The English Anthem

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DEFINITIONS

The term "Anthem" has been used to denote almost as many different things as the term "music" itself. It has been used and misused for almost a thousand years, for its earliest use according to the "New English Dictionary" is attributed to Bede in the year 1000. It is my guess that if you were to ask the average person with even a vague familiarity with church services what an anthem is, he would respond with: "That's what the choir sings in church." The second most popular reply, at least in America, would probably be: "You mean the 'Star Spangled Banner'?"

Since terminology should be the servant of usage, I will present a definition in the form of a composite of qualifications of my own selection which proceed from the least specific to the most specific. An anthem is:

1. a song with words.
2. a song of praise or glorification (as "National Anthem")
3. usually performed by a choir with or without soloists as opposed to soloists without choir.
4. a choral work with or without accompaniment.
5. intended for use in a worship service as a non-liturgical piece of concerted vocal music as opposed to a setting of a portion of the mass such as a "Kyrie" or a "Sanctus," etc.
6. a thorough-composed piece as opposed to a hymn, chorale, or psalm tone in which the same music is used for several different stanzas or verses.
7. an independent work as opposed to a portion of an oratorio, passion, or cantata.
8. a work which derives its inspiration and thematic material solely from its text (often scriptural) without being based on a hymn tune, chorale, or plainsong with the exception of the very earliest anthems in a motet style.

It should be pointed out that while things are often used as anthems, the above provides a fairly accurate definition; but not accurate enough, I'm afraid.

Donald Francis Tovey states in a discussion of the term "sonata":

> "Everything depends on the period and circumstances of the work described. A 'sonata' in the seventeenth century may be merely a piece or portion that is 'sounded' on instruments instead of being a piece that is sung, *scilicet* 'cantata'. In the eighteenth century it may still be no more, or it may be anything between a regular suite and a kind of concerto without orchestra. From Mozart's time onwards, it is the most definite and highly organized art-form in the history of music; while at the present day it is one of Humpty Dumpty's words that means whatever he chooses to make it mean. For us, who do not sit upon a wall and who cannot afford to pay our words overtime wages, the best plan is to agree to understand terms of art according to their highest classical usage."

The highest classical usage of the term "anthem" therefore includes a body of choral literature which may be identified by its function more than by its musical form as in the case of the sonata. The "anthem" is a direct result of the Reformation in England under Henry VIII. The term therefore refers to an art-form which is by and large the property and product of the Church of England and its related church bodies.(2) Another qualification of an anthem is that the greater part of anthem literature is in the English language. Groves dictionary goes so far as to limit the anthem "exclusively" to the English, but sufficient literature has been produced in America (some in German) which meets the above-mentioned eight qualifications to warrant mention at the least, in this study.

Most of the above qualifications are either implied, pre-supposed, or explicit in the following excerpt from *Anthems and Anthem Composers,* by Miles Birket Foster, one of the very few books which deal exclusively with the anthem as defined by the previous qualifications:

> "Whatever the proper derivation of the term may be, the modern definition of an anthem is 'a composition for voices, with or without accompaniment, to be sung as part of the service of God's House'. This definition is sufficiently broad to include *any music* set to sacred words; but in this little work I have endeavored to eliminate all movements originally composed with some other object in view, such as excerpts from larger works, Cantatas or Oratorios, and, above all, movements torn from Masses and Services, and adapted to words which are foreign to their original connection; and I desire to present to your notice those complete works *only,* which were written *as Anthems,* and intended to be introduced in those positions in which, 'in Quires and Places where they sing,' the Anthem followed.
>
> I am convinced that, however fine these adaptations may be, and however appropriate to God's worship, they are not strictly and in the first place to be regarded as Anthems."(3)

The practice referred to by Foster of adapting other works for use as anthems in the latter part of the 18th and 19th century has tended to destroy the conception of the anthem as a distinct musical form. This process will be dealt with in greater detail in a later chapter, but it is worth mention here, because it bears directly upon a concise definition of the anthem. Due to the fact that the source of the anthem is found in the Reformation in England, and that the decline of the form occurred in the 18th century, it may be stated that in its narrowest sense, anthem literature may be confined to the period from 1538 to 1759 (the death of Handel). This is not to discredit the work of such composers as S. S. Wesley, John Goss, F. A. Gore Ouseley, and John Stainer from the 19th century and the many fine 20th century composers. In terms of function, their work is certainly acceptable as anthem literature, but due

to the broad use of the term "anthem" today, much of their work has been confused with hymn and chorale traditions. It does not arise out of the "Cathedral tradition" in England which was the environment of the classical anthem. Another style arose in the 19th Century called the hymn-anthem which departs from qualification number eight by using pre-existing thematic material.

One more word is necessary regarding the confusion existing between anthem literature and other types of sacred choral music. Most sources of information regarding the anthem agree that it was an outgrowth of the motet. Indeed, the function of the anthem in the English Services was similar to that of the motet in the Latin church: "authorized though not liturgical."(4) It is also true that in the earliest stages, the terms anthem and motet were synonymous as will be shown later. The common origin, however, did not result in a parallel development. Elwyn A. Wienandt comments on the dichotomy:

> "Some writers have found it convenient to place motets and anthems together during the entire span of their common existence, but our view has been that the anthem differed sufficiently from the motet to be studied as a separate, viable form. In function and text sources it may be of the same family, but its development as a musical form kept it separate until the end of the nineteenth century. If the anthem bore a relationship to another existing musical type, it was to the cantata rather than to the motet, especially after it developed into a multisectional piece."(5)

While this chapter has attempted to provide a concise definition, the reader has undoubted y detected its polemic character. From what great injustice must the English anthem be defended? It is my opinion that the volumes of choral literature that crowd the *anthem files* of countless churches includes more 19th century *junk* than good solid anthem literature. This is evidently not a minority viewpoint. Wienandt comments: "When a difference of musical styles again emerged (between sacred and secular music) after Handel had left the scene, it was a difference that identified church music with tedium, hackneyed formulas, and endless stretches of predictable and tiresome music of a type that has aptly been termed 'choir-fodder'."(6) Martin Cooper writes in his comments on anthems: "After the early years of the nineteenth century, anthem compositions generally declined in value without diminishing in number."(7) Foster, in dividing Anthem history into four periods, titles the third period the " 'Mixed' or 'Degenerate' Period."(8) Recognizing this element as not being a part of the real anthem tradition can result in a much greater appreciation of that tradition.

With that, then, let us proceed to examine this rich and varied Cathedral tradition known as the Anthem.

ETYMOLOGY

The term "anthem" is the modern form of the Old English word *antefn* or *antempne*. This in turn, comes from the Greek word *antiphonon* which means a song which is sung "antiphonally," that is, by two groups. One group sings a part, and then the other group. This character has been retained throughout the history of the anthem in the practice of having the choir divided in two with certain portions of the music sung by one half and other portions by the other half. The two sides are known as *Decani* and *Cantoris*. It was common in the cathedral worship to have the *decani* on the south or Dean's side, and the *cantoris* on the north or Precentor's side of the large cathedral chancels.

While the parallel has been drawn between antiphonal singing and the *decani* and *cantoris* practice, we must be careful not to assume too many things. According to Wienandt, "The alternation between the two halves of the choir . . . is

not directly related to the antiphonal style of Italian church music."(9) One might assume, for example, that the membership of the *decani* and *cantoria* might be of different composition. This, however, was not the case. The two groups were SATB on both sides. Even though they were often singing one half at a time, when they merged together, the result was a large SATB choir and not SSAATTBB. If trebles sang occasionally in opposition to the lower voices, each group was made up of singers from both sides of the choir. Use of contrasting one side with the other or tossing interest back and forth as in the "double-choir" works of the continent is rare indeed. If the choir was singing a number in five or six parts, such as SSATB, the part of Soprano 1 would be assumed by the *decani* and Soprano 2 by the *cantoris*. This practice provided an interesting thinning of soprano texture in what might be shown as ssATB" (or thinning of whichever part was split.(10)

There is another sense in which the anthem might reflect its ancestral form. Even though none of the resources I have used mention it, the verse anthem might be said to be an antiphonal composition. It is antiphonal to the extent that chorus and solo or soloists alternate in section after section. In spite of these two ways in which the anthem may be said to be antiphonal, it is unlikely that anthem composers intended any connection between anthem and antiphon.

It cannot be stated without qualification that the word "anthem" evolved from antiphon. There are other possibilities as well. Foster mentions that when Chaucer alludes to "Antym" in the tale of the Prioress from *Canterbury Tales*, he may be referring to "Anti-hymnus." This term is explained as meaning the singing of a hymn from side to side of the choir.(11)

Foster makes two additional suggestions regarding the origin of the term. The first suggestion he evidently disavows. The levity with which he mentions it indicates his disapproval:

> "Another derivation, supported by many earnest students, is from ἀνθος, *a flower*, and it is worthy of remark that certain very old Anthem or Antiphon books are named Antho-logia, which might be translated 'Nosegays'!" (12)

The other suggestion, he admits, is purely conjecture on his part:

> "... I will briefly add my own suggestion that 'Anthem' might be derived from part of ἀνατίθημι, a verb meaning to set up or dedicate as an offering. Thus 'Anthem' could mean 'A votive offering,' and, as such, I hope and pray it may ever be regarded; . . " (13)

When all suggestions have been aired, it appears that the early history of the word is almost as vague as its recent history, leaving only those persons of the 16th and 17th centuries with a precise understanding of its meaning. They were too busy writing beautiful anthems to take time for speculation about terminology.

THE PLACE OF THE ANTHEM IN WORSHIP

Since I have defined anthem by its function, it would be appropriate to examine that function. As was previously stated, the anthem occupies the same place in the service (authorized but not liturgical) as the motet in the Latin services. Willi Apel says in the *Harvard Dictionary of Music* that a motet is "an unaccompanied choral composition, based on a Latin sacred text, and designed to be performed in the Catholic service, chiefly at Vespers."(14) To fully understand the anthem as it grew in England, I will digress into the practices of worship in the Chapel Royal of the English monarchs.

During the 12th and 13th centuries, it was for monarchs to have a retinue of servants with him at all times, not only to attend to his personal needs, but to help project the personality and dignity of the monarch. Included in the list of attendants were those who were to minister to his spiritual needs. Under the Normans, this group became known as the *servientes da capella* which included a number of priests capable of singing Mass. As far back as 1200, there are records of 'who sang what' in the Chapel Royal. Around the year 1300, choir-boys were added to the Chapel Royal so that the Chapel had all the resources of the cathedrals (and then some). The Chapel Royal had a more substantial budget, the right of impressment of the best musicians from all of England, and the ego of the monarch to assist it in becoming the center of musical activity in the church.

Things really began to happen during the reign of Henry VII. He, like no other, began to patronize the arts. It was he that began construction of the highest achievement of English perpendicular gothic architecture, King's College Chapel, Cambridge. It is late in his reign that we find the first reference to an anthem associated with Chapel worship. It was in 1502. Fayrfax shows that he received 20s. "for setting an Anthem."(15) From the many scattered references to "anthem" during this period, it is understanding that when writing in English, one said "anthem," and when writing in Latin, one said "motet." At any rate, the anthems from the early years have Latin titles and words and were motets. The frequency and context of their performance may be assumed from this order from 1526 (Henry VIII):

> "The Master, with six children and six gentlemen shall give their continual attendance in the King's Court and daily to hear a Mass of Our Lady be-

fore noon, and on Sundays and Holy Days, Mass of the Day, besides Our Lady Mass, and an Anthem (Antempe) in the afternoon."(16)

The increasing use of the term anthem paralleled the decreasing use of "motet." Shortly after Henry VIII broke with Rome, he closed the monasteries. This action contributed to the decay of the motet tradition.

The changes made by Henry VIII were profound, but not as thorough as might be expected. Henry was conservative liturgically and the Mass and Offices (only two of which, Matins or Morning Prayer and Vespers or Evening Prayers, survived the Reformation) were still in Latin. Most of the changes were made in the liturgy by Archbishop Cranmer. He omitted all hymns, threw out six of the eight offices, and revamped the Roman Breviary; modified the Latin material, translated it, condensed it, and produced in 1549 the first *Book of Common Prayer* in English. These events occurred two years after the death of Henry VIII under eleven year old Edward VI. England was obviously being affected by the New Learning from Italy and Lutheranism from Germany. These effects were more explicit in the revised Prayer Book in 1552. It is this version which has survived.(17)

Where was the anthem amidst all this? Queen Elizabeth issued some instructions for the clergy regarding Morning and Evening Prayer in 1559 which indirectly referred to the anthem: "an hymn, or such like song (in churches) . . . to the praise of Almighty God in the best sort of melody and music that may be conveniently devised."(18) We do not find specific mention of it until the Agenda of Charles II in 1662 where it says at the end of the third collect which is at the end of Morning and Evening Prayer, "In Quires and places where they sing, here followeth the anthem."(19) It is also quite likely that another anthem was often performed right after the sermon. In this position it is often called the "offertory anthem."

The position of the anthem in Lutheran services is extremely vague. It is not mentioned at all in either the old or the newer *Service Book and Hymnal*, nor is it mentioned in *The Lutheran Hymnal* (o'd green or new blue). Similarly, the *Worship Supplement* does not specify a place for it. Luther Reed makes only two short references to the anthem both of which appear below.

"When the choir desires to sing two anthems in the Service, one will follow the Offertory and the other may be sung as a substitute for the Gradual immediately after the simple Alleluia. In this significant location, between the Epistle and the Gospel for the day, care should be taken to have the text

and the music of the anthem strictly liturgical, that is, in harmony with the lessons and the mood of the day or season."(20)

"The offering and the anthem, as we know them today, are two relatively modern features (?) in the Service. Neither should prolong the Service unduly, though each should have its own proper dignity. The anthem should not be sung while the offering is being taken unless the matter of time makes this necessary. It may be sung before the offering is received or after the Prayer of the Church."(21)

Anthem placement is usually a matter of local custom. It would make an interesting study to survey some churches regarding this matter.

An additional comment is in order. It is my opinion that the position of the choir in worship has been diluted. If the choir is singing an anthem, it should be placed somewhere in the service as an anthem. If, however, the choir is doing a setting of a *Kyrie,* or a *Gloria in Excelsis,* or a Concertato setting of a hymn with the congregation, then it should be performed in the place of the *Kyrie, Gloria in Excelsis,* or congregational hymn and not stuck into the "anthem slot." As well as making the choir more a part of the service, it might also help to clear the fog of confusion that hangs over the "anthem."

Some anthems were not specifically intended for worship services. There are those that have been written as partial fulfillment of requirements for a music degree known in England as a "Degree exercise." Anthems were also commissioned for special events like the funeral of a Duke, a coronation, to commemorate military or naval victories, etc. It is also true that Earls and others would commission a composer to write some anthem for his court, evidently for his own glorification and not God's. Such was the case of the "Chandos anthems" of Handel.

CLASSIFICATION

As might be expected, various authors have different ways of classifying anthems. One method common to all is the distinction between "full" anthems and "verse" anthems. This distinction is at once simple and complicated. A full anthem is one which is for chorus. A "verse" anthem is one for chorus and soloists. The distinction is complicated by the occasional inclusion of verses (solo passages) in an anthem designated by its composer as a "full" anthem. Suffice it to say that a full anthem is predominantly for chorus while the verse anthem is more reliant upon soloists.

These two basic forms vary a great deal from one period to the next. Occasionally one might find an anthem in which solo passages so overshadow the chorus parts that they might be called (and have been called) "solo anthems." (23)

One gaping hole exists in the sources which I consulted. The very simple questions of people totally unfamiliar with anthem literature often remain unanswered. Two questions to which I refer are: "What is a verse?" and "What isn't a verse?" I will attempt to remedy this gap with a few very fundamental comments. Any part of a full or verse anthem that is not done by the chorus but by one OR MORE soloists is called a verse. Verses are not to be confused with verses or stanzas of a hymn or poem. Verses in anthems do not necessarily rhyme. They are not necessarily sandwiched in between full sections, but may follow or precede another verse. As mentioned previously, it is not uncommon to find a verse for two, three, or four voices singing simultaneously in a duet, trio, or quartet. The verse is more a derivation of the Gregorian type verse or versicle (abbreviated V.) and not a derivation of the poetic term "verse." The Gregorian "verse" was a sentnce sung by the priest; hence his soloist connotation.

Beyond these two basic types of anthem, there are many ways of classifying anthems. Most of them refer to periods and styles. The succeeding short chapters will deal with the anthem according to my own classification which is as follows:

1. The Motet Period (Early Tudor) — primarily full anthems.

2. Elizabethan Period (Late Tudor & Jacobean) full and verse.

3. Transitory Period (Charles I) Italian influence, full and verse.

4. Restoration Period (Charles II) French influence, mostly verse.

5. Handelian Period (18th century) full and verse.

6. The 19th Century — full anthems preferred.

"The twentieth century will have to be left alone. The reason is because there is little analytical material available, the Cathedral tradition faded or at least changed with the decline of royal patronage, and because contemporary compositions that are used as anthems are greatly varied in style and in their textural and thematic sources. This is not to say that they are of inferior quality or design. Rather, they comprise a body of literature that does not, by and large, follow in the anthem tradition in its narrow sense.

Although reference will be made to individual composers, no attempt will be made here to provide great detail. Also, due to the great variation in scores available to whomever might read this paper, I will avoid reference to specific works as examples. Instead, I will recommend one set of books that is extremely valuable as an anthology. It is *The Treasury of English Church Music* in five volumes. It is edited generally by Knight and Reed, but each volume has a special editor. The series is listed in the bibliography. It includes a very good selection of anthems, particularly in volumes two through four. Also included in each volume is a foreword, a commentary on the contents, a discography, a bibliography, a list of current editions for choirs of the choral works of these composers represented in the collection, and a list of published collected works by the various composers.

THE MOTET PERIOD

The earliest period in the development of the anthem is called the motet period, because in this early period, the anthem was a motet. As mentioned previously, it could be that when reference was made to this genre of composition in English, it was an anthem; whereas if the reference was in Latin, then it was a motet. To understand the basic characteristics of the motet-anthem, we had better examine the characteristics of the motet.

The anthem can be said to have evolved during the reign of Henry VIII. The motets of this period were no longer performed by solo voices as in the earlier stages of its development. These earliest motet-anthems differed from those later anthems in that they did have a pre-composed melody upon which they were based. Like other motets, the tenor carried that melody which was probably derived from plainsong. The motet in England had reached that stage where the three or four voices were becoming more and more egalitarian, but the tenor was still the most important.

There were several uniquely English styles of polyphony. The English have had a tradition of "sonorous" music as opposed to highly independent voices. Bukofzer explains very well in referring to music from the 14th and 15th centuries:

"Harmonically, the motets display the gradual intrusion of the English sixth-chord style in motet writing. The emphasis on contrary motion and perfect consonances at the beginning of each perfection, which characterizes the harmonic style of the thirteenth century, is weakened here by a marked tendency to introduce thirds or sixths, to direct the voices in parallel as well as contrary motion, and to keep them together occasionally by a very conspicuous means: parallel six-three chords. These effectively counterbalance the aim of Gothic music to differentiate and stratify the voices by means of register, color, and, especially,

rhythm, which prevailed in France more strongly than in England. English composers with their sensibility to blending intervals and the spell of sheer sonority followed only part of the way and preferred to adhere to what may be called chordal or "harmonic" effects, although they did not entirely shut themselves off from the rhythmic innovations of the Petronian style."(24)

The English motets therefore have much more full harmonies (by today's standards) than others of their day. They have a long history of discant and gymel, both of which rely heavily on a frequency of sixth and thirds, and the parallel motion mentioned by Bukofzer. This style is described by the Italian writer Gulielmus Monachus (c.1475) as *modus Anglicorum*.(25)

The Old Hall Ms. shed much light on this subject. It was a collection of various types of service music for the Royal Chapel from the 14th and 15th centuries. The characteristics cited by Bukofzer above are prevalent along with frequent examples of a "migrant" cantus firmus. (26)

In the earliest stages, motets were often translated into English and called anthems. This was even done by the composer on several occasions.(27) This translation occurred at the same time as the Reformation. These were difficult times for the composers who were often caught in the crossfire. Take, for example, John Taverner who has come through history ironically as one of the leading Catholic composers of his age. He subscribed to the teachings of Luther and was imprisoned for it until Wolsey let him out because he was "but a musician."(28) Foster adds, "Can we not picture the puzzled state of these poor composers, never knowing whether, by setting their music to the new English words, they would be burned alive, or by using the old Latin ones, they would be hanged!"(29)

The longer anthems were divided into two parts which could be performed separately or together. Polyphonic texture pervades them, but a strong harmonic sense lies beneath it. Points of imitation are developed minimally and soon melt into a semi-conscious style.

At this point, it is important to mention the two earliest anthem writers from the early Henrician period. They were Richard Fayrfax (?-1521) and William Cornish (?-1523). The group most notable immediately after the Reformation includes John Taverner (?-1545), Richard Farrant (1535-81), Christopher Tye (1505-72), Thomas Tallie (1505-85), John Merbecke (1510-85), and Thomas Caustun (?-1569).

One very important characteristic of the music in early anthems was its syllabic character. One reason for it might be the English preference for conductus style which tends to allow the words to be heard more clearly than in polyphony. The primary cause is that this style was required by royal decree. During the reign of Henry VIII there were already many complaints about the music overshadowing its text. One has been preserved in Young's book: "Syngyng and saying of Mass, Matins or Evensong, is but rorying, howling, whistling, mummying, conjuring, and jugelyng, and the playing of the organys a foolish vanitie." (30) During the reign of Edward VI came the order. In 1548 it was decreed that there should be allowed "no Anthemes of our Lady or other saynts but onely of our Lord. And then not Latin but choseyng owte the best and moste soundyng to cristen religion they shall turne the same into Englishe settyng, thereunto a playn and distincte note, for every sillable one, they shall singe them and none other."(31)

It was late in the motet period that the verse anthem made its appearance. The earliest example is attributed to Farrant. These will be dealt with in the next chapter.

THE ELIZABETHAN PERIOD

In the later years of the reign of Queen Elizabeth and the reign of King James I (or, 25 years either side of 1600), there occurred an incomprehensible explosion of creativity in England. Some say that genius is born of turmoil. This could well be the case in England. There had been persecution of Lutheran ideas under Wolsey, then persecution of Catholics and ransacking the monasteries under Henry VIII and Cranmer, then persecution of Cranmer and Protestants under Bloody Mary, and then Mary lost her head after having taken that of Cranmer. The uprooting of Catholocism and Mariolatry in England was nothing short of cosmic to the people of the day. When Henry took the monasteries and Catholic lands and began selling them off, the crown became extremely rich and a new class of wealthy landowners arose, patrons to the very last. When the English language took the place of Latin, it had become respectable and mature for the first time. The rise of the middle class produced great interest in drama, music, and learning. Musical instruments became household items. The clavichord of that day, the virginal, was even named after the Queen.

The list of creative people is astonishing. It includes William Shakespeare, Francis Bacon, John Donne, Edmund Spenser, Inigo Jones (architect), Ben Johnson (drama), and many others. This was the Golden age of literature as well as music, both sacred and the secular

madrigals. The madrigals of the age were not far different, stylistically, from anthems. The harmonic structure with frequent cross relations, the polyphonic imitation interspersed with homophonic sections, and the frequent word painting are present in both. Elizabethan anthems are generally more reserved than the madrigals and ballets and lack the "Fa-la"s so common to them.

The anthems of this age were plentiful particularly due to the joy of setting new English lyrics which had not been possible when writing for the old Latin texts which had been set and reset to music for centuries. With all the poets around, there was no lack of poetic texts for anthems. The syllabic treatment alluded to previously had thwarted composers for a while. They had two problems with it during the early years of anthem writing. First of all, there was a tendency to repeat phrases over and over again to make longer melodic lines. This problem has become associated with the anthem over the years. When one musician was asked the difference between a hymn and an anthem in 1949, he replied, "in a hymn you would sing 'Hand me that pike, Jack' while in an anthem the text would be something like 'Hand me, hand me that pike, that pike, O Jack.'"(32) The other problem was a holdover from metric psalms which were in common use, and in the early use, the rigid metric rules produced some ridiculous texts. The problem then is to make interesting music out of a boring and clumsy text. For example, it seems that in 1553, Christopher Tye translated the first fourteen chapters of the book of Acts into English metre and set them to music. A sample:

"It chanced at Iconium,
as they oft times did use,
Together they into dyd cum
the Sinagoge of Jues."(33)

The same problem beset the literary world until Shakespeare developed free verse or "verbal polyphony" by counter-rhythms and use of prose in counterpoint to verse rhythms.(34)

By the end of the 16th century, sufficient time had passed to free composers of music from the stilting and awkward problems of syllabic writing. Tovey says that we often are unfair to the 16th century composers in shackling them with bar lines. He explains:

"I offer here a specimen of *Paradise Lost,* treated as ordinary methods of barring are not to treat the rhythms of Palestrina and the madrigalists.

(*to be read with strong emphasis on the second and last syllables of each line.*)

Of Man's first dis
Obedience and
The fruit of that
Forbidden tree,
Whose mortal taste
Brought death into
The world and all.

This is a perfectly fair parallel to the custom of beating four-in-a-bar to sixteenth-century music. It scans, in an ugly fashion, just often enough to make the Byzantine scholiast imagine that it is the places that will not scan that are wrong, instead of the whole scheme that is fictitious."(35)

The music of the mature Elizabethans is perhaps the best balance between polyphony and homophony. The polyphony favors no particular voice and is therefore true polyphony: and yet the English strong traditional sense of sonority and harmony is there minus all the rules which we have added. The main difference between our harmony, or what sounds good to us, and theirs is their frequent use of cross-relations (collisions between major and minor thirds in the same chord). These are not as strident in vocal texture as they are on the piano according to Tovey.(36) Also, one must remember that this great flowering occurred about one hundred years before Bach. Let's not put too many expectations in our ears.

It was during this period that the verse anthem emerged. The earliest verse anthems are from the mind of Richard

Farrant. Another composer, Thomas Morley (1557-1603) was a pioneer in this field. He is also known for his work, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* in 1597, which tells us much about 16th century music.

Just as Beethoven is said to be a bridge from the Classical to the Romantic, William Byrd (1543-1623) could be called a bridge between the early anthem-motet writers and the mature Elizabethans and Jacobeans.(37) He had been the pupil of Thomas Tallis and he carried some of that flavor of solemnity into the Jacobean age.

The Jacobean age was the culmination of the Elizabethan. There were five men who shine above the rest. All were anthem composers. William Byrd has been called the father of English Church Music as his contemporary, Orlando Gibbons. Many say that the verse anthem was brought to its greatest heights by Gibbons. Thomas Weelkes is best known for his madrigals, but I prefer his anthems to the others for their sense of balance and text. The fourth is John Bull who is best known for his keyboard work and has been called the founder of the English style of keyboard music. When these men died, the polyphonic anthem died with them. With the exception of Thomas Tomkins, the deaths of these five men and King James I occurred within a span of six years.

The full anthems were usually done without accompaniment. They were beautifully balanced between polyphonic points of imitation and homophonic treatment near the evenly spaced cadences. Often the new points of imitation begin before the cadence is released, providing continuity. Rhythms are very free. They are every bit as masterful as the work of Palestrina and represent to English speaking people what Schultz does to the Germans, because the text is so eloquently matched by the music.

The verse anthems were usually accompanied especially in the verse sections. The instruments and the soloist interacted in polyphonic style while the full sections were homophonic by comparison.

Most of these works are for four, five, or six parts. There seems to have been an overabundance of altos in those days resulting in much music for five parts. This could also be due to the two types of alto singing in those days; contratenor and true alto or low treble.

TRANSITORY PERIOD 1625-49

This period in anthem history is seldom mentioned as being separate from the others. I feel that it is unique in several ways. First of all, the old Elizabethan masters had all died within three years of 1625 leaving a vacuum. Furthermore, Charles I was not the patron that Elizabeth and James had been. Therefore, the Chapel Royal suffered greatly from diminished funds and interest. It might also be compared with the death of Bach. The forms and styles of the times had been brought to a magnificent peak. Any further treatment of the same material would be redundant and anti-climactic.

The few composers of note from this period are not, however, to be ignored. Their work is of high quality and of different style. This new style was imitative of the Italian declamatory style of singing. It was brought to England by Walter Porter (1595-1659) who had studied in Italy with Monteverdi. He was accompanied in his efforts by Christopher Gibbons (the son of Orlando), William Child (1606-96), and Henry Cooke (1610-72). Henry Cooke was the only one who was to have a truly distinguished career.

Not only did these men have to begin their careers under the shadow of the great men before them, but they also had their careers cut short by impending civil war and the resulting Commonwealth under Cromwell. Civil war erupted in 1642. The musicians and composers dropped their pens and instruments and took up the sword. When Charles I lost his head, the church lost its music. The *Book of Common Prayer* was abolished in 1644; organs were destroyed or shut up; Cathedral worship was called to a halt and the Cathedrals closed; many organs and copies of music were litertally destroyed. Metrical psalms were all that remained.

Those that survived the war were too old fashioned for Charles II and, with the exception of Captain Henry Cooke (the title conferred during his service in the Loyalist forces), they spent their remaining years in the background.

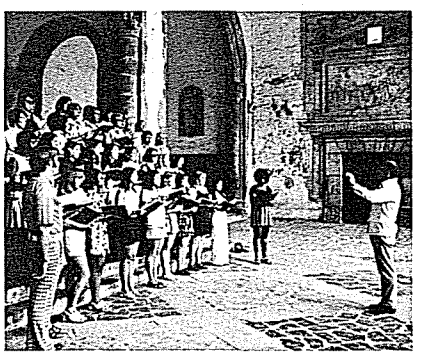
RESTORATION PERIOD

The Restoration period is so divergent from all that had gone on before, that anthems written during this period were called Restoration anthems. They grew out of the preference of their new monarch, Charles II. He had been in France until the Restoration (1659) and had acquired French tastes there. In the simplest terms I can muster, the French taste in music was for dance rhythms (instrumental style) and instrumental music. One of the musicians of that day, Thomas Tudway, compiled a six volume collection of Ms. titled "Anthems from the Reformation to the Restoration of King Charles II, composed by the best Masters." He sums up the situation from an eyewitness point of view:

> "His Majesty was soon tired with the grave and solemn way which had been established by Byrd and others, and ordered the Composers of his chapel to add symphonies with instruments to their Anthems; and established a

—Continued on page 26

THE CHORAL FESTIVALS



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select number of his private band to play the symphony and the ritornellos he had appointed. The old masters of music such as Dr. Child and Dr. (Christopher) Gibbons hardly knew how to comport themselves with these newfangled ways, but proceeded in their compositions according to the old style." (38)

King Charles II appointed Captain Cooke to the position of Master of the Children of the Chapel Royal. It was certainly a wise appointment. Cooke started with practically nothing. He went on a talent hunt and came up with the following impressive list of young men which became known as Captain Cooke's Boys: Henry Purcell (1658-95 — trained by, but not discovered by Cooke), William Turner (1652 - 1740), Michael Wise (1638 - 87), John Blow (1648 - 1708), Thomas Tudway (1650-1730), and Pelham Humfrey (1647-74). The last one became very influential in bringing the French style to England. He had attracted the attention of Charles II and was sent by Charles to Italy and to France where he studied with Lully.

Captain Cooke is often overshadowed by the work of his pupils, particularly that of Henry Purcell. But his importance is never to be underestimated. Within three years, he trained and gathered an excellent choir having started from scratch.

During the Restoration period, verse anthems were favored. Rather than verses blending with full sections, they were now set apart by orchestral interludes and ritornellos. The text was portrayed vividly by the melody imitating the suggestion of the words. There was no more polyphony as it had been known. The verses had a much more fluent melody and, rather than being contrapuntally conceived against the instruments, they stood out from the accompanying instruments which played in a contrasting, non-vocal style. Dotted rhythms were very common, along with other styles typical of French dance forms.

Henry Purcell is considered to be the greatest of his contemporaries. He is usually recognized as the last internationally known British composer for 200 years. He was the first of the anthem composers to use a figured bass.

Much light is shed on this age by the priceless diaries of Samuel Pepys and Evelyn. The men of this period were also fond of singing clubs, catches, and other worldly pursuits. Most of them enjoyed writing and performing in operas which, oddly enough, were a product of the Commonwealth days. It was also during this period that sole anthems appeared on the scene. Full anthems were still being written with or without accompaniment and these are often buried beneath the popularity of the verse anthems. There are many of great quality.

THE HANDELIAN PERIOD

This period is not called the Handelian period because of what he did for the anthem, but because of what he did to the anthem. First of all, Handel certainly cannot be said to be in the anthem tradition. He was not English. He was a native German and had traveled and studied all over Europe. In anthem literature he is known primarily for his Chandos anthems, twelve in all, which were intended for court use, not for worship. I find that Handel did not really advance the anthem much farther than Purcell had done. The major differences are the more sophisticated harmony of Handel and greater continuity throughout the work. This was accomplished through such methods as using an arch form for the various sections similar to that of J.S. Bach in the motet, *Jesu Meine Freude.*

Handel's popularity in England resulted in almost a century of "Handel worship" which tended to draw attention away from the great Cathedral worship tradition.

The last holdouts of that tradition were William Croft (1648 - 1727), Maurice Greene (1696-1755), and William Boyce (1710-79). Anthems from this period are not as inventive as the Restoration anthems, but adhere to a style more like that of the Elizabethans, more subdued and introspective. Since the death of Charles II, the "Twenty - four Violins" had been disbanded and the accompaniment was provided by the organ in most cases. Throughout the 18th century, the accompaniment declines in importance.

Besides their own compositions, the before mentioned men made other noteworthy contributions. Due to the many years since the Elizabethans, much of the music was still in part books and in manuscript. They had been recopied and reissued so many times, that it was difficult to find any manuscripts or copies that had not been altered. Croft was the first one to publish a collection in 1724 titled *Musica Sacra.* Maurice Greene inherited

some money which enabled him to devote much of his time to collecting manuscripts and authentic editions which he set into score with intention of publication. When he died, he willed his materials to William Boyce. He evidently realized that due to failing health he would not be able to complete his work. Not long after, John Alcock heard of Boyce's efforts and gave his materials to Boyce also. The resulting collection (*Cathedral Music* 1760-1773) is a monumental treasury published in three volumes.

The death of William Boyce marks the end of the anthem as it came out of the Cathedral tradition of England.

As Cathedral worship dwindled, congregational music was on the increase. Charles Wesley began the Methodist movement around 1700 and with it the Methodist hymn traditions. In America and in England, singing schools were begun to improve congregational singing. Partly due to this congregational movement, the works of the masters were subjected to considerable plundering in the last half of the 18th century. They were adapted, arranged, cut up and reassembled to meet local needs. The results were of a markedly lower calibre.

Just prior to the American Revolution, several volumes of anthems were published in America. These contained mostly works by the British composers, Stephenson, Tans'ur, Knapp, Williams and some works by Handel. Most were short anthems, unaccompanied, in four parts, with a basso continuo line to accompany solo sections. They were not, by and large, of the best quality. A more detailed picture is given in an article by Ralph T. Daniel titled "English Models for the First American Anthems." This article is listed in the bibliography. The result was the beginnings of some American anthems produced mainly by William Billings (1764-1800) and a few others. Some of these are included in score in a supplement to *The Anthem in New England Before* 1800, also by Daniel.(39)

What remained of an anthem tradition in England was carried on by John Battishill (1738-1801) and William Crotch (1775-1847).

THE 19TH CENTURY

Another anthem tradition in England began to develop in the 19th Century due to the Oxford movement and various congregational efforts in the dissenting (non-Anglican) churches. There arose a demand for shorter anthem which were within the scope of congregational use. These are mostly accompanied by the organ. They are definitely new in design with the organ accompaniment becoming more important and more independent. These efforts were initiated by Thomas Atwood (1765-1838) who was a pupil of Mozart and a dear friend of Felix Mendelssohn.

The tradition really took root in the very famous Wesley family. The most notable of these was Samuel Sebastian (S.S.) Wesley (1810-76). John Stainer (1840-1901) and F. A. Gore Ousley (1825-89) also made many contributions. These men, unfortunately, are often confused with the "Choir fodder" mentioned earlier. This association is not justified. They have to compete with re-publications of many translated works from the continent as well as from England's own past. Also it is to be noted that the anthem had by their time lost its identity as a distinct musical form due to the introduction into the service of excerpts from oratorios, cantatas, masses, etc.

Men like John Stainer also did much to bring the earlier anthem traditions to light with editorial work and musicological studies. Thanks to their efforts, much of the great wealth of anthem literature is now available to church musicians who are finding it to be a fine source of usable material.

Much of this anthem literature is little used and often misunderstood by choral directors in and outside the church. There are many reasons for this. I suggest that we often use the term "anthem" in its widest sense. Choral directors bear the responsibility of understanding and pro-

ANTHEM . . .

moting their art in the clearest terms possible. If we returned to a more specific use of "anthem," the great body of literature discussed in this article would stand a better chance of being identified, known, and used.

At a recent symphony concert, the program notes described an orchestral melody as "a poignant folk tune almost like an anthem," and again, "a quiet church-like episode." Is this type of usage the result of the admittedly difficult task of making program notes interesting and intelligible to both the musician and the layman, or is it the result of all too frequent generalization? Are our "anthem files" stuffed with excerpts from larger works, cantatas, settings of hymns and liturgical settings? For many people, "anthem" means "religious choral music." For others an anthem may be "music printed on 'octavo'-sized paper." For us it should mean something more specific.

As our profession continues to mature and develop, I am confident that we will hear more from the "Cathedral Tradition" in our concerts and in our worship services. We may also be led to a finer appreciation of the anthems of the twentieth century. Even though the anthem is an historical art form with its roots in the heritage of the Church of England, it lives today. When we say that music is a universal language, we can claim that heritage as our own. Our composers can build upon it and our choirs can rejoice in it.

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FOOTNOTES

1. Donald Francis Tovey, **Essays in Musical Analysis,** Volume 5, pages 12-13.
2. Whether that relationship be bosom as in the Anglican Church in America or shirttail as in Methodism or English speaking Lutheranism is a distinction of importance to the cloth and not to students of church music.
3. Myles Birket Foster, **Anthems and Anthem Composers,** p. 14.
4. Blom, Eric, ed. **Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians.** Volume I, p. 166.
5. Wienandt, Elwyn A. **Choral Music of the Church.** p. 321.
6. **Ibid.** p. 165.
7. Martin Cooper, ed. **The Concise Encyclopedia of Music and Musicians.** New York: Hawthorn Books Inc., 1958. p. 22.
8. Foster, **Anthems.** p. 13.
9. Weinandt, **Choral Music,** p. 143
10. **Ibid.** Wienandt discusses **decani** and **cantoris** extensively on pages 142-146.
11. Foster, **Anthem,** p. 14.
12. **Ibid.**
13. **Ibid.**
14. Will: Apel **Harvard Dictionary of Music,** 1974. p. 541.
15. **Grove's Dictionary,** Vol. I, p. 166.
16. Percy M. Young, **A History of British Music,** p. 82.
17. Albert E. Bailey, **The Gospel in Hymns,** p. 5-7.
18. **Musik in Geshichte,** Vol. I. — "Anthem." p. 514.
19. **Ibid.** p. 514.
21. Luther D. Reed, **The Lutheran Liturgy.** p. 297.
22. **Ibid.** p. 309.
23. Dagobert D. Runes and Harry G. Schrickel, ed. **Encyclopedia of the Arts.** New York: Philosophical Library, 1946.
24. Manfred F. Bukofzer, **Studies in Medievel and Renaissance Music.** p. 20-21.
25. Percy M. Young, **A History of British Music.** p. 55.
26. **Ibid.** p. 59-60.
27. Wienandt, **Choral Music,** p. 141.
28. Young, **British Music,** p. 93.
29. Foster, **Anthems,** p. 17.
30. Young, **British Music,** p. 96.
31. **Ibid.**
32. Ralph T. Daniel, **The Anthem in New England Before 1800,** page x.
33. Foster, **Anthems,** p. 19.
34. F. E. Halliday, **An Illustrated Cultural History of England,** pp. 132-133.
35. Tovey, **Essays,** Vol. 5, p. 4.
36. **Ibid.** p. 9.
37. 'Jacobean' comes from the French form of James which is Jacob. "Jacobean" therefore refers to the reign of James I (1603-25).
38. Foster, **Anthems,** p. 50. ❖

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE . . .

sonants, the result being a gorgeous sound which communicates absolutely nothing. Such singers are first cousins to those whose faces never change expression whether they are singing a lament, a love song, or a hallelujah. For them, my second proposed motto would be, "Look like the music!"

Does anyone want to collect a list of choral pet peeves to be reproduced and made required reading of all conducting students? I'd be happy to act as a clearing house.

Exaggeration is the essence of satire. No conductor I've ever seen, of course, is guilty of offending all these prejudices of mine. We have made tremendous progress in the quality of choral performance in this country during my lifetime, but perhaps these light-hearted complaints may inspire a little more.

Sincerely,

Walter S. Collins