS 30480–4

*And that done, grant that with true heart
 I may without hypocrisy
 Affirm the truth, detract no man,
 But do all things with equity.*

10. and 13. *Gloria tibi Trinitas, equalis una
 Deitas, et ante omnia secula, et nunc et in
 perpetuum.*

*Glory to thee O Trinity, one equal Deity: before
 all ages, now and evermore.*

11. *O quam glorifica luce coruscas, stirpis
 davidice, regia proles, sublimis residens,
 Virgo Maria, supra ceterigenas aetheris omnes.*

Hymnorum...Sarisburiensis, f. 178v (four verses in all)

O how you radiate with glorious light, O royal
 descendant of David, residing on high with the
 whole heavenly host.

12. *Veni redemptor gentium,
 Ostende partum Virginis;
 Miretur omne seculum,
 Talis decet partus Deum.*

Hymnorum...Sarisburiensis, f. 4 (eight verses in all); translation by J. M. Neale

Come thou, redeemer of the earth,
 And manifest thy virgin-birth:
 Let every age adoring fall;
 Such birth befits the God of all.

the first English organ virtuoso, served as ‘organista’ at Eton College in the later 1440s, and later in life was paid to instruct the boys of the Chapel Royal in both singing and organ-playing. Surviving employment indentures and institutional statutes reveal that organ tuition, as a standard element of a chorister’s training, had become a nationwide phenomenon by the end of the fifteenth century. Liturgical organ-playing, therefore, was nurtured primarily in chorister schools, and early organ music in its stylistic conception owes as much to the voice as to the fingers.

It is not until the reign of Henry VIII that such stylistic evidence survives. The first surviving manuscript of composed organ pieces (British Library MS Royal Appendix 56), a collection of dance and song arrangements, liturgical pieces and notational miscellanea, was compiled nearly 20 years after Henry’s accession, around 1530. The most important mid-century keyboard manuscripts (British Library MSS Additional 29996 and 30513) contain substantial quantities of organ music composed during Henry’s lifetime, even though they were copied after the king’s death in 1547. Henry’s reign witnessed a boom, not only of organ-playing, but of the composition and copying of pieces conceived exclusively as keyboard music. The cosmopolitan culture of Henry’s court almost certainly played a significant part in this. Henry, like his children, was a more than competent keyboard player, and foreign virtuosi were among the cultivated visitors welcomed to court. The Venetian friar and organist of St Mark’s, Fra Dionisius Memo, was presented in 1516 to Cardinal Thomas Wolsey before playing to the king ‘to the incredible admiration and pleasure of everybody, and especially of his majesty’. In the same year, the German-born Benedictus de Opiitis, previously organist to the guild of Our Lady in Antwerp, was appointed one of Henry’s chamber musicians. He later joined London’s guild of church musicians and, like Memo, stayed in London for several years.

It would be surprising indeed if native organists neither encountered nor were influenced by these continental masters: arguably the visitors catalysed the sudden and (in terms of surviving manuscripts) unprecedented emergence of organ composition

as a flourishing part of the English church's liturgy. This innovation grew out of, and partially displaced, the old tradition of improvised polyphony, whereby counter-melodies of greater or lesser simplicity were sung upon the regular plainsong melodies. During the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries the most important English variant of this wider improvisatory tradition was *faburden*, in which the plainsong melody, sung in the uppermost voice, was harmonized by two voices singing at sight below the proper melody: one in simple fourths, and the lowermost voice in a combination of sixths and octaves. This latter voice-part was the more difficult to 'sight' accurately, but gave a clear harmonic profile with unambiguous cadences. For these reasons, a large number of *faburden* melodies were written down and used instead of the chant as the basis for improvised polyphony, both by singers and by organists.

One of the liturgical chants most commonly sung to *faburden* was *Te Deum laudamus* (#1), the hymn or canticle recited at the conclusion of the morning office of Matins and during solemn processions. Organs were also regularly used for the *Te Deum* during the late middle ages, with organ versets alternating with sung ones. Three such settings survive from the reign of Henry VIII, two by John Redford and one by Avery Burnett (fl. 1527–41). Although the career of Burnett is obscure, he belonged to a generation of composers who came into direct contact with foreign musicians, both in London and abroad, to an extent not seen for nearly a century. As a member of Thomas Wolsey's household chapel, he was among the Cardinal's ambassadorial retinue in France in 1527; in the later 1530s, several years after Wolsey's death, he served as a gentleman of Henry VIII's Chapel Royal. We do not know for whom he wrote his organ *Te Deum*, although organs were used in both establishments, and both Henry and Wolsey attended state occasions which called for the singing of *Te Deum* (most spectacularly at the Field of the Cloth of Gold in 1520). Burnett's setting is based on the *Te Deum faburden*, played in most versets by the left hand; for this recording Professor John Caldwell's reconstructed *faburden* verses have been sung between each organ verset. Although it is rooted idiomatically within the established English tradition of melismatic ornamentation, it nevertheless shows the influence

Gloria tibi, Domine,
Qui natus es de Virgine,
Cum Patre et Sancto Spiritu,
In sempiterna secula. Amen.

Hymnorum cum notis opusculum secundum usum insignis ecclesie Sarisburiensis
(Antwerp: Christopher Endoviensis for Francis Byrckman, 1525: STC 16131), ff. 8–9v;
translated and paraphrased by J. M. Neale (1818–66)

3. *Lucem tuam, Domine, nobis concede,
ut destitutus cordium tenebris, pervenire
possumus ad lumen qui est Christus.*

Nunc dimittis servum tuum, Domine:
secundum verbum tuum in pace.
Quia viderunt oculi mei: salutare tuum.
Quod parasti: ante faciem omnium populorum.
Lumen ad revelationem gentium:
et gloria plebis tue, Israel.

Gloria Patri et Filio: et Spiritui Sancto.

Sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper:
et in secula seculorum. Amen.
Lucem tuam, Domine...

4. *Felix namque es, sacra virgo Maria, et
omni laude dignissima: quia ex te ortus est
sol justitie Christus Deus noster. Alleluia.*

6. *Where griping grief the hart would wound & doleful domps the [mind] oppresse,
There Musick with her silver sound is wont with spede to give redresse
Of troubled minde for every sore, swete Musick hath a salve therefore.*

Richard Edwards, *The Paradise of Daynty Devises* (London, 1576: STC 7516),
p. 55: 'In commendation of Musick'

All honour, laud, and glory be,
O Jesu, Virgin-born, to Thee;
all glory, as is ever meet,
to the Father and to Paraclete. Amen.

*Give to us your light, O Lord, so that,
with shadows fleeing our hearts, we are able
to reach that light which is Christ.*

Lord now lettest though thy servant
depart in peace: according to thy word.
For mine eyes have seen: thy salvation.
Which thou hast prepared: before the face
of all people. To be a light to lighten the gentiles:
and to be the glory of thy people, Israel.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son:
and to the Holy Ghost.
As it was in the beginning is now
and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.
Give to us your light, O Lord...

*Happy indeed art thou, holy virgin Mary, and
most worthy of all praise: for out of thee has
risen the sun of justice, Christ our Lord. Alleluia.*

2. *A solis ortus cardine
Ad usque terre limitem
Christum canamus Principem,
Natum Maria Virgine.*

Beatus auctor seculi,
Servile corpus induit:
Ut carne carnem liberans,
Ne perderet quos condidit.

*Caste parentis viscera
Celestis intrat gratia:
Venter puelle bajulat
Secreta, que non noverat.*

Domus pudici pectoris
Templum repente fit Dei:
Intacta nesciens virum,
Verbo concept Filium.

*Enixa est puerpera
Quem Gabriel predixerat,
Quem matris alvo gestiens
Clausus Johannes senserat.*

Feno jacere pertulit,
Presepe non abhorruit:
Parvoque lacte pastus est,
Per quem nec ales esurit.

*Gaudet chorus celestium,
Et angeli canunt Deo:
Palamque fit pastoribus
Pastor, creator omnium.*

*From lands that see the sun arise,
to earth's remotest boundaries,
the Virgin-born today we sing,
the Son of Mary, Christ the King.*

Blest Author of this earthly frame,
to take a servant's form he came,
that liberating flesh by flesh,
whom he had made might live afresh.

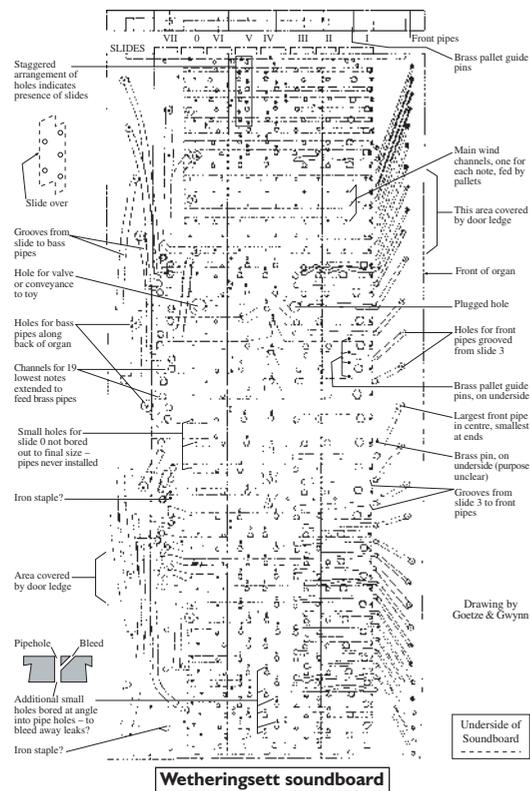
*In that chaste parent's holy womb,
celestial grace hath found its home:
and she, as earthly bride unknown,
yet call that Offspring blest her own.*

The mansion of the modest breast
becomes a shrine where God shall rest:
the pure and undefiled one
conceived in her womb the Son.

*That Son, that royal Son she bore,
whom Gabriel's voice had told afore:
whom, in his Mother yet concealed,
the Infant Baptist had revealed.*

The manger and the straw he bore,
the cradle did he not abhor:
a little milk his infant fare
who feedeth even each fowl of air.

*The heavenly chorus filled the sky,
the Angels sang to God on high,
what time to shepherds watching lone
they made creation's Shepherd known.*



of continental styles of imitative counterpoint which began to circulate in England during the 1520s, suggesting a composition date of around 1530 (contemporary, that is, with the Wingfield and Wetheringsett soundboards).

Burnett's *Te Deum* is a compendium of early-Tudor organ styles, showing over the course of seventeen versets an admirable variety of textures and devices: runs; repetition (both sequences and ostinati); syncopation; fleeting points of imitation; biting 'scotch snap' figuration (in 'Dignare Domine'); and some flashes of rapid fingerwork which carefully follow the natural contours of the hand (*inter alia* in 'Salvum fac populum': 'an excellent verse' according to the seventeenth-century composer Thomas Tomkins). Few of these ideas are unique to Burnett, and we may assume that early-Tudor organ students were taught a shared repertory of textural, melodic and rhythmic gambits. But Burnett's avoidance of keyboard cliché is matched by a singer's attentiveness to well-balanced phrase-structures, and a rhetorician's use of rising pitch to generate musical momentum (melodic high-points are frequently held in reserve for the final moments of each verset).

Given its ritual importance, *Te Deum laudamus* would typically have been played on the largest instrument available (many churches having had more than one organ, some as many as five). By far the commonest locations for organs were the quire or chancel, where it might be played for the services of the day on high feasts, and within the Lady chapel, for use at services devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary. (If there was no room on the floor, either in the quire or in the Lady chapel, the organ might have been placed on a screen, on a special gallery, or in a 'perch' or crow's nest on the north wall of the chancel.) The anonymous setting of the hymn *A solis ortus cardine* (#2) was composed in the mid-sixteenth century for the morning office of Lauds on Christmas day, and would almost certainly have been played on an instrument located in the main quire.

Texts: (sung texts in Roman type; texts played on the organ in italics)

1. Te Deum laudamus: *te Dominum confitemur*. Te eternum Patrem omnis terra veneratur. *Tibi omnes angeli; tibi celi et universe potestates*; tibi Cherubim et Seraphim incessabili voce proclamant: *Sanctus: Sanctus: Sanctus: Dominus Deus Sabaoth. Pleni sunt caeli et terra majestatis gloriae tuae*. Te gloriosus apostolorum chorus; *te prophetarum laudabilis numerus*; te martyrum candidatus laudat exercitus. *Te per orbem terrarum sancta confitetur Ecclesia, Patrem immense majestatis: venerandum tuum verum et unicum Filium; Sanctum quoque Paraclitum Spiritum. Tu Rex gloriae, Christe*; Tu Patris sempiternus es Filius. *Tu ad liberandum suscepturus hominem, non horruisti Virginis uterum*. Tu, devicto mortis aculeo, aperuisti credentibus regna caelorum. *Tu ad dexteram Dei sedes, in gloria Patris*. Iudex crederis esse venturus. *Te ergo quesumus, tuis famulis subveni: quos precioso sanguine redemisti*. Eterna fac cum sanctis tuis in gloria numerari. *Salvum fac populum tuum, Domine, et benedic hereditati tuae*. Et rege eos, et extolle illos usque in eternum. *Per singulos dies benedicimus te*. Et laudamus nomen tuum in seculum, et in seculum seculi. *Dignare, Domine, die isto sine peccato nos custodire*. Miserere nostri, Domine, miserere nostri. *Fiat misericordia tua, Domine, super nos, quemadmodum speravimus in te*. In te, Domine, speravi: non confundar in eternum.

We praise thee, O God: *we acknowledge thee to be the Lord*. All the earth doth worship thee, the Father everlasting. *To thee all angels cry aloud: the heavens and all the powers therein*. To thee Cherubim and Seraphim continually do cry: *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth. Heaven and earth are full of the majesty of thy glory*. The glorious company of the Apostles praise thee. *The goodly fellowship of the Prophets praise thee*. The noble army of Martyrs praise thee. *The holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge thee* the Father of an infinite Majesty; *Thine honourable, true and only Son*; also the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. *Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ*; Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father. *When thou tookest upon thee to deliver man, thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb*. When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, thou didst open the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers. *Thou sittest at the right hand of God in the glory of the Father*. We believe that thou shalt come to be our Judge. *We therefore pray thee, help thy servants whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood*. Make them to be numbered with thy Saints in glory everlasting. *O Lord, save thy people and bless thine heritage*. Govern them and lift them up for ever. *Day by day we magnify thee*; and we worship thy Name ever world without end. *Vouchsafe, O Lord to keep us this day without sin*. O Lord, have mercy upon us have mercy upon us. *O Lord, let thy mercy lighten upon us as our trust is in thee*. O Lord, in thee have I trusted: let me never be confounded.

Magnus Williamson began his musical education as a boy chorister at Westminster Abbey. He read music at Magdalen College, Oxford, graduating in 1990 and as organ scholar studied liturgy with John Harper, repertory studies with David Sanger, and improvisation with Nigel Allcoat. After graduating, he served as Director of Music at Oxford's University Church, St Mary the Virgin (1991–7). As a performer, he specialised in improvisation, winning various prizes (in the 1988 Royal College of Organists fellowship examination, and in France and Belgium). After completing his doctoral thesis he was lecturer in music at Somerville College, Oxford, prior to his appointment as lecturer at Newcastle University in 1997. His research is on the liturgical music of the late middle ages and early renaissance, particularly on English musical culture during the early Tudor period: he is currently completing research on the Reformation and its effects on musical practices in England, 1530–70.



The *Early English Organ Project* draws upon his skills as a performer and improviser, and his experience as a scholar of late-medieval English music. He gave the world premier recital and radio broadcast on the Wingfield organ with the *Cardinall's Musick* in 2001, and has since given numerous lectures and master classes on the organs and their associated repertory.

Like all early-Tudor organ hymns, this setting of *A solis ortus* comprises organ versets for the odd-numbered verses, played in alternation with the even-numbered verses which were sung. Whereas the short verses of the *Te Deum* result in a rapidly alternating dialogue between organ and voices, the four-line stanzas of *A solis* produced correspondingly more extended versets, creating more space within which the composer's ideas could be unfolded. Each verset has a distinct compositional ground plan. Verse one is a two-part 'bicinium' between left hand (paraphrased *faburden*) and right hand (countermelody, consisting of melodic sequences, syncopations and, in the approach to the final cadence, 'scotch-snap' figuration). Verse 3 comprises a two-part canon (RH) set against the *faburden* melody, sparsely ornamented (LH). Verse five is a beautiful piece of quasi-vocal four-part counterpoint, based on fragments of the *faburden* melody in the LH (and justifiably marked 'very good' by Tomkins many decades after its composition). The final verse is a *moto ostinato*, with running quavers (RH) superimposed upon the *faburden* melody in the tenor (LH) in *sesquialtera* proportion (cross-rhythms) against the bass part. In alternation with the organ versets, the even-numbered verses of the hymn are sung in three-part *faburden*.

The text of *A solis ortus cardine* was taken from a longer poem, the *Paeon Alphabeticus de Christo* written around 450 AD by Coelius Sedulius, each verse of which began with a successive letter of the alphabet. The seven verses of *A solis ortus* comprise letters A to G; the next few verses of the *Paeon Alphabeticus*, beginning with letters H–L, were assigned to the hymn sung on the Epiphany, *Hostis Herodes impie*. It was probably no coincidence that two settings of *Hostis Herodes impie*, both of them anonymous, were copied into the same manuscript (British Library MS Additional 29996) immediately following this setting of *A solis ortus*. The second of these is so similar to *A solis ortus* as to suggest that they were written by the same composer, perhaps as a pair: both use syncopation and melodic fragmentation in their first verset, have a canonic middle verset, and combine in their final verset a fast-running RH with slower-moving syncopated voices in the LH; the two settings include identical melodic gestures, and both were written for short-compass instruments.

television programmes on BBC 1, Channel 4, and the BBC World Service, and on several foreign networks.

The choir has made many CD recordings covering a wide range of sacred and secular music from both English and continental repertoire. Composers featured include Janáček, Puccini, Rheinberger, Gounod, Charles Wood, Rebecca Clarke, John Sanders, Robin Holloway, and a reconstruction of the St Mark Passion by J. S. Bach (including music by Keiser). A recent release on Signum Classics “All the ends of the earth” contains an unusual programme of medieval music with contemporary choral music based on medieval styles and techniques by composers such as Judith Weir, Bayan Northcott, Jonathan Harvey and Gabriel Jackson. The choir has also worked with the choirs of St John’s and Clare Colleges on a filmed DVD release of music by Francis Poulenc, and with the choir of King’s College on a recording of music by John Rutter for EMI. Full details of the choir’s recordings are available on the College website (<http://www.cai.cam.ac.uk>).

Performers – (solo items in parentheses)

Mean: Katy Butler (7, 12, 17, 18), Karl Gietzmann (15/iv), Clare Lloyd (7, 14)
Joelle Meakin, Charlotte Roberts, Felicity Weston

Counter-Tenor: Hannah Cooke, Pierre Dechant (4, 15/ii, 19), Joseph Harper (7, 15/ii+iv, 18),
Matthew Knight, Joseph Mills, Helena Nicholls, Andrew Taylor

Tenor: John Herford (7/i+iii, 15), John Kelly, Alex Patton (15/ii+iv)

Bass: Tom Faulkner (15/ii), James Halliday, Sam Queen (15/iv)

Organ: Francesca Massey (17–19)

Organ: Magnus Williamson (1–6, 8–15)

Organ duets: Magnus Williamson and Geoffrey Webber (16, 20)

The canticle sung at the evening office of Compline, *Nunc dimittis* (#3), was preceded and concluded by an antiphon (usually a Biblical or festal text, set to a plainsong melody) which varied according to the grade of feast or season of the year. The antiphon *Lucem tuam* was assigned to the principal feast, Trinity Sunday, as well as to the feasts of Relics and All Saints, and Redford wrote three different settings. This reflects the festal importance of the antiphon, but it also presents the performer with some difficult decisions. Did Redford play the antiphon on the organ both before and after the canticle was sung? If so, did he play the same setting twice? Or, for the sake of variety, did he play different versions before and after? For this recording, two different versions are heard, one of which (from the Mulliner Book) sets the plainsong melody in breves in the alto or mean part; the other (from BL Additional 29996), by contrast, has the chant in semibreves in the tenor. Both are excellent and contrasting examples of Redford’s assured contrapuntal style: the Mulliner Book setting has an abundance of melodic ideas, freely taken up and discarded; the shorter setting is based almost exclusively on one melodic idea, stated and re-stated with thorough-going persistence.

The other outstanding master of the mid-sixteenth century, Thomas Preston (fl. 1543–59), composed most of his organ music in the 1550s, although his composing career began in the 1540s. Unlike the London-based Redford, Preston appears to have spent his career as a singer, organist and choirtrainer outside the capital: in Oxford (1543), Cambridge (1548–59) and Windsor (1558–9). Preston’s organ compositions also seem generically distinct from Redford’s: whereas Redford composed mostly for the Office, by way of hymns and antiphons for use on feast days, Preston’s smaller output is devoted largely to the Mass, particularly offertories for festal masses and the daily mass of Our Lady. John Caldwell has suggested that a number of anonymous organ hymns (among them *A solis ortus cardine* and *Hostis Herodes* discussed above) were in fact written by Preston, whose organ Mass for Easter Sunday exhibits a similar predilection for cross-rhythms and ostinato. Preston’s principal achievement, however, is in the sustained use of imitative counterpoint on the grand scale. Used as slow-moving cantus firmi, the long melismatic melodies of Mass offertories presented the perfect framework for

long-term contrapuntal essays; lengthy organ offertories also served a practical function within the pre-Reformation liturgy, solemnifying the preparation of the chalice and the censuring of the altar, ministers and choir prior to the canon of the Mass.

Felix namque (#4), which was sung at Lady Mass, was by a very wide margin indeed the most frequently set Mass offertory, reflecting the almost ubiquitous use of the organ to play the Proper chants of Lady Mass (a tradition which began in the mid-fourteenth century or earlier). More than twenty *Felix namque* settings survive from the sixteenth century, eight of which were written by Preston. This surely reflects his fervent devotion to the central cult of traditional Catholic piety, that of the Virgin Mary: in 1559, following the accession of the Protestant Queen Elizabeth he was ejected from his post at Windsor because of his continuing papal allegiance. But Preston also used the chant as an imaginative frame around which to spin eight contrasting contrapuntal webs – to test his mettle, perhaps, as a composer. The fourth setting is a classical and utterly confident essay in the recently-naturalized art of imitative counterpoint. After the incipit, sung by the vocal soloist, the chant unfolds in slow-moving breves in the tenor part, around which the three other voices gather with a stately lack of urgency. Over the course of 128 breves, nothing faster than a crotchet disturbs the slow unfolding of Preston's lines, whose long-term interest is sustained through sheer force of contrapuntal logic.

In chamber and schoolroom: organ music in secular contexts

With Thomas Preston's *Felix namque* we reach the apex of Catholic England's short-lived tradition of liturgical organ composition: from 1559 the history of English keyboard music takes a decisive turn. Arguably the most fundamental trend during the sixteenth century was a shift in contexts and uses from sacred to secular, a process accelerated by religious changes in the 1540s and 1550s, but which began earlier. As we have seen, the playing of organ music was an established part of the chorister's curriculum by 1500; this training, moreover, became increasingly widespread as more

The Choir of Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge

Gonville and Caius College was founded in 1348 but the musical tradition stems from the late-nineteenth century when Charles Wood became Organist. The Choir in Wood's day contained boy trebles; it is now a mixed undergraduate ensemble directed by **Dr Geoffrey Webber**, who has been Precentor and Director of Studies in Music since 1989.

The Choir sings regular Chapel services during the University term and has a busy schedule of additional activities including concerts, recordings and broadcasts. It also travels extensively abroad, performing at a variety of venues including concert halls, universities, cathedrals and churches in Europe, America and beyond, often in connection with other professional ensembles such as Opera Northern Ireland and the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra of San Francisco. Live broadcasts on BBC Radio 3 have been notably adventurous in content and have ranged from baroque anthems performed with period instruments to music composed especially for the choir, Russian and Greek Orthodox music, South African music, and, most recently a performance of Tallis' Spem in Alium.

Other BBC work has included a Radio recording of Schubert's Mass in A flat with St John's College Choir and the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, and a live relay of Radio 4's Sunday Worship programme, featuring a commissioned work by Gabriel Jackson. The choir has also featured in



triplets; the third and fourth variations, for good measure, include quotations from contemporary secular tunes ('The woods so wild' and 'The shaking of the sheets').

Nicholas Carleton's *A verse for two to play* is perhaps the first surviving example of a fully developed keyboard duet. Like John Blitheman, Carleton chose to use the obsolete chant *Gloria tibi Trinitas* as a cantus firmus, although the melody inconspicuously nestles within rich four-hand polyphony. Carleton began his musical career as an almonry boy at St Paul's Cathedral in the 1580s, and died in Worcestershire in 1630. Little is known of his life in between, although he was a close friend of the composer, Thomas Tomkins, who owned BL Additional 29996, and who himself wrote a keyboard duet, probably in response to Carleton's. Both of these early-seventeenth-century duets were then copied by Tomkins into his much-annotated score of pre-Reformation organ music. After all the vicissitudes of the Reformation, and despite the near-extinction of the church organ in England, Redford and Preston rubbed shoulders with their Jacobean descendants, and – after yet more religious upheavals in the 1640s and 1650s – the English organ survived the odds.

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and more churches established polyphonic choirs. Outside the song schools, lay people also began to take tuition on musical instruments, including keyboards, by private arrangement (as witness the contents of numerous *post mortem* inventories and one or two legal cases when such informal arrangements went awry). By the 1540s, therefore, we can trace the emergence of the professional secular musician whose training and career ranged beyond the hierarchies – and musical repertoires – of the established church. This initially gradual trend towards secularization was radically accelerated by the Reformation, which reduced the scope for music and musicians to enhance the liturgy and correspondingly eroded the church's one-time pre-eminence as an employer of singers and keyboard players.

The changing role of the organ within the Tudor church will be investigated below, but few pieces represent the move from sacred to secular as dramatically as *The Trowmpeppetus* (#5). This charming, if crude, fanfare was copied into a printed English Bible (the 'Matthew Bible') of 1537, on the verso of the New Testament title page. The Bible's first owner, John Alcetur, was a monk and sacrist of Evesham Abbey whose abrupt dissolution he recorded in the same Bible taking place midway through the evening office of Vespers on 30 January 1540:

[And the yere of our Lorde 1539 [=1540] the monastery of Evesham was suppressyd by King Henry the VIII, the XXXI yere of his rayene, the XXX day of Januari at Evensong tyme, the convent beyng in theyre quere at thys verse *Deposuit potentes*, and [the king's agents] wold not suffir them to make an end.]

Although at odds with the more prosaic exchequer documents, which record the surrender taking place two months earlier, Alcetur's recollection is perhaps the more appealing, with the unfinished Magnificat verse 'He hath put down the mighty from their seat: he hath scattered the proud' signalling the dispersal of his 839-year-old community. Sometime after this traumatic event, perhaps as late as the 1560s, the pensioned-off monk copied three short keyboard works onto various blank pages

of his English Bible: a thoroughly secular piece to suit Alceur's newly secularised circumstances.

For other musicians, the rise of secular music was more seamlessly experienced. The Mulliner Book (BL Additional 30513), on which we depend for much of our knowledge of mid-sixteenth-century English keyboard music, gives us a near-perfect snapshot of the kinds of music used to train a young keyboard player in the 1550s and 1560s, whether a boy chorister or – less likely in this case – an aspiring amateur. Its metropolitan repertory is a miscellany of music for the old Sarum rite, arrangements of Anglican anthems, secular partsongs, dances and other non-liturgical keyboard pieces whether cantus firmus-based or short essays in imitation. A pedagogical anthology, rather than a working liturgical manuscript, it encapsulates the eclecticism of a Tudor keyboard student's training.

The Mulliner Book also preserves traces of another, long-forgotten, aspect of the Tudor chorister's rota, namely the production of dramatic interludes and plays. The early Tudor court enjoyed entertainments put on by the boys of the Chapel Royal from perhaps as early as the 1480s. For the choristers of St Paul's Cathedral, who performed in their own playhouse, the organist John Redford wrote *The Play of Wit and Science*; but one of the foremost Tudor impresario-choirmasters, if only for a brief period, was Richard Edwards (1525–66). After a classical education two Oxford fellowships (Corpus Christi, 1540–6 and Christ Church, 1546–57), he became a gentleman of the chapel royal, then its Master of the Children in 1561. In this latter role he wrote and staged plays before the Queen, drawing upon his substantial knowledge of classical mythology; he also wrote at least twenty poems which were posthumously published as *The Paradise of Daynty Devises* ('aptly made to be set to any song in .5. partes, or song to instrument'). The text of the song *Where grypinge griefes* (#6) is attributed to Edwards, and clearly corresponds with an eponymous tune, given without attribution in the Mulliner Book. The poem, perhaps intended to be sung to this music, was quoted by William Shakespeare in *Romeo and Juliet* (Act 4, Scene V).

memorable. The composer of the published psalm-tune is unknown, but the organ variation was copied out (and possibly composed) by Thomas Mulliner in the early 1560s. The idiom used in the variation – a running LH countermelody against a two-part harmonization of the psalm-tune in the RH – might as easily have been applied to a Catholic plainsong melody as to a Calvinistic psalm-tune, and bears some similarities to organ music by John Blitheman.

In stark contrast to the Lutheran chorale prelude, the English psalm-tune variation was a largely unsuccessful experiment, perhaps because the most fervent users of metrical psalters were among the most implacable opponents of elaborate church music; in equal measure, the most prominent composers of keyboard music, particularly William Byrd and John Bull, were repelled by Calvinist theology and showed correspondingly scant interest in metrical psalters. The official liturgy of the Church of England made no provision of any kind for organ music and, as we have seen, organ music was strenuously discouraged by many of Elizabeth's bishops; nevertheless, organ music continued to survive in pockets – a particularly accommodating pocket, of course, being Elizabeth's Chapel Royal. Voluntaries, 'verses' and 'lessons' were played before readings during morning and evening prayer and 'offertories' during holy communion; these served as adjuncts to the liturgy (and not active, integral components of it), even though many of the pieces written for this purpose were actually based on real or invented cantus firmi. William Byrd's variations upon a hexachord cantus firmus, *Ut re mi fa sol la* (#16) and *A verse for two to play* (#20) by Nicholas Carleton (c. 1573–1630) would both have been suitable for use as interludes within services. Byrd's *Ut re mi fa sol la*, called a 'lesson' in its manuscript source, was written for two players. It closely resembles a *Felix namque* duet written probably in the 1530s, in which one of the players (perhaps a pupil, perhaps the teacher) played the cantus firmus in long notes, while the other player spun increasingly complex contrapuntal melodies around it. This established model was reworked by Byrd who wrote five statements of the rising and falling six-note cantus firmus, the first three in duplets, the final three in

The verse services and anthems of Byrd, Morley and their contemporaries testify to the re-invention of the organ as an accompanimental instrument during the 1560s. During the reign of Elizabeth I, and especially under her successor James I (r. 1603–25), English organists also cultivated new forms of solo music, in place of the now-banned plainsong settings. Some composers turned to the Reformed liturgy and its associated musical repertoires as a source of *cantus firmi* on which to base their pieces. A handful of pieces based on tunes from early Elizabethan metrical psalters were written during the 1560s. An anonymous variation on the eighty-first psalm, **Be light and glad** (#14), contained in the same York Minster manuscript as Sheppard's *Vaine all our lyfe*, exemplifies this new-born tradition at its simplest. The tune was first published by the Protestant printer John Day in 1562, and subsequently incorporated into the first complete 'Sternhold and Hopkins' psalter, prepared by Thomas Sternhold and John Hopkins and published in the same year: *The Whole Booke of Psalmes...very mete to be used of all sortes of people privately for their solace & comfort: laying apart all ungodly Songes and ballades, which tende only to the norishyng of vyce, and corrupting of youth*. The anonymous organ variation is performed here together with the first four verses of the psalm, to a late-Elizabethan harmonization published by Richard Alison in 1599.

Printed among the initial contents of Day's *Whole Psalmes* is **The Lamentation of a Sinner** (#15): not a psalm, but a penitential poem, that achieved enduring popularity within metrical psalters throughout the early modern era. Polyphonic settings of it were published in Day's harmonized psalter of 1563 and by other Elizabethan composers, and three of these harmonizations are sung in this recording. The author of *The Lamentation*, Thomas Marckaunt, vicar of Clacton (Essex) until his death in 1586, was a committed Calvinist with strong penchants for hair-shirt moralising and doggerel rhyme. In his *Notable Instruction for All Men to Beware the Abuses of Dice Wyne and Wemen* published in 1571, he inveighed against fancy clothes and lamented his youth mis-spent at 'dauncinge schole'. It is perhaps slightly surprising that *The Lamentation* should have served as the springboard for an organ variation, given the known hostility of clergy of Marckaunt's party to the instrument, although the tune itself is strong and



Wingfield Organ

Among Edwards' colleagues in the Chapel Royal, John Sheppard died in the winter of 1558/9, only weeks after the accession of Queen Elizabeth. Like Edwards he had built his early career in Oxford in the 1540s, although as a church musician (at Magdalen College), rather than a college fellow. Sheppard's oeuvre is dominated by church music (Latin liturgical polyphony and, to a lesser extent, vernacular anthems and service settings). But it seems he wrote very little secular music: two partsongs, *O happy dames* (to a text by Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey) and *Vaine, all our lyfe* (##7–8), each survive by way of keyboard arrangements (although a single texted voice-part also survives for each song, enabling John Caldwell to reconstruct the vocal prototype of *Vaine, all our lyfe* from a vocal partbook in York Minster Library). Both the song and the arrangement are recorded here.

The transmission of *Fond youth is a bubble* (#9) by Thomas Tallis (d. 1585) is tortuous. Although found in the Mulliner Book as a keyboard transcription, the title given there would seem to refer to a secular song text. This original text is lost, and an eighteenth-century antiquary, E. T. Warren-Horne, provided a spurious reconstruction in mock-Tudor verse. Another sixteenth-century copy of the music, however, has the devotional text 'Purge me, O Lord'. Like Tallis' other devotional partsongs, 'Purge me O Lord'/'Fond youth' was almost certainly written during the reign of Edward VI, at a time when the distinctions between church and secular music (i.e. between anthems and devotional partsongs) was blurred, and when pieces were frequently contrafacted, one text being substituted for another.

The same blurring of distinctions between sacred and secular, liturgical and devotional, applied also to the kinds of techniques used by Elizabethan composers of keyboard music. *Cantus firmus*, for instance, continued to be used as the basis of keyboard composition long after the plainsong melodies, which had given rise to the technique, had ceased to be sung in church. John Blitheman (c. 1525–91) wrote six settings of the plainsong antiphon *Gloria tibi Trinitas* (##10 & 13), a melody first popularised by John Taverner in an eponymous six-part mass written in the mid 1520s. Like Richard

foundations of its day. Although we cannot be certain that all pre-Civil War organs were built to exactly the same pitch, two factors militate against any assumption otherwise. Firstly, English weights and measures had been standardised since the fourteenth century, and organbuilders were legally bound to supply the lengths of expensive pipe-metal specified in their contracts (a contract from 1519 gives a length of '10 foot or more' for the bottom note); short measures were easy to detect simply by measuring the longest pipe, leading to a successful prosecution against the builder. Organ-building became an increasingly specialised trade by 1500, concentrated in the hands of a few builders (the Howe and Dallam families, for instance), whose instruments would have been constructed according to similar or identical design principles. Many of the most prominent choral foundations bought organs from the Howe's and Dallam's, and so we may assume a close comparability of pitch-standards between these various institutions.

Assuming that the three Stanford on Avon pipes are representative, therefore, the likeliest performing pitch of Byrd's accompanied choral music lies just over a semitone above its written pitch. This is nearly a tone lower than this repertory has usually been performed (and recorded) during much of the last century. The rationale for this pitch can most clearly be seen in the famous psalm-setting *Out of the deep* (#19), by Thomas Morley (1557/8–1602). Here, the solo part is taken by a high tenor, rather than the more familiar male falsettist 'alto'; this throws into relief the rhetorical effect of Morley's first solo Contratenor entry – an imitation of the human cry to God, in which the voice ascends, as if from the deep, from low D (d) up to high G (g'). The edition used here was prepared by Geoffrey Webber, following John Morehen's suggestion that the choruses may have originally been composed in four parts. These reconstructed choruses are based on the four-part versions given in the organ score in Christ Church MS 6. This organ part is notably different from the more familiar one in the Batten Organ Book, beginning with low-pitched entries that anticipate the opening vocal phrase 'Out of the deep'.

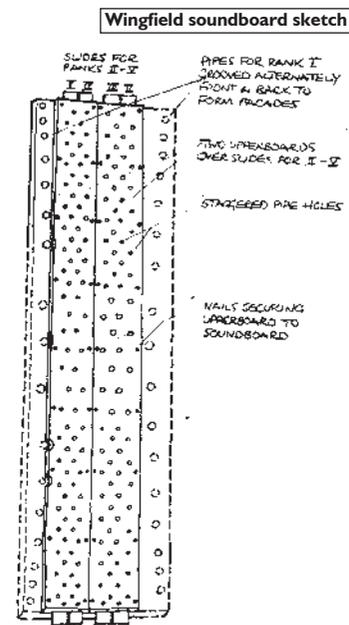
frillery. But what of the organ? In the old Latin liturgy, organ music had replaced whole sections of text, being played as a substitute for the singing voice. This was evidently unacceptable within the Reformed liturgy in which the word was paramount. The organ survived, therefore, by changing its fundamental premise: from 1559 onwards it served two new purposes. For the first time it was used to accompany choral music – a role now utterly commonplace but in the 1560s a radical innovation. We do not know for certain who devised this solution, but William Byrd has as good a claim as any Elizabethan composer. It seems likely that he wrote the invitatory psalm 119, *Teach me, O Lord* (#17) whilst organist at Lincoln Cathedral in the 1560s, and that this was an early, perhaps the first, essay in a form which came to characterise the early Anglican choral tradition: the verse anthem. Although unassuming it marks a revolution in style, combining for an independent organ accompaniment with alternating solo and full choral verses. Also dating from Byrd's Lincoln years, or perhaps from the 1570s, at which time he was a gentleman of Elizabeth's Chapel Royal, the *Second Service* (#18), a prototype verse service whose Magnificat is recorded here.

Although most of the contents of this recording will be new to listeners, both the *Second Service* and *Teach me, O Lord* are evergreens in the repertoires of church choirs. The EOP instruments, however, enable us to hear these familiar pieces in a new light. In the *Second Service*, for instance, the choruses are accompanied in the manner suggested by pre-Civil War organ books, with a simple duo of RH and LH (played upon the Wetheringsett organ's rank of 'basses'); most modern editions include 'filled-out' accompaniments played in the manner of a chamber organ. A more marked departure from established performance norms is the pitch at which the early Anglican repertory was recorded here. Concrete evidence concerning the pitch of English organs before the Civil War is preserved at the church of St Nicholas, Stanford on Avon, in Northamptonshire, which houses the remains of an organ built by Robert Dallam for Magdalen College, Oxford, in the early 1630s. Three of Dallam's original pipes survive unrestored and bearing their original note-name markings, enabling us to recover the pitch standard for this organ, which was made for one of the most important choral

Edwards, Blitheman spent the first part of his career at Christ Church, Oxford (where John Taverner had worked in the 1520s, albeit when the college was trading under a different name); when he moved to the Chapel Royal in or before 1558, he became a colleague, not only of Edwards, but of John Sheppard and Thomas Tallis. Like Thomas Preston (also an Oxford man), Blitheman approached his favoured cantus firmus from a number of different perspectives, deliberately creating a set of contrasting settings. The six settings therefore bear some resemblance to variation form, a particular achievement of the next generation (among them Blitheman's pupil, John Bull), while drawing upon the techniques used in the old strophic organ hymn (in, for instance, *A solis ortus*).

Old forms of composition continued to be relevant in the later sixteenth century and beyond, long after the Reformation had swept away their liturgical *raison d'être*.

We have seen how Thomas Tomkins annotated (and hence played and studied) the contents of BL Additional 29996 ('a daynty fine verse...a good old indeade very good [sic]...old stuff upon the faburthen'). A Jacobean manuscript in Oxford's Bodleian Library contains a single verset of an otherwise lost setting by John Redford of *O quam glorifica* (#11), the hymn sung at Vespers on the feast of the Assumption. This



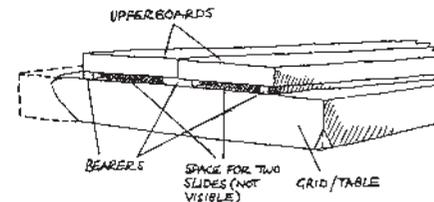
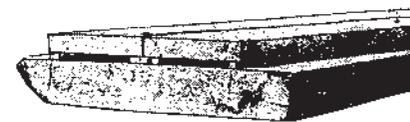
cannot have been used for worship, except at clandestine services, as the feast had been abolished in England in 1538 (save for a revival in the mid-1550s). Clearly, the music was for study, rather than worship, hence the annotation 'A very good vers called redfordes meane'. The Mulliner Book transmits only two of the original four versets of Thomas Tallis' organ hymn *Veni redemptor gentium* (#12): the other versets are lost. This too suggests that the versets were preserved more for learning than for liturgical use. They are performed conjecturally here, with the first hymn verse sung by a soloist between the two Tallis organ versets: an Elizabethan chorister, perhaps, learning how to use a plainsong cantus firmus at the organ.

The Temple purg'd: sounds of Elizabethan Protestantism

The history of the English church organ very nearly came to an end during the reign of the militantly Protestant boy-king Edward VI (r. 1547–53). The abolition of the Use of Salisbury in 1549 removed at a stroke the primary purpose of church organs, namely the rich plainsong inheritance which they served to embellish. The simultaneous dissolution of the chantries, moreover, removed most of the endowments set aside for musicians' salaries – especially at parish churches. By 1553, the future of English choral and organ music looked bleak indeed – the reign of the catholic Mary Tudor (1553–8) won a crucial reprieve, however. For five years, Latin liturgy was restored, elaborate polyphony was sung once again, and neglected organs were mended and pressed back into service: indeed, much of the most distinguished choral and organ music of the century was written during these five years. Mary's death in November 1558 again brought English church music to the brink of destruction. Her successor Elizabeth (1558–1603), while firmly committed to Reformed theology and vernacular liturgy, nevertheless enjoyed the full panoply of elaborate ceremonial: she commanded her Chapel Royal to meet her expectations, the results of which can be heard in the great Anglican service music of Thomas Tallis, William Byrd (c. 1543–1603) and their contemporaries in the Chapel.

Elizabeth met with little success, however, in her attempts to enforce her wishes upon the Church of England as a whole. Her bench of bishops, upon whom she relied to re-impose Anglicanism within her dioceses, was trenchantly opposed to the retention of anything which smacked of the old order – and this emphatically included elaborate choral and organ music. Church choirs were soon disbanded and, throughout the 1560s and 1570s, any remaining organs were dismantled when detected by episcopal visitors (to be destroyed, sold off or – as at Wetheringsett – re-used as building materials). By 1580, choral and organ music survived only in small pockets: the Chapel Royal (where it was cultivated assiduously), a few cathedrals (where it was barely tolerated), and a handful of parish churches. By the end of the sixteenth century, the tradition was sufficiently enfeebled as to present no threat to the reforming ambitions of Elizabeth's bishops (whose zealous first generation was rapidly dying off, moreover, creating lee-way for less stringent ecclesiologies); the restoration of English church music from the 1590s to the 1640s, however, is a different story.

The task of church musicians in the 1560s was to respond to the prevailing austerity of the early-Elizabethan church, to attend to textual meaning rather than ritual splendour. In the case of choral music this meant simple, syllabic writing, stripped of unnecessary and distracting



Wingfield soundboard section