

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

MPhil in Musicology

**THE STYLE AND DEVELOPMENT OF
HERBERT HOWELLS' EVENING
CANTICLE SETTINGS,
1918-1975**



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But let the glorious Te Deum be thundered from a noble organ into the dim and misty aisles of some cast and shadowy cathedral, the clear voices of the choristers joining at intervals, now low, now loud, until the pure tones echo and roll like the deep billows of a swelling sea among the sculptured columns, and every niche of Gothic tracery is dull of sound, the effect of such music upon the mind is astonishing, and at first a person would be ready to believe that the tones were really addressing themselves to this intellect. The cast aisles, the sculptured columns, the tinted windows, the pale monuments, all add to the sublime impression; and, more than all these, the sense of the purpose of the building and the meaning of the music, the awe that is produced by so sublime a worship...¹

¹ Ruskin , *Praeterita 1*, 409.

INDEX

Abstract	i
Methodology	iii
Acknowledgements	viii

Chapter one

1:1	Setting the scene	1
1:2	Howells' musical world in context	5

Chapter two

2:1	Introduction	10
2:2	The Tudor Revival	11
2:3	Charles Stanford	30

Chapter three

3:1	Introduction to Howells' musical style	41
3:2	Acoustics	45
3:3	Texture and timbre	57
3:4	Melodic construction	83
3:5	Structure, thematic and motivic use	102
3:6	Harmony	124
3:7	Cadences	168
3:8	Modes	181
3:9	Howells' canticles in the repertoire today	197

Chapter four

4:1	Drawing conclusions	208
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Appendices	
Bibliography	

Abstract

It is the aim of this dissertation to look at the style and development in style of Howells' evening canticles from the first set, written in 1918 through to the final set of 1975. **Chapter one** will put Howells' life in the Anglican Church into context. It shows an outline of Howells' life and will observe briefly the musical world into which he was born, viewing the reforms that took place religiously and musically during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

In **Chapter two**, analysis will initially focus on Howells' love of tudor models, and his wealth of first-rate pieces for unaccompanied choir, which were composed whilst he was still a student at the Royal College of Music. These works are clear precursors to his later choral works, so early characteristics of his mature style will be identified. Discussion on the influence of Charles Stanford (Howells' teacher at the Royal College of Music) will also be added to broaden the discussion, illustrating where Howells found further inspiration.

Chapter three will concentrate extensively on the distinctive style Howells achieved in all 20 sets of evening canticles, and how this style developed through time. Conclusions will be drawn as to why the settings written between 1945 and 1952 were the most successful, and why the latter settings were (and still are) less accepted. Suggestions as to which canticles should have a more regular place in Cathedral repertoire lists will also be contributed.

The importance of certain events on Howells' style of composition make up a large amount of the fourth and final Chapter. Howells' religious scepticism will be

discussed alongside the fact that he composed in a style which many believed to be the perfect aid to worship – neither under nor overstated, highly reflective and emotive, yet sensitive and tremendously insightful to the Office of Evensong. How did Howells manage to change the face of Anglican music so much after the dominance of Stanford, as he effectively became the one individual who ‘wrote the soundtrack of Anglican cathedral worship...’¹ for the twentieth century?

¹ John Rutter to Sophie Cleobury (personal e-mail), 02.05.06.

Methodology

I decided to focus on the evening canticles of Herbert Howells, because beyond the documented popularity of certain settings (namely those written for King's College Cambridge, Gloucester Cathedral and St Paul's Cathedral), there is little written on the whole collection, which spans a 57-year long period, being most of Howells' compositional life.

Books and articles on Howells' life are abundant. However, a certain lack of scholarly literature on Howells is clear. Whilst Christopher Palmer's *Herbert Howells, A Centenary Celebration* and Paul Spicer's *Herbert Howells* provide the much needed background that is necessary in studying this subject in-depth, much of the writing, especially in Palmer's book seems like the work of an enthusiast rather than a detached academic. Some of his comments seem vague and are rarely backed up in close examination of the music in question. The best example of this is his use of the term 'impressionistic polyphony.'¹ With regards to Howells' music, this is a term which remains somewhat vague and unexplained, and does not wholly help the discussion on Howells' music. More will be said on this in **Chapter three**.

Paul Andrews' *Documentary and Bibliographical Study* was also extremely helpful in supplying lists of useful articles to aid my research, but short of an MA dissertation from 1983 on the post-1945 canticles by Hughes and a few brief but specific articles (*Herbert Howells' Evening Canticles, a personal survey* by Russill and *Neglected Resources – Paul Spicer evaluates Herbert Howells's canticle settings*), there is little else which examines all 20 evening settings as a group, putting them into context with

¹ Palmer, C., *Herbert Howells, A Study* (Sevenoaks: Novello, 1978), 2.

Howells' earliest choral works and looking at the impact of other composers and stylistic influences. Hughes' dissertation failed to look back to the pre-1945 settings, which need recognition in their own right. There is one article (again by Russill; *Herbert Howells and Westminster Cathedral 1912-1918*) that discusses Howells' early choral compositions, which certainly show the beginnings of his later style, but again, this does not set out to show developing features of his later style.

It was clear that, although quite a lot has been written on Howells' canticle settings, there was no single investigation into the evening canticles, their individual style, how this style came about, and how it developed through time. I wanted to put the evening canticles into greater context by looking at Howells' earliest choral works and showing the development of his choral style through his life.

In addition, it seemed an appropriate time to spend researching the canticles of Howells, due to the release of *The Complete Morning and Evening Canticles of Herbert Howells*, sung by The Collegiate Singers and directed by Andrew Millinger. There is now the possibility of hearing all the evening canticles (in one collection), of which five were premiere recordings (Service in E flat for Unison voices, Service in D for Men's voices and the *Hereford, Magdalen College Oxford*, and *York Services*). These were recorded amongst all the morning service settings and some of Howells' works for Westminster Cathedral, which allows the listener to be able to judge for him/herself the value of one of Howells' most celebrated musical idioms. The sleeve notes to these recordings by Paul Andrews are detailed and well researched, further enhancing the listeners' appreciation of the music.

In studying Howells' output of evening canticles, I narrowed down my research to one very specific idiom of composition, which would allow for closer analysis. It is an idiom in which I think Howells showed his best work. Some of his morning canticles suffer due to the lengths of texts, which I believe Howells found harder to structure successfully. Howells' settings like the *Te Deum* for St Mary Redcliffe and *Te Deum* for Canterbury Cathedral are not as well structured as the shorter texts of the *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis*, with which he certainly excelled. The morning settings also quite often lack rhythmic vitality that goes hand in hand with the texts; the *Jubilate* and *Te Deum* texts ('O be joyful in the Lord all ye lands' and 'We praise thee, O God') for instance.

The Office of Evensong is a highly contemplative and introspective service, one to which Howells particularly adhered especially after the tragic loss of his son at such a young age, and close friends during the war. Evensong is a service of deep reflection, and one through which Howells' warm yet highly elegiac personality shone. The words of Alan Ridout here ring true for all of Howells' music, but are especially valid if considered with particular reference to his evening canticles:

Sadness can become addictive, and, though [Howells] could laugh, this was always briefly against a background of unshed tears.²

In researching my thesis, I used personal e-mail correspondence as a foundation for compiling modern opinion on the evening canticles and also for insights into Howells

² Ridout, A., *A Composer's Life* (London: Thames, 1995), 56.

as an individual. I wrote to Directors of Music at a number of cathedrals and collegiate chapels in order to ascertain which of Howells' canticles are in current repertoire lists, and I also asked them why they thought the canticles written specifically for their cathedral or chapel either worked or did not work. I received a number of useful replies, which supplemented my own opinions and made for a useful record of current views on particular canticles.

As another source of insight into Howells' outlook on composition, I spent some time in the library of the Royal College of Music, where a great supply of archival material is available on Howells. Useful information included Howells' talk for BBC Home Service on *Church Music of Today* in 1943, his discussion in 1960 with Alec Robertson and Eric Routley on *Music in Worship* and his address to the Blanford Press Reception on *The Treasury of English Church Music* in 1965. Untitled notebooks included Howells' jottings on 'the church and history of art', 'music's power of architectural imitation', 'plainsong's magical character' and 'where and when does the composer's approach being?', which would most probably have been used as notes in lectures at the RCM. These all supplied me with fascinating insights into Howells' thinking and compositional process.

I found it very useful to read through Howells' lecture notes, and although I had to be weary of some (particularly his notes for the series *Music and the Ordinary Listener* and other such lectures for example) due to the audiences for which they were written, I was provided with a great deal about Howells' compositional ideas and beliefs, which were of unquestionable importance as background to my work. Lecture notes included his opinions on polytonality, atonality, the importance of Purcell and

counterpoint to music of his contemporaries (Walton and Britten), and the employment of colour within music.

Other articles included in the Howells Royal College of Music archives include the *Friends of Cathedral Music's 18th Annual Report* from 1972, in which Richard Lloyd wrote an appreciation of Howells' work for the liturgy. Useful press cuttings from various publications also augmented public opinion of Howells and his beliefs.

With all this in mind, I was presented with a great amount of material with which to base my thesis. I found all the archive work extremely insightful to Howells' mindset and way of composition, and this set me in good stead to analyse the musical style in his evening canticles.

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I would like to thank John Rutter and David Willcocks for their kind personal insights into Howells.

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Birmingham University Singers
Colmore Consort
Oxford Spezzati
Choir of St. Martin-in-the-Fields
Collegiate Singers

November 2006

CHAPTER ONE

- 1:1. Setting the scene
- 1:2. Howells' musical world in context

1:1 Setting the scene

Herbert Howells' musical upbringing was steeped in the Anglican tradition. His father Oliver, a well-educated man with a deep admiration for music, encouraged his young son to listen to and play the organ. He took him to numerous cathedrals and churches, exposing him to the sounds of organs and choir; sounds which were so important to his future compositional output.

Born in Lydney in Gloucestershire on 17th October 1892, Howells first encountered organ tuition from Herbert Brewer at Gloucester Cathedral and showed such great promise, that he won an open scholarship to the Royal College of Music in 1912, where he was taught by Charles Stanford and Charles Wood. After his time at the Royal College, Howells moved directly to Salisbury Cathedral as sub-organist, an important post which set in motion what could have been a great career as cathedral organist. However, this position was short-lived due to the diagnosis of Graves' disease which gave Howells only a few months to live in 1915.

During his convalescence, Howells took to editing Tudor manuscripts and later took on a teaching appointment at the Royal College of Music. He only returned to the post of organist at St John's College Cambridge as a deputy to Robin Orr during the Second World War, and this was only for 4 years (1941-1945). Howells thus never became as successful an organist as was predicted earlier in his career, but his time away from the organ loft certainly gave him the chance to explore other forms of music (see Appendix A).

In his later life, Howells took on a vast number of appointments, such as Head of Music at St Paul's Girls' School (succeeding Howells), president of the Incorporated Society of Musicians, president of the Plainsong and Mediaeval Music Society and also the Royal College of Organists. He was awarded the CBE in 1953 and various honorary degrees, including an honorary fellowship at St John's College Cambridge in 1961. Howells died in February 1983 in London and was succeeded by his daughter Ursula, an actress, who died recently in 2005.

Today, Howells is remembered primarily for his contribution to the Anglican repertoire. During his formative years however, Howells' production of sacred works was not substantial. **Appendix A** shows a chronological list of his works, and those in the 'sacred choral' category (in red) appear rather infrequently in his younger years compared with 1940 and beyond. In his earlier years, Howells produced a larger quantity of part songs, solo songs and works for chamber groups and small orchestras. The small number of sacred works that appeared before 1917 were composed mainly as assignments whilst at the Royal College of Music.

In spite of a slightly more regular output of sacred works from 1918, with such memorable pieces as *Here is the little door*, *Sing Lullaby*, *A Spotless Rose* – the three carol anthems – *My eyes for beauty pine*, and his earliest service settings for male voices and unison choir, there was a particularly marked increase in sacred choral works from 1940. It is fair to say that the largest portion of Howells' output after this date was for combined forces of choir and organ, with only a smattering of works for other mediums – many of which are rarely performed today. These include secular choral works (such as *The Scribe*, *Inheritance*), pieces for chorus and orchestra (like *A*

Maid Peerless, House of the Mind), and organ and piano pieces (such as *Siciliano for a High Ceremony, Prelude: De Profundis, Dalby's Fancy and Toccata, Howells' Clavichord*). Howells' works for orchestra or chamber ensembles virtually dried up after this time as he seemed to devote many of his later years to sacred choral and organ music.

There are a whole host of reasons why the early 1940s marked a turning point in Howells' compositional output. His move to Cambridge in 1941 to fill in as organist at St John's College was an important factor. Being steeped in the intensity of the Cambridge choral tradition surely swayed the nature of Howells' musical production. The collapse of his happy family life which ensued after the death of his nine-year old son Michael from polio only six years earlier (in 1935) also bore a huge impression on Howells. Michael's death left Howells inconsolable. There is no clearer testament to his devastation than the relative dearth of composition in any genre between 1936 and 1938.

Howells was a highly emotional individual. His music showed this through and through, so a sudden halt in compositions was bound to ensue for a little while after losing his son at such a tragically young age. What it did mean, however, was that from the 1940s onwards, his musical style had begun to show great maturity. It was a highly successful period for Howells composition-wise, as many of his pieces still known today came from this time. *Hymnus Paradisi* (written in 1938, but with a long gestation period, as it was first performed in 1950) is a work of huge proportions and unlike anything he had attempted before. Organ pieces like *Six Pieces for Organ* (which included the well-known *Master Tallis' Testament*) were completed in 1940.

1941 saw the collection of the four anthems (*O Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem, We have heard with our ears, Like as the Hart Desireth the Waterbrooks, and Let God Arise*), many of which have solid places in cathedral music lists across the country today. Other important works from this time include *Missa Sabrinensis* (1954), *Hymn for St Cecilia* (1958), *Stabat Mater* (1963), and one of Howells' most performed anthems *Take Him, Earth, for Cherishing* (1964).

Regarding Howells' evening canticles, 1945 is a more significant date, as this was the year in which he composed the *Collegium Regale* evening service – the setting which (along with the *Te Deum* and *Jubilate* of the previous year and the Communion service of 1956) so changed the face of Anglican Church music. After this year, Howells composed 15 further sets of evening canticles, all with their own individual mark, but all easily identifiable as his own.

It was this growth in maturity of style that brought Howells into his own. From his middle age, he made the world of church music his niche, and it was here that he was to have continuing success.

1:2 Howells' musical world in context

Born in the final decade of the nineteenth century, Herbert Howells' earliest years witnessed the latter end of reform in religion and, subsequently, church music. The Oxford Movement (or more generally, Tractarianism – named after the publications *Tracts for Times* which began in July 1833) facilitated a surge in religious activity across the country from the middle of the nineteenth century. Believed by its sceptics to be an attempt to return to unity both theologically and organisationally within the Roman Catholic church, Tractarianism brought new modes of worship across the country, and this greatly affected musical output within a religious context.

Tractarians had strong beliefs in the ceremonial nature of religion and put huge emphasis on the glorification and worship of God. Being 'more a movement of heart than head...' ¹ their main aim was

...to involve the "whole of the nature of man, his body, mind and spirit in worship"... [and] by dramatising the altar, restoring the chancel and enriching vestments, they "desired to turn the thoughts of the worshippers away from themselves and towards the almighty"... ²

Following this, churches were restructured, giving further significance to the outward aspects of worship (visual, musical and ceremonial), a very Catholic trait. John Bloxam's church at Littlemore (a small Oxfordshire village) is illustrative of the

¹ Chadwick, O., *The Spirit of the Oxford Movement* (Cambridge: CUP, 1990), 1.

² Rainbow, B., *The Choral Revival in the Anglican Church 1839-1872* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2001), 252.

Oxford Movement at work. On the altar he put candlesticks, a bible and a wooden alms dish, and behind the altar he put a stone cross.

Tractarianism emphasised the values of ceremonial in worship and the importance of personal conduct over the rather more perfunctory and *laissez-faire* of their eighteenth century Anglican predecessors.

In many churches, the movement impacted on choirs, which were moved to the more prominent east-end of the church, and which no longer sat in the west-end gallery as was the custom in so many parishes. One of the most famous examples of Tractarian reform was that of Leeds Parish Church, which was entirely rebuilt in 1841, and by the 1860s was held up as a successful model of what many of the country's cathedrals had failed to do.

Leeds Parish Church was designed along the lines of the Gothic revival, and included a vast space inside to accommodate growing congregations. As far as musical reforms went, the church was fortunate enough to have as its first organist Samuel Sebastian Wesley. He spoke tirelessly on the acceptance and appreciation of music in worship, and together with his colleague, John Jebb, set about employing the fully choral service as the example for cathedral worship.

Music of this era, whilst serving its immediate purpose, was epitomised by composers such as Stainer, Barnby and Goss. However, it was still trapped in a conservative world. Today's generalised view of Anglican Church music of the Victorian era is one of drudgery, with works being essentially weaker models of Mendelssohn and Spohr.

In order to satisfy the escalating number of choirs across the country, music was produced at an alarming rate. By the closing decades of the century, there was a huge quantity of very mediocre music that was suitable for the average parish choir. Inclusion of works from this era in weekly Cathedral music lists has almost perished today, but it certainly served the vital purpose of reinvigorating the desire for good quality sacred music across the country, which had fallen into an almost irrevocable state in the early years of the century. Peter Charlton states that

from this period – between Goss and Stanford – relatively little remains in use; but what is now regarded as dispensable served an important role in bringing order and high standards to Anglican worship as we now know it.³

In his book *Studies and Memories*, Stanford heavily criticised Victorian music's 'mediocrity'⁴. Moving on a little, Richard Runciman Terry, a close friend of Stanford's and Howells,' and Director of Music at Westminster Cathedral from 1901, rebuked the 'poverty-stricken Anglican service'⁵. Howells' views were similar. Referring to various hymn tunes from this period, he makes his point:

Many of our hymn tunes... are ruined by false and very beastly harmony, chromaticism which is not that of *Tristan und Isolde*

³ Charlton, P., *John Stainer and Victorian Church Music* (London: David and Charles Inc, 1984), 124.

⁴ Stanford, C., *Studies and Memories* (London: Archibald Constable & Co Ltd., 1908), 63.

⁵ Terry, R., 'Our Church Music' in *Catholic Truth Society Tracts, 1896-1902* (London: Catholic Truth Society,), 12.

by any means, but something that is quite cheap. [It is] what I call... sentimental chromaticism...⁶

Howells took little notice of the music of the Victorians, in which his early years were so steeped. In discussing Howells and his views on Victorian music, Paul Andrews adds

[Howells] does not seem to have committed anything to paper [on his views on Victorian music]. But perhaps that is not really surprising. In a way his commentary on the church music of previous generations is found in his own music.⁷

It is clear that much of Howells' music took a great deal of inspiration instead from the Tudor school, a revival of interest in which had begun to captivate certain composers during the nineteenth century.

The end of the nineteenth century was a turbulent time throughout the Western musical world. Disillusioned by the dominance of the German school of previous centuries, other countries were gradually creating their own nationalist music. The Russians and various eastern European countries were heavily inspired by folk song, whilst French composers (although always having their own distinct tradition) began to introduce impressionism to music.

⁶ Howells in '*Music in Worship*', transcript of a discussion with Herbert Howells, Alec Robertson and Erik Routley recorded on 28.01.60, RCM, Howells Archive, Box C.

⁷ Paul Andrews to Sophie Cleobury (personal e-mail), 20.09.05.

England left the nineteenth century with a mixture of musical styles. Whilst the German influence of Wagner and Brahms was apparent in the music of Elgar, Stanford and Parry, moves were afoot to create a more distinctively nationalistic style. The result of this was a resurgence of interest in English folk song – an idiom that had been developed at first by Stanford in his Irish folksong arrangements, but one that was later captured in much of Vaughan Williams' music. Vaughan Williams' style was in ways closest to the French (and most obviously Ravel) because of his use of impressionistic colour. It showed a bold move away from German dominance, which by the 1920s was entering a new phase, the Second Viennese School with composers such as Schoenberg, Berg and Webern leading the way.

The folk music revival in England seemed only to interest Howells' early years, in his many secular songs (see 'secular choral' in **Appendix B**). Most importantly to this discussion however, Howells did latch onto the Tudor revival. Interest in Tudor music allowed him to exploit the music of his ancestors (with which he had a deep affinity through his Celtic roots⁸), whilst also creating his own distinctly modern style.

It was within the realms of the church that interest in the Tudors was chiefly sustained, and part of **Chapter two** will focus on the Tudor revival's strong influence on Howells' compositional output, which so paved the way for his future canticle settings.

⁸ For more detail, see Palmer, C., *Herbert Howells: A Centenary Celebration* (London: Thames, 1992)

CHAPTER TWO

- | | |
|------|------------------|
| 2:1. | Introduction |
| 2:2. | Tudor Revival |
| 2:3. | Charles Stanford |

2:1. Introduction

Chapter two looks at influences on Howells' musical style in writing for the church. **Section 2:1** looks at the growing interest in Tudor music in England towards the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century. Howells' works for Westminster Cathedral (a motivating force in Tudor, Italian, Spanish and Flemish polyphony from its opening in 1901) are examined alongside similar works by other leading composers at the time. It will be seen that many of Howells' stylistic traits which are found in his evening canticles appear in his earliest compositions for choir.

Section 2:2 looks at the influence of Howells' principal teacher at the Royal College of Music, Charles Stanford. Stanford is remembered in a similar light to Howells. Both men were innovators of their respective generations in the realms of church music. It is important to assess the impact of Stanford's teaching on the young Howells, and consider his overall importance in the resurgence of interest in Tudor music, which gave the succeeding generation greater scope of material with which to compose.

2:2. The Tudor Revival

...who shall say if in this small beginning a great school of English church composers has not possibly its origin.¹

- Telegraph commentator, 1914

The latter part of Queen Victoria's reign encouraged a nationwide interest in Tudor England, as many parallels were drawn between her reign and that of Elizabeth I – England's most eminent female monarch to date. Victoria I's reign coincided with the three hundredth anniversary celebrations of Elizabeth's. Anniversaries of events like the Spanish Armada (1588) were celebrated, increasing interest once again in the Tudors and their music. In the secular world, many madrigal societies were instigated, and composers were partial to editing works from this period. Links were also made at Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887, drawing parallels with Elizabeth I's Golden Age. Music in England was enjoying a resurgence of interest and vitality, which some would say, had been lost in the sentimentality of some music of the nineteenth century.

Within the realms of Church music, it was the resurgence of interest in Tudor music, specifically at Westminster Cathedral that seemed to shape Howells' developing taste. Westminster Cathedral was by no means the leader in its field. Stanford played an important role in reinvigorating music of the Tudors in Cambridge (at Trinity College), but as far as Herbert Howells was concerned, Westminster Cathedral is where his story begins.

¹ The Telegraph (1914) quoted in Andrews, H., *Westminster Retrospect, A Memoir of Sir Richard Terry* (London: OUP, 1948), 133. The quotation refers to the compositions for Westminster Cathedral in 1914.

Howells' teacher at the Royal College of Music, Charles Stanford, had particular admiration for a young Cambridge-educated musician, Richard Runciman Terry, and it was the appointment of Terry as Organist and Director of Music at Westminster Cathedral in 1901 that moved the existence of the Tudor Revival within Church music a step in the right direction. Terry was a stern disciple of the move to introduce early music back into church services. Interestingly, Stanford had first met Terry in Cambridge two decades previously, where he had 'picked [him] out of the crowd... as [an up and] coming young man [and] had followed his career with professional interest.'²

The music of the Catholic Church was going through similar musical problems to the Anglican Church at this time. In a tract written for the Catholic Truth Society in 1901, Terry condemned the condition of Catholic Church music as being in 'anything but a satisfactory condition.'³ He blamed this on a number of issues: incompetent choirs, lack of tradition, and unsuitable music. He went on to describe the 'tyranny of the organ [and its] fancy stops and orchestral imitations,'⁴ and cried out in despair for simply composed music – 'some of the sublimest music ever written is simplicity itself. I need only mention Palestrina's *Improperia* and Mozart's *Ave Verum* as instances of this.'⁵

Terry's tract anticipated by two years Pope Pius X's 'Moto Proprio' of 1903. A Papal Document on church music, it 'held up polyphony and plainsong as the ideal church music, and exhorted modern composers to study and learn from the old masters,

² Andrews, *Westminster Retrospect, A Memoir of Sir Richard Terry*, 133.

³ Terry, R., 'Our Church Music' in *Catholic Truth Society Tracts, 1896-1902* (London: Catholic Truth Society, 1901), 1.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 4.

emulating their restraint, technical discipline and beauty of sound.⁶ The document asserted the importance of Gregorian chant and Renaissance polyphony, and made sure that ‘nothing profane’ be allowed.⁷ Such musical profanities referred specifically to secular music, which some believed to have been the basis of Catholic Church music after the Renaissance. Andrews claimed that Alessandro Scarlatti and Pergolesi were exemplary culprits, writing ‘religious music that was purely secular in character.’⁸ It is certainly true that the distinction between sacred and secular works was very blurred in much of Catholic Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Terry’s desire for simpler music led to the restoration of performances of works from great Renaissance and Tudor masters in Westminster Cathedral. He implored a return of ‘curious singing’, which was how Anglicans termed ‘the glorious contrapuntal music of the old Catholic days.’⁹ Terry claimed bluntly that the traditions of Catholic Church music began well before those of the Anglican Church, and it was the country’s duty to return to these former models: ‘...the best of this early music... is Catholic in spirit, and catholic in origin... it is our heritage – our birthright.’¹⁰

By the Holy Weeks of 1912 and 1913, Byrd, Tallis, Mundy, Sheppard, Tye and White featured heavily in services and, during 1914, all of Palestrina’s double choir masses were performed.¹¹ Terry’s vision was gradually crystallising, and it was around this

⁶ Russill, P., ‘Herbert Howells and Westminster Cathedral 1912-1918’ in *The Organists’ Review*, September 1992, 203.

⁷ Dyer, J., ‘Roman Catholic Church Music’ in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie, 21, (London: Macmillan, 2001), 565.

⁸ Andrews, *Westminster Retrospect, A Memoir of Sir Richard Terry*, 29.

⁹ Terry, ‘Our Church Music’, 10.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 16.

¹¹ Statistics taken from Russill, ‘Herbert Howells and Westminster Cathedral 1912-1918’, 203.

time that Howells began immersing himself in the great amounts of polyphony available to him at the Cathedral.

A significant number of Stanford's pupils passed through Westminster Cathedral at this time to hear what he termed 'polyphony for a penny'.¹² There is a wealth of music from the early decades of the twentieth century that looks back to Tudor and early contrapuntal idioms. Some compositions are more pastiche than others, but a number of pieces show an innovative style – a fusion of older techniques with new ideas. This is particularly true of Howells, whose works written for the Cathedral choir between 1912 and 1918 show a clear development, and certainly pave the way for the style of his evening canticles, the first set of which was written in 1918.

Howells' *Mass in the Dorian Mode* was his first composition for the Cathedral, coming only six months after his arrival as a student at the Royal College of Music (he arrived in May 1912 and the first performance of the *Mass* was in November of that year). At the top of the autograph score he wrote 'May/June 1912', showing that this could certainly have been one of Howells' very first compositions as a student. It was certainly the first published work from his time at the Royal College. This lays further claim to the *Mass* being solely a compositional exercise; something which Russill refutes.

Russill, in the Introduction to the published *Mass in the Dorian Mode* stated that it is 'understandable, but mistaken [to think of the mass as a] purely student exercise.'¹³

¹² Palmer, *Herbert Howells: A Study*, 23. 'Polyphony for a penny, my bhoys' was Stanford's standard phrase, a penny being the price of a bus ride from the Royal College of Music to Westminster Cathedral.

¹³ Russill, P., Introduction to *Mass in Dorian Mode* (Croyden: RSCM, 1990).

However, he does not provide supporting evidence for this. Spicer leaves judgement on this issue open: 'On one level it could be described as a technical exercise because Howells was obviously flexing new-found musical muscles, and yet the music itself raises its way about the level of mere academe. Howells was simply 'in tune' with this style and wrote as happily in it as in any style which he was forming of a more individual hue.'¹⁴

As Spicer believes, Howells' *Mass* certainly shows that he already had a natural affinity with this genre of music. The Kyrie opens in strict imitation between parts, and the vocal lines are made up of step-to-step notes and a few simple leaps of thirds and fourths. The Gloria and Credo are both more homophonic in style, in order to move through the text more efficiently. The Benedictus employs treble, alto and tenor, a common use of voice parts for this part of the *Mass*. The second Agnus Dei employs a canon at the octave, further demonstrating Howells' confidence in these early idioms. The *Mass in the Dorian Mode* is particularly simple and very much in the emotionally restrained style of Renaissance masses. It shows Howells' complete command of Renaissance polyphony, but at this point, shows little of his future style.

Figure 1
Howells' compositions for Westminster Cathedral

Mass in Dorian Mode	1912		
Nunc Dimittis (<i>Latin text</i>)	1914		
Four Anthems for the Blessed Virgin Mary		1) Alma Redemptoris Mater	1915
		2) Ave Regina	1915
		3) Regina Coeli	1915
		4) Salve Regina	1915
Haec Dies	1918		

However, in his 1914 *Nunc Dimittis*, which lasts a mere 56 bars, glimmers of his later style begin to present themselves. Howells employs Dorian and Mixolydian modes, as

¹⁴ Spicer, P., *Herbert Howells* (Bridgend: Seren, 1998), 36.

used in the 1912 *Mass*, including *terce da picardies* at the end of sections, and imitation between choirs (antiphonal between decani and cantoris). Despite the setting's overall simplicity, however, there are a number of conspicuous features that alert the listener to Howells' developing style.

One of these is the impetus he creates, which aids the flow and momentum of the music. Howells achieves this harmonically – something of which Renaissance composers were not consciously aware. Cadence points are common in the *Nunc Dimittis*, shown effectively in the line 'lumen ad revelationem gentium, et gloriam plebes tuae Israel' which precedes the Gloria (Ex. 2:1.1). The example below shows the second of the cadences, on gloriam, where the first treble line stretches the interval to A natural.

By using the choirs homophonically, with tight rhythms, Howells achieves strong cadential moves (marked by *), which drive the music forward. He capitalises on this harmonic drive by also employing the first treble effectively. The minor third up to the top A flat in bar 25 (on revelationem) followed by the major third to the top A in bars 26-7 (on gloriam) highlights clearly his penchant for building strong climaxes – a common feature of his evening canticles.

Ex. 2:1.1. Howells *Nunc Dimittis* (1914), bars 26-29

28 *poco rall.*

gen-ti-um, et glo - ri-am ple-bis tu-ae Is-ra-el. _____

gen-ti-um, et glo - ri-am ple-bis tu-ae Is-ra-el. _____

gen-ti-um, et glo - ri-am ple-bis tu-ae Is-ra-el. _____

gen-ti-um, et glo - ri-am ple-bis tu-ae Is-ra-el. _____

poco rall.

gen-ti-um, et glo - ri-am ple-bis tu-ae Is-ra-el. _____

gen-ti-um, et glo - ri-am ple-bis tu-ae Is-ra-el. _____

gen-ti-um, et glo - ri-am ple-bis tu-ae Is-ra-el. _____

gen-ti-um, et glo - ri-am ple-bis tu-ae Is-ra-el. _____

One aspect that the 1914 *Nunc Dimittis* lacks is the use of melismas or flowing contrapuntal lines, typical of a lot of Tudor music. It is very syllabic and often each choir sings in blocks. This is more in the Anglican style of thinking. Melismas are brought a little more readily into his *Regina Coeli* on the word 'Alleluia', which expands the piece's potential for interesting vocal lines (Ex. 2:1.2).

Ex. 2:1.2. *Regina Coeli*, alto, bars 7-12

However, Howells does not treat these contrapuntally, as much of the time, the melismas are sung homophonically by the whole choir (Ex. 2:1.3).

Ex. 2:1.3. *Regina Coeli*, choir I, bars 54-58

Salve Regina, the last of the four Anthems for the Blessed Virgin Mary, shows a marked progression in style from the two previous pieces, and it was 'undoubtedly the most successful synthesis of [Howells'] emerging style and the polyphonic traditions celebrated at Westminster.'¹⁵ Going against the trend of the *Nunc Dimittis* and *Regina Coeli*, Howells employed a single choir (only the trebles are doubled), and from the outset all the vocal lines are assured independence. Nowhere to be seen are the block

¹⁵ Russill, 'Herbert Howells and Westminster Cathedral 1912-1918', 206.

chords seen in the opening of the *Nunc Dimittis*, or the strong unison that opens the *Regina Coeli*.

Howells' use of chromaticism shows a marked development between the *Nunc Dimittis* and *Salve Regina*. There is relatively limited chromaticism in the settings of the *Nunc Dimittis* and *Salve Regina*, but it is certainly worth noticing the occasional use of seventh and ninth chords that crop up every so often in both settings, which award the works slightly more harmonic interest (Ex. 2:1.4). Again, the example below shows the piano reduction of the choir lines at the words 'secundum verbum tuum'.

Ex. 2:1.4, *Nunc Dimittis* (1914), bars 11-13



Heavier chromaticism was a more striking feature of the *Salve Regina* setting. Chords that are very typical of Howells' later style began to creep into the vocal textures, for example the second beat of bar 24 which hints briefly at a chord of G flat with sharpened ninth (Ex. 2:1.5). This shows the beginnings of the typical Howellsian trait of unpredictability; moments when he takes the music to areas that are very much unexpected (more detail in following chapter).

Ex. 2:1.5, *Salve Regina*, full choir, bars 24-27

- su - les, fi - li - i He - vae. Ad
 fi - - li - i He - vae. Ad
 He - - vae.
 ex - su - les, fi - li - i He - vae. Ad
 ex - su - les, fi - li - i He - vae.
 te sus - pi - ra - mus, ge -

This chord is followed by an enharmonic move from a chord of D flat, to a chord of A major in bar 27, which successfully changes the feel and direction of the music. The *Salve Regina* has a far greater employment of heavier chromatic chords, false relations and clashing notes than seen in any of Howells' choral settings by this point. He was slowly letting go of the strictness of Renaissance polyphony and moving towards his very own style.

One feature of the *Salve Regina* that shows a definite maturing of Howells' style is his use of melody. The independence of the vocal lines reigns supreme as his handling of counterpoint developed. The way in which Howells constructed and used his melodies allowed him to create the climaxes for which his choral works are so well known. The first treble part that soars above the rest of the choir from bar 40 is exemplary of the style found later on in Howells' canticles (Ex. 2:1.6).

Ex. 2:1.6, *Salve Regina*, trebles I + II, bars 37-46

37 poco accel. [p] [f] *poco meno* [♩: 96]

val - le. E - ia er - ga, Ad - vo - ca - ta

val - le. E - ia er - ga, Ad - vo -

43

nos - tra, il - los tu

- ca - ta nos - tra, il - los tu

If this line had been written with every note having the same length, it would bear a great resemblance to that of plainsong; many of the intervals are stepwise, but gaps of fourths and fifths are common, the long and flowing character of the line resembles plainsong too.

With these ingredients in mind, Howells expanded the expressiveness of the phrase by lengthening some note values and building up a huge climax at the top A natural, bringing it down gently to the B flat in bar 45. With such individual melodies as these, it seems as if Howells had let go of writing in blocks of sound as he did to an extent in the previous two settings. Coupled with expressive melodies come the harmonies which add to the Howellsian flavour of the music.

In fact, the whole spirit of the *Salve Regina* foresees much of Howells' later choral music. The serene contours of the vocal lines that gradually push towards a climax, and how he quits these climaxes with no sense of hurry, is one of the greatest qualities

of Howells' canticles, and the beginnings of his future style are certainly seen in the final bars of the *Salve Regina* (Ex. 2:1.7), which, in some ways, is somewhat anticipatory of the vocal textures in his *Collegium Regale Nunc Dimittis*.

Ex. 2:1.7. *Salve Regina*, full choir, bars 69-72

The image shows a musical score for a full choir, consisting of seven staves. The lyrics are "O pi - a: O dul - cis" repeated across the staves. The music is in a minor key and features a "poco" marking. The final bar shows a circled "pi" in the fifth staff.

There were a few other composers in the early twentieth century who took inspiration from the music performed at Westminster Cathedral. Terry was 'particularly proud'¹⁶ of the eight-part settings of the *Nunc Dimittis* by composers such as Gustav Holst, Percy Buck, Charles Wood and Cyril Rootham. He believed these pieces, and many more, to have been composed in the same restrained but beautiful style as the older

¹⁶ Andrews, *Westminster Retrospect, A Memoir of Sir Richard Terry*, 132.

masters. To him, they were correctly full of the dignity and ‘real mysticism’¹⁷ attained back in Palestrina’s day.

Ralph Vaughan Williams was one such composer who achieved relative success in his compositions for Westminster Cathedral. His *Mass in G Minor* of 1922 was hailed a triumph by Terry. Indeed, it was a total fulfilment of Pope Pius X’s *Moto Proprio*. However, whilst strongly maintaining features from older masters, Vaughan Williams’ *Mass* certainly had its own individual touch. Nowhere does he succumb to Howells’ growing penchant for thicker harmonies as seen in the 1918 *Salve Regina*. Vaughan Williams’ individuality is seen through his partiality for mediant chord relations, and use of chords lacking in harmonic function, many of which resulted in frequent false relations (Ex. 2:1.8). The chords here, taken from the piano reduction show the chords on the words ‘et ho-mo fac...’

Ex. 2:1.8. Vaughan Williams, *Mass in G Minor*, Credo, ‘et homo fac...’

Vaughan Williams’ *Mass* shows his conscious anachronism in his use of streams of parallel triads, which shows his liking for sixteenth century organum, but also his tendency towards models of French impressionism (Ex. 2:1.9).¹⁸

¹⁷ Andrews, *Westminster Retrospect, A Memoir of Sir Richard Terry*, 134.

¹⁸ Many of these features are common to a whole host of Vaughan Williams’ works from other genres, particularly his *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis* and *Pastoral Symphony*, which were ‘intimately associated’ with the *Mass*. See Mellers, W., *Vaughan Williams and the vision of Albion* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, c1989), 68.

Ex. 2:1.9. Vaughan Williams, *Mass in G Minor*, Sanctus, organ introduction and reduction of first 4 choir bars on the word 'sanctus'

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system is the organ introduction, marked 'Lento.' and 'p'. It features a treble staff for the organ and a bass staff for the manual. The second system is the choir part, marked 'Andante con moto.' and 'pp legato'. It features a treble staff for the choir and a bass staff for the manual. The organ part continues in the second system, marked 'Swell pp legato'. The choir part begins in the second system, marked 'pp legato'.

The *Mass* showed his complete command of contrapuntal movement and his use of this to build magnificent climaxes. This is shown effectively towards the end of the *Mass* (Ex. 2:1.10), which brings double choir and soloists together in the final climax.

This is presented serenely, and despite of the heavy texture of voices, never feels too weighty. He captures the pure essence of the traditional Catholic mass perfectly.

...in your individual and modern idiom you have really captured the old liturgical spirit and atmosphere... [there is] practical unanimity in noting its devotional spirit and strictly liturgical character.¹⁹

¹⁹ Terry quoted in Kennedy, M., *The works of RVW*, (London: OUP, 1963), 160.

Ex. 2:1.10, Vaughan Williams, Mass in G Minor, Agnus Dei, final

SOLI.

do - na, do - na, do - na no - bis pa - - - - - cem.

do - na, do - na, do - na no - bis pa - - - - - cem.

do - na, do - na, do - na no - bis pa - - - - - cem.

do - na, do - na, do - na no - bis pa - - - - - cem.

CHORUS I.

do - na no - bis do - na, do - na no - bis pa - - - - - cem.

do - na no - bis do - na, do - na no - bis pa - - - - - cem.

do - na no - bis do - na, do - na no - bis pa - - - - - cem.

do - na no - bis do - na, do - na no - bis pa - - - - - cem.

CHORUS II.

do - na, do - na no - bis pa - - - - - cem.

do - na, do - na no - bis pa - - - - - cem.

do - na, do - na no - bis pa - - - - - cem.

do - na, do - na no - bis pa - - - - - cem.

Although in a different musical genre, the importance of Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis* on Howells is assured. The *Fantasia* is the orchestral equivalent to the *Mass* (being composed for two string orchestras and a solo quartet; in a similar way that the *Mass* is composed for two choirs and solo quartet) and, composed 12 years before the *Mass*, it bore a deep impact on the young Howells when he first heard the piece in Gloucester Cathedral in 1910 at the Three Choirs

Festival. Howells was overwhelmed by its beauty and the effective use Vaughan Williams made of the acoustic of Gloucester Cathedral.

The effect created by such a great number of strings was one of great spaciousness, and one in which Howells took particular interest, as many of his canticle settings engineered large vocal ranges which suited the big acoustics of cathedrals and chapels (Ex. 2:1.11).

More important, however, was the nostalgic and reflective sentiment of the *Fantasia* to which Howells strongly adhered. The use of modes and clear acknowledgement of the past was something that came naturally to both Vaughan Williams and particularly Howells.

Ex. 2:1.11, Vaughan Williams, *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis*, Orchestra II, bars 1-2

Orchestra II.

Violin I
(1 desk).

2 Violin II
(1 desk).

2 Viola
(1 desk).

Violoncello
(1 desk).

Contrabass
(1 player).

Largo sostenuto. $\text{♩} = 54$ ($\text{♩} = 112$)

div.

pp molto sostenuto

div.

pp molto sostenuto

div.

pp molto sostenuto

div.

pp molto sostenuto

div.

pp molto sostenuto

Both men felt great spiritual affinity with the past, and the impression born on Howells when he first heard the *Fantasia* was profound to the future of his music-making:

I heard this wonderful work, I was thrilled, I didn't understand it, but I was moved deeply. I think if I had to isolate from the rest any one impression of a purely musical sort that mattered most to me in the whole of my life as a musician, it would be the hearing of that work not knowing at all what I was going to hear but knowing what I had heard I should never forget it.²⁰

Kennedy states that Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia* is 'sublime... [with its] wonderful blending of spiritual strength and physical exaltation'²¹, and it was this spiritual strength and physical exaltation which impacted on Howells so greatly and was carried forth by him in his music.

Referring back to the works composed for Westminster Cathedral, Charles Wood's *Nunc Dimittis* in B flat of 1916 is less interesting than any setting by Howells and Vaughan Williams. The music had a tendency to fall into setting one note per syllable, a trait he was accustomed to using in his many compositions for the Anglican Church. Harmonically his music was much less challenging than Howells' – the most exciting passage being towards the end of the text before the Doxology, where the music

²⁰ Howells quoted in Spicer, *Herbert Howells*, 22.

²¹ Kennedy, *The works of RVW*, 126.

moves into D flat, and the choir suspends itself on an E flat seventh chord in last inversion on 'gentium'.

Wood, however, was not so keen to employ long plainchant melodies, which so gave Howells and Vaughan Williams' works their flavour. Nonetheless, he salvaged his shorter melodies by treating them antiphonally and in sequence. Counterpoint was used very simply in this setting, which kept it within the capabilities of parish choirs.

Gustav Holst's eight-part *Nunc Dimittis* composed for Westminster Cathedral's Easter Day service in 1915 shows a more daring harmonic palette at its opening – the first chord, built up from second bass to first treble, creates an E major chord with added seventh and eleventh. The subsequent chord moves to F major with added seventh. Much of the rest of the setting however lacks the interesting harmony of Howells' *Salve Regina*. Holst's harmonies are clearer, as he tries to maintain the clean, devotional nature of the work. Once again, it is a rather homophonic work with little independence in vocal lines, but the climax achieved at the end of the Gloria, with more independence given to vocal lines, gives the setting further interest.

Holst skilfully handles a variety of motifs in imitation across the double choir towards the end of the Gloria, and another feature that has previously been seen in reference to Vaughan Williams, is Holst's use of parallel chords at '*secundum verbum tuum*' (Ex. 2:1.12), acknowledging past ideas and models.

Ex. 2:1.12. Holst *Nunc Dimittis*, SSA, bars 6-10

6

ser-vum tu-um, Do - mi-ne, *pp* se-cun-dum ver-bum tu -

ser-vum tu-um, Do - mi-ne, *pp* se-cun-dum ver-bum tu -

ser-vum tu-um, Do - mi-ne, *pp* se-cun-dum ver-bum tu -

Holst's *Nunc Dimittis* was one of very few of his works composed for a sacred setting. Unlike Howells, he did not find his niche in composing choirs – but this *Nunc Dimittis*, one of his first attempts, shows an equally promising piece as Howells' earliest efforts.

The importance of Terry at Westminster Cathedral in the early decades of the twentieth century should not be underestimated in the nourishing of Howells' compositional style. Westminster Cathedral was essentially a motivating force of musical form, and a great number of composers were turning back to the style of earlier contrapuntal idioms. It is clear though, that Herbert Howells was showing signs of developing a wholly new style combining old with new. Through his original use of harmonies and his competence at using expansive vocal lines, it is clear to see that Howells' mature style was in its embryonic form at Westminster Cathedral, and ready to bloom.

2:3. Charles Stanford

One could so easily devote a whole address to [Stanford] the teacher... a recital of the list of his pupils is but a proud boredom to those who know it by heart. But without it the story of music in Britain would be out-of-joint and incomplete.¹

-Herbert Howells

Charles Stanford and Herbert Howells were leading forces of their respective generations in the realms of Anglican church music. Both composers spearheaded reforms and drove Anglican composition to new and different directions, which afforded them highly valued places in the history of church music.

It is crucial to assess Stanford's role as Howells' principle teacher at the Royal College of Music. A great many of Stanford's values and ideas shone through into Howells' music, and whilst the two men's styles are incredibly individual and different, it is important to take note of Stanford's teachings and the esteem in which he was held by a great many of his pupils.

Most crucially, Stanford provided innovative ideas within musical form, introducing further importance to structural unity within the Anglican repertoire. He also placed great emphasis on the value of modal composition, showing his fascination with music of earlier times, an area of interest which was passed, without doubt, onto Howells.

This section of Chapter two focuses on Stanford's role as a teacher. It explores his main teaching techniques in reference to Howells and draws on accounts made on him

¹ Howells quoted in 'Charles Villiers Stanford' *PRMA*, vol 79 (1952-3), 19.

by his distinguished list of pupils, in order to give full consideration of his valued influence on Howells.

* * * * *

“Stanford the teacher” has been a much-discussed topic over recent decades (Greene, Rodmell, Dibble). By examining his teaching techniques, it is possible to discern some ideas that were clearly manifested in Howells’ music. Although, it must be said that little of Stanford’s music actually impacted stylistically on Howells; their compositional approaches were extremely different.

Stanford’s book *Musical Composition* identifies his rigid teaching techniques. It was Vaughan Williams who said of Stanford ‘[he] was a great teacher, and like all great teachers he was narrow-minded. A broad minded teacher is useless.’² A great number of Stanford’s pupils remembered him and his teaching with fondness. Howells remarked the following:

Whatever else one might have become under his shrewd guidance, it never could have been a wobbler, a neutral, a befogged practitioner. It was often his way to make a student fight hard in defence of a point of view, an expression, or a mere chord.³

² Vaughan Williams, R., ‘Charles Stanford’ in *National Music and other essays*, (London: OUP, 1963), 197.

³ ‘CVS by some of his pupils’ in *Music and Letters*, vol 5, no. 3 (1924), 199.

Stanford would begin teaching all his pupils the value of modal counterpoint. He would then move on to teaching variation, canon and fugue and then sonata form, providing them with a thorough grounding in the structural foundations of music.

Rigid training in modal counterpoint appears to be the aspect of Stanford's teaching for which he is most vehemently remembered by his pupils. In the *RCM Magazine* article 'Sir Charles Stanford and his pupils' from 1924, Bainton stated that:

Stanford's teaching seemed to be without method, one might almost say haphazard. With the possible exception of the stuff of "modes" on the proper understanding of which he rightly insisted...⁴

Bainton was not the only budding composers who remembered Stanford's persistence in teaching counterpoint. A number of his other pupils also made similar remarks:

The question of whether counterpoint has ever been of any use to anybody except its teachers has been debated time and again, but Stanford set great store by it. Although the same exercises used to reappear after a short lapse of time and be judged as new work, there is a place in the back of one's mind from which at odd moments keep oozing little drops of C. V. S. counterpoint to help one's work.⁵ (L. H. Heward)

⁴ 'Sir Charles Stanford and his pupils' in *RCM Magazine*, vol. 20, no. 2 (1924), 55.

⁵ 'CVS by some of his pupils', 202.

[Stanford] is the outcome of a great national tradition fostered by such names as Tallis, Byrd, Gibbons, Blow, Purcell, Battishill, and S. S. Wesley... What more fitting burial place could there be for him than by the side of Henry Purcell.⁶ (H. G. Ley)

The method of modal counterpoint interested Howells very much. Stanford believed first and foremost that a good basis in contrapuntal writing enhanced the composer's ability to create successful lines or melodies:

...Initial training should be horizontal. Notes need logical connections... If a student begins by thinking of chords, no matter how agreeable they may be to the ear, his first attempt to write a composition will infallibly be in blocks of chords.⁷

Modal compositions gave composers further resources with which to compose – the number of scales in use being increased from two to six. This way, a composer's 'weapons of armoury [were] multiplied by three.'⁸ Stanford held up Palestrina's Magnificats as prime examples to study, amongst them every mode was employed. This expansion in modes, Stanford believed, would 'teach [a pupil the] ability to stay in one key without producing a sense of monotony and lack of colour.'⁹

⁶ 'CVS by some of his pupils', 205.

⁷ Stanford, C., *Musical Composition* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1911), 6-7.

⁸ *Ibid*, 19.

⁹ *Ibid*, 20.

Stanford was acutely aware of the problems of works over-laden with chromaticism. He lived towards the end of the Victorian era when composers such as Goss, Stainer, and Barnby were around, to name but a few. It is evident that he despised this sort of music. Indeed, he put it very well when he described a great deal of romantic music (even Wagner and Strauss) as '[tickling] the palate vastly, but in the end wholesome food prevailed as a diet over pickles and jams!'¹⁰

Stanford's assertion that composers should first study horizontal lines in the style of Palestrina may well have had its roots in his own musical training. He studied primarily in Leipzig with Reinecke, who was principally known for his interest in the Germanic tradition (Bach, Mozart, Beethoven). A later visit to Germany in 1876 enabled him to study with Friedrich Kiel in Berlin. This was 'the most valuable of [his] visits to Germany'¹¹ as he came to base many of his own teachings on what he learnt from Kiel. Greene's biography corroborates this and states that 'Stanford was one of the greatest composition teachers there has ever been, and he said himself that the principles on which he trained his pupils were those which he had learnt from Kiel in 1876.'¹² Stanford openly claimed that 'Kiel was a rare man and a rare master. [He] learnt more from him in three months than from all the others in three years.'¹³

This brief insight of Stanford's musical education and his own subsequent teaching methods demonstrates his love of music from earlier times. Indeed, as organist of Trinity College Cambridge, it was Stanford who changed the termly music lists beyond recognition. Before 1876, repertoire was heavily biased towards the Anglican

¹⁰ Stanford, *Musical Composition*, 46.

¹¹ Rodmell, P., *Charles Villiers Stanford* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 49.

¹² Greene, H. P., *Charles Villiers Stanford* (London: Edward Arnold & Co., 1935), 53.

¹³ *Ibid*, 53.

composers of the time. Lists were heavily laden with settings by Stainer, Goss, Dykes, Ouseley and Barnby (most of whom are remembered today for their sentimental Victorian style). Representation of music from the earliest Anglican traditions like the Tudors was particularly sparse, and this was something Stanford very much tried to amend. Whilst he was organist at Trinity chapel, he gave the works of much older composers greater exposure, ensuring that the roots of Anglican church music had an important role in chapel repertoire lists once more.

Stanford's high regard for music of bygone eras bore strong impact on Howells. Stanford stood firmly by Verdi's saying of "Torniamo all'antico", stating that '...there is no diet so life-giving and so life-preserving as the natural out-pouring of the songs of the soil. They have sanctity of age coupled with the buoyancy of youth.'¹⁴ The resurging interest in modal music is commonly attributed to Vaughan Williams, his fervent interest in folk song and role in bringing about the English Hymnal. However, Stanford's innovative role in the use of modal music must not be overlooked. Only Rodmell's biography examines the importance of Stanford in bringing about the employment of modes as a national music for Britain. Within Stanford's musical output, there is a handful of pieces which are based around modes and folk song. These include his *Irish Symphony*, part of his *Stabat Mater* and his oratorio *Eden*, written in 1890.

Stanford's use of modes in *Eden* was highly inventive, as he made an association between the ethereal sounds of Heaven and the old ecclesiastical modes, something

¹⁴ Stanford in 'Thoughts concerning Folk-song and Nationality' in *Musical Quarterly*, vol 1 (1915), 237.

which Howells successfully captured too. This was achieved far before Vaughan Williams made similar attempts.

Despite having such novel ideas, the problem for Stanford at the time was the total lack of interest in this sort of music. Despite rather early positive reviews (Dibble quotes Barnby's excitement for *Eden*¹⁵), the oratorio lacked positive reviews from its outset. In the end, it was condemned as something of a failure. It is intriguing to read various accounts of it by Bernard Shaw in the three volumes of *Music in London 1890-94*. The account is a complete tirade against the use of modes.

Figure 2

Table showing Bernard Shaw's accounts of Stanford's modal piece *Eden* in 1891-4.

14 October 1891

...what I cannot do is to persuade myself that if I write in this fashion, my music will sound angelic, and that if I use the ordinary major and minor scales the result will be comparatively diabolic. I find it work out rather the other way.¹⁶

10 May 1893

...when Professor Stanford is genteel, cultured, classic, pious, and experimentally mixolydian, he is dull beyond belief.

17 May 1893

Mixolydian nonsense... the angels' choruses written in no mode at all, because, as I take it, he conceives angels as too "genteel" to sing in anything so vulgar as the major and minor modes used at the concert music halls...¹⁷

4 April 1894

O those mixo-lydian, hypo-phrygian angels, and those honest major and minor devils! Shall I ever forget them?¹⁸

What was it that encouraged a trouble-free acceptance of modal music less than two decades later, when Howells, Vaughan Williams and other composers began producing works for Richard Terry at Westminster Cathedral? *Eden* certainly provided a start, but

¹⁵ Dibble, J., *Charles Villiers Stanford: man and musician* (Oxford: OUP, 2002), 227.

¹⁶ Shaw, B., *Music in London, 1890-94*, vol 1 (London: Constable & Co. Ltd., 1932), 259.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 310.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, 83.

a rather unpopular one due to its length and that it was dismissed as being generally rather uninteresting.

Another suggestion is that it also had something to do with the story of the German school at this point. On the one hand, after Brahms' death in 1897, many may have felt that there were no great composers left in Germany, and so began formulating new ideas of composition. On the other hand, composers like R. Strauss and Wagner were dominating musical circles at the beginning of the twentieth century. This meant that all across Europe, composers were looking for new and original ideas in their compositions which would hinder the supremacy of the German school. Perhaps then, Stanford's ideas came a little too early and it was with the music of his successors (Vaughan Williams and Howells) that a more fervent interest was developed in modal music. However, Stanford's role in this should not be forgotten:

...Stanford's teaching demonstrated to his pupils that modes could not only be applied to a 'pastoral' style, but could be used to extend the harmonic and melodic palette in all areas. He thus reinforced the idea that modal writing could be viewed as an alternative to both the loosening of tonality pursued by Strauss and Schoenberg, and the interest in the exotic shown by Debussy and Ravel. For composers looking to forge a distinctive British style... a thorough-going use of modes provided a means of expression yet to be exploited consistently in mainland Europe.¹⁹

¹⁹ Rodmell, *Charles Villiers Stanford*, 370.

This section has so far shown Stanford's uncompromising position on the importance of modal music, which had an indelible effect on Howells' music. However, there are further traits of Stanford's music which impacted strongly on Howells.

Stanford's interest in older musical forms is worth noticing briefly. He was particularly intrigued by Gregorian chant, a sample of which is found in the Te Deum of his B flat service. The opening melody to the Sanctus from the same service also uses the typical Gregorian intonation. These sorts of ideas impacted strongly on Howells whose melodies were formed very much from the characteristics of plainsong, as the next Chapter will show.

Features that are common to both composer's canticles are ideas on thematic and tonal structure. Stanford's service in B flat is well-known for its innovations in cyclic unity. Stanford used the same theme for different parts of the service, which unified the setting. For example, the doxology of Te Deum, Jubilate, Benedictus and Nunc Dimittis are treated the same, and the Dresden Amen is used in the Jubilate, Benedictus, Credo, Sanctus, Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis. A similar idea was taken up by Howells in his service settings for King's College Cambridge, where the organ opening of the Magnificat is sounded at the beginning of the Kyrie (Ex. 2:2.1).

Ex. 2:2.1, opening to Collegium Regale Magnificat (organ, bars 1-3), which also appears in the Collegium Regale Kyrie

Following on from the idea of cyclic unity between sections of particular services, Stanford was also the first Anglican composer to treat his music in a quasi-ternary form, by using a recapitulatory feature. Repeating the music at particular intervals had been used previously by S. S. Wesley in *The Lord Hath Been Mindful*, but this only happened at a return of the same text. Stanford brought about musical repetition without necessarily repeating the same text. No longer was the music so bound to specific words. By returning to an opening key, or melody, towards the end of a movement, Stanford's settings were given a greater sense of structural coherence, and this was something not yet achieved by any other Anglican composers. In this way, Stanford's music abandoned the rather episodic nature of music like Wesley's, and achieved greater structural clarity. After this, there was no turning back for the generation of composers after Stanford, of which Howells was a member.

Stanford brought in many a useful analogy to his teaching, not least when discussing the necessities of a well-structured piece of music.²⁰ 'The house cannot stand if it is built upon insecure foundations.'²¹ His insistence that 'no canons save those of beauty

²⁰ Stanford, *Musical Composition*, 74.

²¹ *Ibid*, 2.

can be applied to [the composition of music],²² bore a deep impression into all his pupils. By giving them such a rounded musical education, with a particular reference to music of the past, and well-structured music, he gave all his pupils the foundations necessary to develop their own particular styles – this being most evident in the music of Howells and Vaughan Williams.

²² Stanford, *Musical Composition, A*

CHAPTER THREE

- 3:1. Introduction to Herbert Howells' evening canticles
- 3:2. Acoustics
- 3:3. Texture and timbre
- 3:4. Melodic construction
- 3:5. Structure, thematic and motivic use
- 3:6. Harmony
- 3:7. Cadences
- 3:8. Modes
- 3:9. Howells' canticles in the repertoire today

3:1. Introduction to Howells' musical style

Herbert Howells received his early musical education as a member of the choir of Lydney Parish Church, and as an organ pupil of Sir Herbert Brewer at Gloucester Cathedral. From a young age, he was nurtured in the strong Anglican tradition, so an output of music for the church during his life was certainly predictable if not inevitable. Howells' 1918 Service in G (published in 1920) was written within a year of his appointment as assistant organist at Salisbury Cathedral, and was the first in a line of 20 sets of evening canticles spanning a 57-year period, the final set being the *Dallas* canticles of 1975.

Despite only holding the post of assistant organist at Salisbury Cathedral for a few months, and deputising at St John's College Cambridge during the Second World War, the impact of working in such religious establishments seemed enough for Howells. His output of music for the Anglican liturgy grew extensively after his time at St. John's. Before the 1945 canticles for *King's College Cambridge* (commonly known as the *Collegium Regale* settings, or more affectionately, *Coll Reg*), Howells' output of evening services had been limited to the Service in G (1918), Service in E flat for Unison voices (1924) and two Services for Men's voices; in E (1935)¹ and in D (1941). It is highly possible that with these four services, Howells was simply catering for specific tastes across the country at the time. Many more Cathedral and parish choirs had come into being since the Tractarian movement took off in the mid

¹ The Service in E was adapted in 1981 by John Buttrey to include an Alto part. This was done in agreement with Howells himself. 'I set about devising an Alto line, taking much of it from the existing first Bass part and the accompaniment, as well as re-aligning the Tenor and Bass parts to allow for the additional voice.' John Buttrey to Herbert Howells (personal correspondence), RCM, Howells Archive, MS 5265.2.

nineteenth century, increasing the desire for music that suited parish choir standards. Services in unison were therefore much in demand.

There was also heavy demand for male-only canticles in cathedrals. Choirs would often use just men on a particular day each week (the same goes for trebles); so the output of services for men only was larger in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries than at any previous time. In addition to this, because of the World Wars in the first half of the twentieth century, men only services were required as children had often been evacuated (especially in London and other large cities), so choirs had to dispense with young choristers.

Although the pre-1945 services show many of Howells' valuable and effective qualities, it was with the service settings for *King's College Cambridge* composed between 1944 and 1945 (the evening canticles in the latter year) that Howells showed a more mature and individual style of composition. Throughout **Chapter three**, the *Collegium Regale* evening canticles will be used as the main point of reference with which to compare and contrast Howells' other evening canticles, demonstrating how they provided a new 'landscape of music for the Anglican Church'² to which Spicer refers.

From this service through to his final evening service composed for St Luke's Episcopal Church in Dallas in 1975, Howells' evening canticles occupy a very distinctive sound world; one which would leave a listener of Howells' music (with only a limited knowledge of it) in little doubt as to the composer. However, each set

² Spicer, *Herbert Howells*, 21.

of evening canticles also has its very own characteristic properties, be it vocal textures, or a particular melodic or harmonic pattern or idea. Despite the very distinctive Howellsian sound, there is a clear development in musical style, the foundations of which can be seen as far back as the music Howells composed for Westminster Cathedral between 1912 and 1918.

Howells' output of evening canticles falls neatly into four categories, making discussion more straightforward (see table below). It is interesting to note that the five service settings in the 1945 – 1951 period are the ones that have retained their place in current repertoire lists of many Cathedrals and collegiate chapels today (refer to Figure 4 at the end of this section). The later canticles move, perhaps unwontedly, to a rather heavy use of dissonance, which were (and are) often beyond the capabilities of many choirs to perform effectively.

Figure 3:

Chronological list of Howells' evening canticles separated into four stylistic categories.

Service in G	1918	Pre-1945 canticles Howells' first attempts, which show glimmers of his later mature style.
Service in E flat (for unison voices)	1925	
Service in E (for men's voices)	1935	
Service in D (for men's voices)	1941	
1945 – 1951 canticles		
King's College Cambridge	1945	Howells' five settings which have retained their regular place in cathedral repertoire lists today.
Gloucester Cathedral	1946	
New College Oxford	1949	
Worcester Cathedral	1951	
St Paul's Cathedral	1951	
Transitional canticles		
B Minor (for RSCM)	1955	A definite maturing of style from the previous category, and greater evidence of experimentation. These settings are often still found in cathedral repertoire lists today, though not as commonly as the previous category.
St Peter's Westminster	1957	
St John's Cambridge	1957	
1966 onwards		
Salisbury Cathedral (Sarum)	1966	Howells took a nine year break from canticle composition between 1957 and 1966. His style from 1966 had changed decisively. These later canticles are markedly starker in sound. Performance of them today is limited.
Winchester Cathedral	1967	
Chichester Cathedral	1967	
St Augustine's Edgbaston	1967	
Hereford Cathedral	1969	
Magdalen College Oxford	1970	
York Minster	1973	
St Luke's Episcopal Church, Dallas	1975	

Arguably, the canticles composed between 1945 and 1951 all show Howells at his most effective; with a light handling of soft dissonance, long flowing melodies, thoughtfully considered use of vocal textures, varied use of counterpoint and homophony, and all bound by clear structures. Being amongst some of Howells' finest works for the liturgy, the canticles from this category, and in particular the *Collegium Regale* setting, will be used as constant points of reference when discussing the developments in style of Howells' evening canticles.

Although it is impossible to discuss different aspects of music in complete isolation, in order to discuss Howells' musical style systematically, **Chapter three** is split into various sections, as follows:

- 3:2. Acoustics
- 3:3. Timbre and texture
- 3:4. Melodic construction
- 3:5. Structure, thematic and motivic use
- 3:6. Harmony
- 3:7. Cadences
- 3:8. Modes

Towards the end of the Chapter, conclusions will be drawn as to why Howells' later settings are not as popular, and discussion will ensue as to which other of Howells' evening canticles deserve further recognition in today's cathedral and chapel repertoire lists.

Figure 4: Howells' evening canticles in current repertoire lists ¹

	Service in G (1920)	Service in E flat	Service in D (1935)	Service in E (1941)	Regale	Collegium	Gloucester	New College	Worcester	St Paul's	B Minor	St Peter's	St John's	Sarum	Winchester	Chichester	St Augustines	Hereford	Magdalen	York	Dallas	
New, Oxford		#		#	#	#	#	#	#	#			#									
Durham	#°		#	#	#	#	#			#	#°	#°										
King's College, Cambridge					#	#				#												
Canterbury	#		#^	#	#	#	#		#	#	#											
Worcester	#	#		#	#	#	#		#	#	#											
York	#°				#	#°	#	#		#°	#°	#								#°		
St Paul's	#	#		#	#	#	#	#°		#	#		#									
Chichester	#				#	#	#			#						#°						
Bristol	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#^		#	#^											
Truro	#				#	#	#			#												
Salisbury	#				#	#	#					#	#									
Winchester	#				#	#	#	#	#	#			#									
Trinity, Cambridge					#	#	#			#												
Hereford	#°				#	#	#			#												

Done with treble voices

° Not in repertoire for some time / Sung only occasionally

^ New additions to repertoire, Summer term 2006

¹ Information obtained from Directors of Music at the relevant Cathedrals and Chapels for the academic year 2005/6

3:2. Acoustics

Acoustics played an extremely important role in Howells' compositional style. It is well documented that he took into consideration the acoustics of each building for which he composed, and it is interesting to see stark changes in style (texturally and sometimes harmonically) between particular evening services composed for different sized and shaped buildings.

Howells' interest in acoustics began at a young age when he bore witness to music making in the church of St Mary Redcliffe in Bristol. A large building, this parish church is often considered the second cathedral in Bristol (**Plate 1**). Howells was subsequently fascinated by Gloucester Cathedral, where he heard a performance of Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis* (this was detailed further in **Section 2:2**).

Plate 1:
St Mary Redcliffe, Bristol



Howells was bowled over by the beauty of cathedrals, and the potential they held for enhancing the resonance of music, especially vocal music. There is no superlative too exaggerated in his vocabulary:

...But the cathedrals, that protrude so immensely out of the Middle Ages, alone raise architecture to the higher peaks of imagination...

Space + space + space! Stand under the Tower. Look up! – another spatial experience. The central tower seems to rise up like another cathedral-within-a-cathedral, illuminated by arcaded windows, and issuing in magnificent timbered vaulting (Canterbury: York): and at Ely, the special glory of the tremendous pillars (at crossing of Nave and transept) spread out fanwise to support the glory of the lantern – a grand suggestion of space...

Pillars, ribs, tracery = glistening with gold. No more heaviness, earthliness, or anything humdrum. Here was matter for the faithful's wonderment, and a feeling of ultra-mondian experience.¹

The list of buildings for which Howells composed in his lifetime is testament alone to his love for large, medieval acoustics, and his music certainly illustrates this

¹ Extracts taken from Palmer, *Herbert Howells : A Centenary Celebration*, 143-5.

perfectly. '...Surely, if architecture is 'frozen music', the music of Howells... is liquefied architecture.'²

Acoustics have been an inevitable and important part of musical composition since the Middle Ages. There is no doubt that all composers carefully took into consideration the acoustics of the buildings for which they were composing.

Even a superficial study shows that early composers were very aware of the effect on their music of the surroundings in which it was to be performed, and that they deliberately shaped their music accordingly. Pérotin's music is perfectly adapted to the acoustics of the highly resonant cathedral... for which it was written. Gabrieli's music for brass consort is resonant, written for St. Mark's, Venice. Purcell distinguished in style the music he wrote for Westminster Abbey and the music he wrote for the Chapel Royal.³

Similar things can also be said of Schütz, composing in Dresden's Chapel, Bach composing in large medieval cathedrals such as Leipzig, Biber who often had four choirs and organs at his disposition at any one time in Salzburg Cathedral, and Mendelssohn who wrote many of his great organ works with St Paul's Cathedral in mind.

² Palmer, *Herbert Howells : A Celebration*, 148.

³ Dart, *The Interpretation of Music* (London: Hutchinson's Music Library, 1954), 56-7.

Howells quite clearly thought about the specific acoustics of each building for which he composed. He is noted to have said:

I have never been able to compose a note of music without either a place or a building in my mind... And there I sat [in St. Albans Abbey] hoping that no-one would recognise the chap who was going to write some music for them and who wanted to hear the choir, but more than that, I wanted to hear what it felt like – the feeling of that room in which something of mine was going to be sung.⁴

That he took a great deal of care over composing for specific acoustics is evident across all of his canticles, and more so from the *Collegium Regale* setting onwards. There is a great difference in musical style between the *Collegium Regale*, *St Paul's Cathedral* and *New College* settings (and indeed all of Howells' evening canticle settings), and the drastic changes in musical styles between settings are largely explained by Howells' acknowledgment of the different acoustics for which he was composing. Different acoustics dictated different tempi and different textures both in terms of number of voices employed and in terms of whether the music was homophonic or contrapuntal. These factors considered, Howells had the potential to compose very specifically to certain buildings' acoustics, and therefore produce very all very differently styled canticles.

⁴ Spicer, *Herbert Howells*, 138. Details from a BBC interview with Howells and Robert Prizeman in 1981.

The setting for King's College Cambridge is one of peacefulness and serenity. The majority of the Magnificat uses the texture of trebles and altos in a very gentle manner. There is a sense of calm to the opening two verses, which are set for single treble line and based around G and B flat, and C and E flat respectively (Ex. 3:2.1). The pureness of the single vocal line is in no way impeded by the individual quality of the organ part, which is used very discreetly.

Ex. 3:2.1, Collegium Regale Magnificat, trebles, bars 4-11

4
Treble

7
Tr.

10
Tr.

My soul doth mag-ni-fy the Lord, and my spi-rit hath re-joiced in God my
Sa - viour. For he hath re - gard - ed the
low - li - ness of his hand - maid - en.

The Nunc Dimittis is equally as humble. The choir remain very controlled and almost motionless under the tenor soloist's long melodic gesture (Ex. 3:2.2). The whole canticle barely raises its voice, even when moving towards its modest climax at 'and to be the glory...', which is the only time the music bears a *forte* marking, except in the Gloria (which is the same for Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis) and verses 6 to 7 of the Magnificat.

The mood of this canticle is extremely fitting of the acoustics and architecture of King's College Chapel. When compared to a large cathedral such as St Paul's, Gloucester or Canterbury Cathedrals, for example, King's Chapel is not enormous. It has no transepts, so that light fills the entire expanse, leaving no darkened corners.

The expanse of the roof is visible from one end of the chapel to the other. These features all combine to make King's College Chapel a particularly unified space.

Ex. 3:2.2, Collegium Regale Nunc Dimittis, full choir, bars 16-19

16

mp

For mine eyes have

pp

For mine eyes

pp

For mine eyes

pp

For mine eyes

pp

For mine eyes

There is a certain intimacy about the building that lends itself to more tender music. This is clearly what Howells considered when composing the canticle in 1945. Its beauty is in its simplicity. This is something attested to by the current Director of Music of King's College:

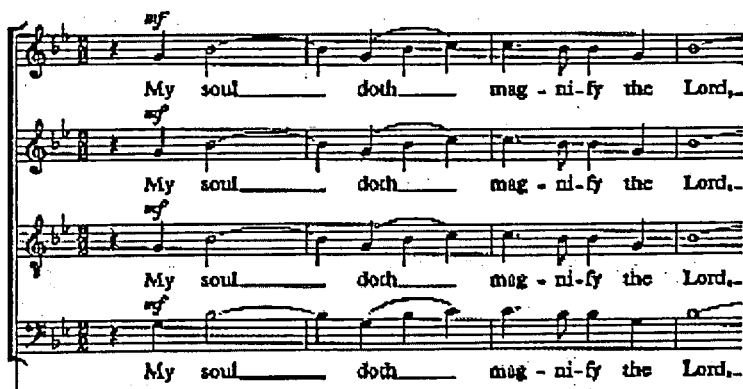
I think that HH in general was very skilled in writing for particular buildings, and in the case of the *Coll. Reg. Mag* and *Nunc*, he is, I believe, principally successful in exploiting the possibilities of intimate music, the Chapel acoustic being very responsive to the quietest sounds, as in the opening of

the Mag, and in the Nunc with the tenor soloist accompanied by a pianissimo choir, as well as exploiting the spacious acoustic in relatively slow moving harmony in the Gloria.⁵

St Paul's Cathedral on the other hand is a vast expanse which is far greater in length and breadth than King's Chapel. Whereas King's is associated with intimateness, and light and fresh acoustics, in St Paul's, one gets more a feeling of mystery and even darkness. It is a far bigger, and more lavishly built structure, full of ornaments and decoration, which imbue it with heaviness.

These exact words fit equally well when describing Howells' *St Paul's* service. It is one of only six of Howells' post-1945 canticles which begins with full choir – not just trebles. In fact, full choir is employed in all but seven of the 146 bars of the Magnificat. There is no time for the listener to settle with a short organ introduction as in many other canticles. Instead, it launches straight in (highly necessary to make a big impact in such a large building), emphasising its intensity (Ex. 3:2.3).

Ex. 3:2.3, St. Paul's Magnificat, unison choir, bars 1-4



⁵ Stephen Cleobury, Director of Music at King's College Cambridge to Sophie Cleobury (personal e-mail), 15.09.05.

In comparing the textures used between the *Collegium Regale* service and the *St Paul's* service, it is obvious that they are much heavier in the latter service. With use of full choir and organ for most of the way through, and not simply trebles and occasional altos (as in the former), the *St Paul's* service seems particularly solid and would carry well in such a vast acoustic. This contrasts equally well to another slightly more intimate acoustic – that of Worcester Cathedral – which uses upper voices (SAT) sometimes in unaccompanied fashion (Ex. 3:2.4). The acoustic of Worcester is more akin to King's College, favouring lighter textures. The heavy bass line in the *St Paul's* service underpins the texture so that the softer upper voices are not so lost in its vast acoustic.

Ex. 3:2.4, Worcester Magnificat, full choir, bars 65-68

65 *mp dolce*

He re-memb'ring his mer - cy hath hol - pen his ser - vant

mp dolce

He re-memb'ring his mer - cy hath hol - pen his ser - vant

mp dolce

He re-memb'ring his mer - cy hath hol - pen his ser - vant

Howells' use of slow moving counterpoint in the *St Paul's* setting intelligently illustrates the expanse of the building (Ex. 3:2.5). In the example below, the treble line settles on a top G at bar 13, but it takes 3 further bars for all four choir lines to

weave slowly towards a G major chord. The shortest note value here is a crotchet, and the tempo is a relaxed minim beat of 66. The G major chord is heard at bar 16 on 'peace' and the music centres around G until bar 20, showing Howells' desire not to change the tonal centre too frequently, otherwise it would be swallowed and blurred by the expanse of the building. This passage is exemplary of much of the *St Paul's* service.

Ex. 3:2.5, *St Paul's Nunc Dimittis*, full choir, bars 10-16

10
let - - test thou thy ser - vant de - part
let - - test thou thy ser - - vant de - part
let - - test thou thy ser - - - vant de -
let - - test thou thy ser - - - vant de -

14
in peace,
in peace,
- part in peace,
- part in peace,
- part in peace,

The *New College* setting differs entirely in character and emotion to both the *Collegium Regale* and *St. Paul's* settings. New College Chapel is relatively small – less than half the size of King's College Chapel in fact. Built in 1379, its roof inside is

wooden and the acoustic is therefore very dry. The current Director of Music at New College, Edward Higginbottom, when asked about the acoustics of the chapel, commented: '[It is] not particularly resonant, and a very clean "direct" sound, tending to prefer the upper partials (the basses always have to work hard). [Acoustic] can go "glassy" if over fed.'⁶

A large amount of slow-moving counterpoint would be rather ineffective in an acoustic such as New College's. As Higginbottom suggests, the acoustic is rather dry and not so resonant. The chapel would pick up fast moving counterpoint very clearly (a Bach fugue for instance), but if Howells had employed the slow-paced counterpoint he used for the *St Paul's* service, much of the resonant effect of it would have been lost. The larger, more resonant acoustics helped to build up long, drawn-out climaxes which Howells was so keen to achieve in his music.

In smaller acoustics like New College, Howells therefore made greater use of thinner, or simpler textures to achieve the effects he wanted. The opening of the Magnificat uses full choir in a relatively simplistic way, employing a homophic texture. It is important to note also that the tempo is 'Allegro, sempre con molto', with a particularly prevalent employment of crotchets (at 132 crotchets a minute) through the Magnificat setting. This more widespread use of crotchets at a slightly faster pace than the *St Paul's* service is far more appropriate to the smaller acoustic (Ex. 3:2.6).

⁶ Edward Higginbottom, Director of Music of New College, Oxford to Sophie Cleobury (personal e-mail), 15.09.05.

Ex: 3:2.6 New College Magnificat, full choir, bars 6-11

doth mag - ni - fy the Lord, and my spi - - rit

In order to create long effective climaxes without the use of long contrapuntal lines, Howells resorted to other means, like the stark change of key from D flat major to G major at the beginning of the Gloria (Ex. 3:2.6), which Higginbottom states 'is either a strong or a weak feature of the composition, depending on your taste...'⁷

Example 3:2.5, New College Magnificat, full choir, bars 152-155

Glo - - ry be to the Fa - - ther

⁷ *Ibid*

There are many other examples in all the other canticles that show Howells' careful consideration of each building's acoustics. As a general rule of thumb though, he saved the longer periods of slow counterpoint for larger buildings, and employed more extensively homophonic passages and lighter textures in his settings for smaller buildings with less adequate acoustics.

Howells' acknowledgment of acoustics went further than this simple rule however. His varied use of vocal textures and timbres showed his understanding of the texts as well, and greatly enhanced his music. This is seen in further details in **Section 3:3**.

3:3. Texture and Timbre

Further to the employment of counterpoint and homophony in various different acoustics, Howells took great care to use a greater variety of textures and timbres in his evening canticles, which further enhanced the level of detail in his music.

Primarily, the vocal timbres employed at the beginning of Howells' Magnificats and Nunc Dimittis must be discussed briefly, but the first subject to be examined in fuller detail in this section is Howells' use of unison, which formed a particularly important part of his canticle compositions. In addition to an assessment of when and where Howells tended to employ unison, this section also strives to discuss the superiority of Howells' unison compared to some other composers, as well as identifying some potential weaknesses in his unison passages. The variety of textures and timbres Howells achieved through using different voices for different points in the text is discussed together with his recognition that spacing the voices differently created very distinct sounds, which went a long way to explaining the vivid change in sound of his later canticles.

The third and final part of this section discusses the role of the organ in Howells' evening canticles. Howells used the organ in a particularly individual way, almost as a vocal line in its own right; it was barely ever relegated simply to that of an accompanying device. The organ was used in a particularly pictorial fashion -- from colouring and enhancing tiny details of music with false relations, to painting specific pictures within a passage of music.

* * * * *

The Magnificat is the triumphant song of Mary after being informed by the Angel Gabriel that she is to give birth to the Son of God. The opening of this canticle has often been sung by trebles (either solo or full), portraying the innocence of the Virgin Mary. Female connotations were obviously of great importance to Howells, as the opening verses of nine of his 18 Magnificats are for treble line only.¹ Howells' oft-quoted line in reference to the *Collegium Regale* Magnificat obviously bore a deep impression:

'...a challenge... also a promise (mine) that if I made the setting of the Magnificat, the mighty should be put down from their seat without a brute force that would deny this canticle's feminine association. Equally that, in the Nunc Dimittis, the Tenor's domination should characterise the gentle Simeon. Only the Gloria should raise its voice. The given promise dictated style, mood and scope.'²

This promise certainly dictated the 'style, mood and scope' of many of the 14 Nunc Dimittises after *Collegium Regale*. Seven of them employ just tenors and basses at their opening (as is common practice in many Nunc Dimittis settings). Following in the style of the tenor solo in *Collegium Regale*, the Nunc Dimittises of the *Chichester* and *Dallas* services both open with a soloist (tenor and bass respectively), whilst the services for *St. Peter's Westminster*, *St John's College Cambridge*, *Sarum*, *St*

¹ This figure excludes the male-only canticles.

² Andrews, P., CD sleeve notes in *The Complete Morning and Evening Canticles of Herbert Howells (1892-1983)*, vol. 1, Collegiate Singers, dir. Andrew Millinger (Bedfordshire: Priory Records, 2000).

Augustine's Edgbaston, Magdalen College Oxford and York Minster all use tenors and basses in unison. This is also the case as far back as the Service in G. It is interesting to note that just three settings use neither device, and only five use both.

Figure 5

The employment of treble voices at the opening of Howells' Magnificats and Nunc Dimittises

Canticle	Trebles in opening of Magnificat	Male voices in opening to Nunc Dimittis
Service in G	Yes	Yes
Service for Unison Voices	Yes	No
Service for Male Voices (1935)	-	Yes
Service for Men's Voices (1941)	-	Yes
King's College Cambridge	Yes	Yes
Gloucester Cathedral	Yes	No
New College Oxford	No	No
Worcester Cathedral	Yes	No
St Paul's Cathedral	No	No
B Minor	Yes	No
St Peter's Westminster	No	Yes
St John's Cambridge	No	Yes
Sarum (Salisbury Cathedral)	Yes	Yes
Winchester Cathedral	Yes	No
Chichester Cathedral	Yes	Yes
St Augustine's Edgbaston	No	Yes
Hereford Cathedral	Yes	No
Magdalen College Oxford	Yes	Yes
York Minster	No	Yes
St Luke's Church, Dallas	Yes	Yes

Section 3:2 provided an insight into Howells' employment of different vocal textures in accordance with the acoustics of particular buildings. As well as providing an assortment of contrapuntal and homophonic textures however, Howells reverted frequently to using unison, which brought yet more variety to his music. The table below documents Howells' use of unison within his evening canticles.

Figure 6

Table showing Howells' use of full-choir unison in his evening canticles

Canticle	Unison in Magnificat	Unison in Nunc Dimittis
Service in G	b. 2-13, 213-218	b. 27-8, 40-42
Service in D (1935)	b. 2-25, 29-31, 41-44, 59-62, 77-81, 108-120, 127-131	b. 18-22, 24-42, 48-53
Service in E (1941)	b. 3-26, 28-56, 70-78, 102-122	b. 3-13, 27-52
King's College Cambridge	b. 48-49, 91-92	b. 35-42, b. 68-69
Gloucester Cathedral	b. 45-47	b. 32, 36-39, 42-54
New College Oxford	b. 170-174, 188-189	b. 21-29, 38-40, 45-49, 59-60, 63-66
Worcester Cathedral	b. 38-48	b. 22-23, 27, 31-33
St Paul's Cathedral	b. 1-7, 13-19, 44-46, 109-117	b. 50-53, 60-63, 84-87
B Minor	b. 40-42, 46-49, 98-99	b. 35-38, 51-52, 55-56
St Peter's Westminster	b. 52	b. 23-26, 47-49
St John's Cambridge	b. 3-37, b. 93-98, 104	b. 29-33, 41-45
Sarum (Salisbury Cathedral)	b. 24, 92-96	b. 41-43
Winchester Cathedral	b. 55-57, 112-116	b. 35-36, 42-44
Chichester Cathedral	b. 48-51, 59, 148-155	b. 28, 32-34, 38-45, 49-53, 64-66
St Augustine's Edgbaston	b. 27, 66, 118-125, 134, 138	b. 21, 34-41, 54, 59-60
Hereford Cathedral	b. 32-34, 88, 102-105	b. 11-14, 38-40, 55, 61-64
Magdalen College Oxford	b. 48-49	b. 40-43, 47-8, 68-70
York Minster	b. 53, 95-99	b. 37-39
St Luke's Church, Dallas	b. 42-43, 59, 68-76, 79-87, 92-93, 104-105, 107-108	b. 21, 28, 56-57

In cataloguing Howells' use of unison in his evening canticles, an interesting discovery is made. In all but four of his 20 evening services, Howells used unison choir at some point towards the end of the Nunc Dimittis, directly before the Gloria. Figure 7 below details this further. The only canticles in which this did not occur were the Service in G, the *Salisbury* and *St Augustine's* services (this table, of course, discounts the Unison service).

Figure 7

Table showing the point at which Howells turned to unison writing in his Nunc Dimittis settings

Canticle	Word in the Nunc Dimittis from which full-choir sings in unison
Men's 1935	Glory
Men's 1941	And to be
Collegium Regale	And to be
Gloucester	People
New	And to be
Worcester	Israel
St Paul's	Israel

B Minor	To be a light <i>and</i> Israel
St Peter's	Of thy
St John's	Israel
Winchester	Israel
Chichester	People
Hereford	Of thy
Magdalen	Of thy (<i>although the very end is not unison</i>)
York	Of thy
Dallas	World without (<i>at the second time, although the very end is not in unison</i>)

Howells obviously meant this to be a strong feature of his canticles. Its significance works on a number of levels. In one sense, a coming-together of everyone at the end of the second canticle displays unity, which is expressed more strongly by all voices together than a mere restatement of a theme, which works only musically. Everyone singing the same part also reinforces the meaning of the words at this particular point. '...the Glory of thy people Israel' is a decisive culmination and celebration at the saving of Israel. As a very brief digression, it is interesting to note that Howells believed the only complete musical consonance was the octave.³ To have all voices singing in unison enhanced this idea of unity and concord.

Howells did not employ unison merely for ease. It seems as if he used these full-choir unison passages as a further way of referring to plainchant (his fondness of which will be discussed in Section 3:4). The unison approach to the Gloria of the *New College* Nunc Dimittis is an excellent example of his quasi-plainchant style (Ex. 3:3.1).

³ Howells, notes on 'discord and concord' [undated], RCM, Howells Archive, Box C.

Ex. 3:3.1. New College Nunc Dimittis, full choir, bars 21-26

Whilst Howells' passages in unison are in many ways effective, there are also a number of restrictions in the use of so much unison. It is easy to see therefore some potential limitations in his Service in E flat for unison voices. The interest in Howells' later canticles relies heavily on his balance of vocal textures (unison, homophony, counterpoint), so immediately in the Service in E flat, Howells took away one of the main components of this music – the variety of textures⁴.

In considering the textural limitations of Howells' service for unison voices, discussion moves on to the limitations in timbre of his services for men's voices of 1935 (in E) and 1941 (in D). In the post-1945 services, much of the ecstasy is created through the use of all four parts of the choir expanding over a number of octaves, especially the declamatory sounds of the trebles' high tessitura. The final bars of the *Worcester* service for example, employ a huge range, from high in the treble register to low in the bass register (Ex. 3:3.2). All four voice parts (treble, alto, tenor and

⁴ The Service in E flat is however a simple and effective composition, and much of Howells' style can be learnt from it. Through his use of unison, he demonstrated his ability to write long, graceful melodies.

bass) provide far more potential for exciting vocal effects. High treble voices make a particularly ethereal sound.

Ex. 3:3.2, Worcester Nunc Dimittis, full choir, bars 65-69

65 *allargando* *ff*

A - - - - - men. *ff*

A - - - - - men. *ff*

A - - - - - men. *ff*

A - - - - - men. *ff*

allargando *ff*

In the Service in E for men's voices, even when the male voices are split into four parts (TTBB), the vocal span is at most just over an octave (Ex. 3:3.3), whereas the largest range covered in the Gloria of the *Gloucester* service stretches through three and a half octaves if the organ part is included (or perhaps more if the organist decides to add a 16 foot stop to the passage). The whole aesthetic experience of this sound is far more radiant than using just male voices (Ex. 3:3:4).

Ex. 3:3.3, Service in E Magnificat, full choir, bars 95-97

hath hol - pen his ser - vant is - ra - el

Ex. 3:3.4, Gloucester Gloria, full choir, bars 94-97

The musical score consists of five systems. The first four systems are vocal staves, and the fifth is a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Ho - - ly Ghost. As it was, As it was, As it was, As it was." The piano part includes dynamic markings like *pp* and *sf*, and performance instructions like "più sempre" and "sf".

The vocal range created by using four very different voice parts (as would be achieved with an SATB choir) made the Services in E and in D two canticles lack the “icing on the cake”. There is something particularly ethereal about the timbre of upper voices in a cathedral acoustic – something which Howells made use of time and again in later settings.

It is interesting to note that when the Service in D was published in 1995, it was suggested that it could also be transferred to the treble register. In the Collegiate Singers’ premiere recording of this service, Andrew Millinger chose to use women’s voices over men’s voices. This sounds particularly effective, no less so because of the ethereal quality of timbre of the upper voices; something to which Russill agrees:

Many choir directors may feel that most of the 1941 Service is as well served by high voices: even the solemn texture of bb. 82-97 in the Magnificat... acquires a different, fragile eloquence at the higher octave.⁵

This is a detail that Jacques raised in his article on *Hymnus Paradisi*. He stated that Howells' success went beyond simply being able to compose for choirs. Howells considered precisely the very particular qualities that each voice part in a choir had, and was therefore able to use different vocal timbres to achieve very different aesthetic goals.

It is not merely the common-sense business... of writing in the most effective part of each voice, or the equally laudible device of giving a momentarily important line to one vocal part rather than another. There is the realisation that a voice is a personal thing, and that intelligent singers are capable of a wonderful alchemy, producing sounds with an infinite range of vocal colour.⁶

Discussion now moves away from Howells' employment of different vocal timbres, to his use of vocal textures (how he spaced vocal lines), which had great impact on the sonorities created.

⁵ Russill, P 'Introduction' in *Howells in D* (Oxford: OUP, 1995).

⁶ Jacques, R., 'Howells' *Hymnus Paradisi*' in *Music and Letters* (July 1952), 196.

Firstly, a brief discussion on Howells' use of double choir is needed. A particularly traditional feature of Anglican Church composition is the division of music into two choirs, which sing antiphonally (Decani and Cantoris). This has been a common device in a lot of music for the liturgy since the Reformation. Many examples of antiphonal singing can be seen throughout the history of Anglican Church music, although its use was less common in the Victorian era as composers were writing for amateur singers and had to keep compositions to a more manageable standard.

Given Howells' total captivation with acoustics, and his desire to realise the full aesthetic potential of his music, it is perhaps surprising to note that he made practically no use of antiphonal or double choir in his evening canticles. Every single setting uses a doubled part at some point, but this rarely lasts for more than a few bars at a time.

The only substantial passages of double choir are seen in the *Collegium Regale*, *Gloucester*, *Salisbury* and *Chichester* services, but what Howells certainly never did was divide the music into sections for Decani and Cantoris to sing antiphonally, as was common practice in earlier Anglican music. Presumably he saw no aesthetic value in composing in this way, seeing as he used so many other ways in which to vary the musical textures and timbres.

The examples here show a few instances of Howells' employment of double choir, but it is also worth noting that even these examples are not strictly passages written for double choir, they are merely subdivided lines which Howells used when he sought to enrich the texture at certain climactic points.

Ex. 3:3.5, Collegium Regale Nunc Dimittis, trebles, bars 32-33

In the *Collegium Regale* example (Ex. 3:3.5), the full choir climaxes onto 'light' in bar 32. The first beat of this bar feels almost like a flower in full bud waiting to bloom, which is exactly what happens. The second treble line grows out of the first treble's top G, delaying the climax just a little longer. This blossoming line of descending crotchets is then drawn out even further by the altos into bar 35, prolonging the ecstasy of the climactic bar of the setting.

Ex. 3:3.6, St Paul's Nunc Dimittis, trebles, bars 18-22

Howells' treats the treble lines with similar effect in the Nunc Dimittis of the *St Paul's* service (Ex. 3:3.6). Here, the first treble line grows out of the heavy clash with the second treble line created in bar 44. The *St Peter's* service provides another similar example of Howells' use of double choir (Ex. 3:3.7). Here though, the lines seem to grow out of each other – see the second trebles' downward movement from the final minim beat of bar 15, followed by the upward movement of the first trebles in the following bar.

Ex. 3:3:7, St Peter's Nunc Dimittis, trebles, bars 13-17

It is worth noticing that the three examples above occur at similar episodes in the canticles, showing Howells' predilection for enriching specific words (further detail on this is seen in **Section 3:4**).

In exploring Howells' different use of choral textures, discussion must also incorporate his use of vocal spacing, a feature that was to show pronounced development in his later evening canticles. **Section 3:4** gives details of how Howells' melodies evolved, showing that melodies in later canticles were often more fraught with difficult intervals and time signatures. Allied with this, come further attempts by Howells to create a more anxious sonority with regards to specific textures.

This is exemplified particularly well in the example below from the *Chichester* service (**Ex. 3:3.8**). The chord in bar 4 is simply an A minor chord (ACE) with added ninth (B). Howells commonly used this type of chord, so harmonically speaking nothing was new. However, the way in which he spaced the chord made its harshness more obvious. Comparing it to an earlier canticle will explain this point further.

Ex. 3:3:8, Chichester Magnificat, trebles, bars 1-8

Sempre teneramente, ma con moto $J = c. 86$ (1892-1983)

SOPRANO I *mp* My soul

SOPRANO II *mp* My soul

ORGAN *mp*

Ped.

doth mag-ni-fy the Lord, and my spi-rit

doth mag-ni-fy the Lord, and my spi-rit

Ex. 3:3:9, Worcester Nunc Dimittis, full choir, bars 24-28

24

light - - - - en the Gen-tiles, and to be the glo - - -

light - - - - en the Gen-tiles, and to be the glo - - -

light - - - - en the Gen - tiles, and to be the glo - - -

light-en the Gen - - - - tiles, and to be the glo - - -

The chord on 'glory' in the *Worcester* service example (Ex. 3:3.9) includes an A and B just as the *Chichester* example does above (the chord here is essentially F sharp

minor, the B being an added eleventh). The way in which the voices are spaced in the *Worcester* example means the chord sounds less severe; the A is placed high in the treble register, and the B in the alto line. Compare this to the *Chichester* example, and the essence of Howells' later style becomes apparent. He kept the clashing notes within the same tessitura, so that the tension of the notes is more audibly conspicuous.

There are countless comparable examples in all of the canticles, but suffice it to say, the way in which Howells distributed his voices in the later canticles was a huge contributing factor to their starker sound. Examples below are from the *Chichester*, *St Augustine's*, *York* and *Dallas* services. (Exs. 3:3.10).

Ex. 3:3.10a, Chichester Magnificat, full choir, bars 28-31

bless-ed. For he that is might-ry hath mag-ni-fied me, -

bless-ed. For he that is might-ry hath mag-ni-fied me, -

bless - ed. For he that is might-ry hath mag-ni-fied me, -

bless - ed. For he that is might-ry hath mag-ni-fied me, -

Ex. 3:3.10b, Chichester Magnificat, full choir, bars 68-72

ble and meek He hath filled

ble and meek He hath

ble and meek He hath filled

ble and meek He hath filled the

Ex. 3:3.10c, St Augustine's Nunc Dimittis, full choir, bars 26-27

ra-el.
ra-el.
ra-el.
ra-el.

Ex. 3:3.10d, York Magnificat, trebles and altos, bars 41-43

cy is on them that fear him
cy is on them that fear him

Ex. 3:3.10e, Dallas Magnificat, full choir, bar 39

He hath shewed

* * * * *

Howells' very particular use of the organ is the final component to this section on textures and timbres. In much Anglican Church music, the organ plays an extremely distinctive role. In many instances, it is an indispensable vehicle. As choir standards deteriorated in the nineteenth century, the organ was needed to cover the choir lines, so from a practical point of view, the organ became wholly necessary. Moving into the twentieth century, the organ started to be used more imaginatively (for more detail, see further on in this section). However, the improvement of choir standards in the twentieth century, coupled with a resurgence of interest in older forms of choral

music (for example, Palestrina's masses at Westminster Cathedral) also meant that the organ could be dispensed with, and the effectiveness of unaccompanied music was appreciated once more.

In many of Howells' evening canticles, the organ significantly adds to the timbre and texture of the music. Having spent his early student days composing for the choir of Westminster Cathedral and Richard Runciman Terry, Howells was emphatically aware of the superfluous nature of the organ in creating the perfect ethereal choral sound. He therefore made painstaking efforts to give the organ a very particular voice – using it for its fullest potential, and never using it merely as a vehicle with which to carry the choir along, which is something that is felt in some settings, like Noble in B Minor and Stanford in G (Exs. 3:3.11).

Ex. 3:3.11a, Noble in B Minor Magnificat, organ and treble, bars 1-6

Allegro $\text{♩} = 72$

My soul, my soul doth magnify the Lord, and my

Allegro $\text{♩} = 72$

Ex. 3:3.11b. Stanford in G Magnificat, organ, bars 1-5

The opening to the Noble in B Minor Magnificat is particularly harmonically driven, with the organ's descent down the octave in bars 4 to 6. The constantly moving crotchets maintain a regular pace. Additionally, the relentless quavers most of the way through Stanford's Magnificat in G sustain a fast momentum beneath the treble solo. This is something rarely found in Howells' evening canticles.

It is unfair to label Howells' organ parts as pure accompaniments. The organ is written for as individually as he does his choir lines, so much so, that the organ can often be regarded as an extra voice in the choir, supplementing the textures. This is best exemplified by the similar nature of the organ and treble lines in the *Gloucester* service, where the two trebles and the right hand of the organ part are almost indistinguishable (Ex. 3:3.12). In this way, the organ parts often provided additional contrapuntal lines that could almost have been sung.

Ex. 3:3.12, Gloucester Magnificat, trebles and organ right hand, bars 16-19

16
p
 bless - - - ed. For he that is might - - - ty hath mag - - ni - - fied.
mf
 call - - - me - - - bless - - - ed.

Creating a quasi-vocal line out of the organ part was not something Howells thought of in his first canticle compositions however. The organ part to the Service in G is rather bolder in comparison, and with its insistent pace, reminds the listener more of the Stanford and Noble examples than those of Howells' 1945 and 1946 services. (Ex. 3:3.13).

Ex. 3:3.13, Service in G Magnificat, organ, bars 1-5

Poco allegro.
 My Soul doth
 My Soul doth
 My Soul doth
 My Soul doth
 My Soul doth
Poco allegro.

In looking at the use of organ in Howells' evening canticles, it is also worth noticing the complete control he had. If he believed the organ to be unnecessary, he was confident enough simply not to use it. The organ part is dispensed with on many occasions, offering a heightened ethereal sound from the unaccompanied voices. This

is seen in a great many services. The examples below are from the *Worcester* and *Winchester* services (Exs. 3:3.14).

Ex. 3:3.14a, Worcester Magnificat, unaccompanied choir, bars 67-69

65 *mp dolce*

He re-mem-b'ring his mer - cy hath hol - pen his ser - vant

mp dolce

He re-mem-b'ring his mer - cy hath hol - pen his ser - vant

mp dolce

He re-mem-b'ring his mer - cy hath hol - pen his ser - vant

Ex. 3:3.14b, Winchester Magnificat, unaccompanied choir, bars 93-95

93

- mem-b'ring his mer - cy hath hol - pen his ser - vant Is - ra - el

- mem-b'ring his mer - cy hath hol - pen his ser - vant Is - ra - el

- mem-b'ring his mer - cy hath hol - pen his ser - vant Is - ra - el

- mem-b'ring his mer - cy hath hol - pen his ser - vant Is - ra - el

mp

One thing Charles Stanford did in the organ part to his Magnificat in G was to use the organ pictorially (the motif seen in Ex. 3:3.11b was meant to show Mary at her spinning wheel). Howells seemed encouraged to do similarly in the opening to the Nunc Dimittis of his Service in E (Ex. 3:3:15), which depicts a gentle lullaby.

Ex. 3:3.15, Service in E Nunc Dimittis, organ, bars 1-4



As far as particular organ stops go, Howells seems to have left this very much down to the organist. Although a small number of stops are specified (the oboe stop in the *Worcester* service and the tuba stop in the *York* service, which is also used in the *B Minor* service), there is little in the way of strict performance practice as regards stops used. Paul Andrews corroborates this:

...I think that this is Howells the practical musician recognising that every organ is different, and that even oboes and tubas on different instruments (sounding in their different acoustics) can sound completely dissimilar. It's also a compliment paid by one musician to another – he simply assumes, probably rather optimistically in some cases, that organists know what works and what doesn't on their own instruments.⁷

Many more of Howells' later canticles take further the idea of painting a picture, but again, with a far greater degree of subtlety. The *Nunc Dimittis* is the Song of Simeon – an aged man coming to the end of his life. In the opening to a number of *Nunc Dimittises* after 1945, it seems as if Howells' organ parts illustrate the sound of a tolling bell, or at times, the limp of a frail individual, or even both together.

⁷ Paul Andrews to Sophie Cleobury (personal e-mail), 20.09.05.

The organ's introduction to the Nunc Dimittis of the *Gloucester* service is reminiscent of a slow chiming bell. Chimes come on the first beat of the third and fifth bars, sounded by gentle clashes that resolve on the next beat (Ex. 3:3:16). These clashes could also illustrate a person faltering, the crotchet movement illustrating each pace, or step.

Ex. 3:3.16. Gloucester Nunc Dimittis, organ introduction, bars 1-5



The services for *Salisbury* and *St Augustine's Edgbaston* both open with an ostinato-type figure (Ex. 3:3.17 and 3:3.18). Both incorporate a move down from B flat to F, effectively illustrating the faltering step of Simeon. The ostinato in the *Salisbury* service re-enters for the link to the Doxology, and with its acceleration at this point, perhaps anticipates Simeon's quickening pace for his glorious arrival in heaven. The regular minim beat in the right hand of the organ in the opening to the *Salisbury* service (cutting across the 3/4 time signature) justly illustrates the tolling bell.

Ex. 3:3.17. Salisbury Nunc Dimittis, organ introduction, bars 1-3

Ex. 3:3.18, St Augustine's Nunc Dimittis, organ introduction, bars 1-2



Wandering organ introductions are a common feature of a number of Howells' Nunc Dimittises, bringing out the rather solitary, nostalgic sentiment of the Song of Simeon. Canticles worth noticing particularly are the Service in G, and the *Collegium Regale* and *St Paul's* services (Exs. 3:3.19), in all of which it is difficult to perceive a time signature. The syncopated melody that opens the Service in G seems to move around aimlessly never sure of its direction, and the same is true for *Collegium Regale* and the *St Paul's* Nunc Dimittises, which both open with a melody that spirals down with little obvious focus until it lands.

Ex. 3:3.19a, Service in G Nunc Dimittis, organ introduction, bars 1-4

Ex. 3:3.19b, Collegium Regale Nunc Dimittis, organ introduction, bars 1-4

Quasi lento, tranquillo ($\text{♩} = 60$)

TENOR SOLO

ORGAN

p

Man.

Lord, now let-test thou thy

pp

Ex. 3:3.19a, St. Paul's Nunc Dimittis, organ introduction, bars 6-8

mf

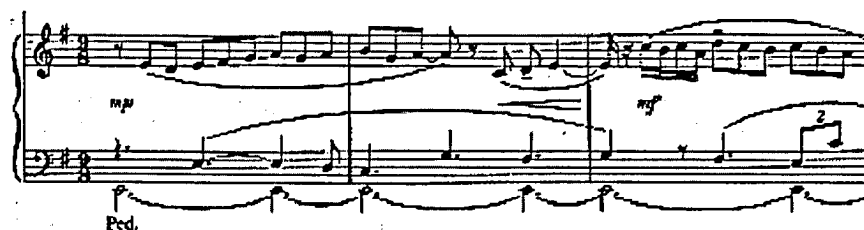
f *pp*

add 16'

The organ parts in some of the later evening canticle settings begin to show Howells' expanding ideas. The Magnificat to the *Magdalen College* service certainly takes on the role of accompaniment (Ex. 3:3.20), but it is also interesting to note the likeness of much of this organ part to Baroque keyboard composition, a genre of which Howells was evidently fond.⁸

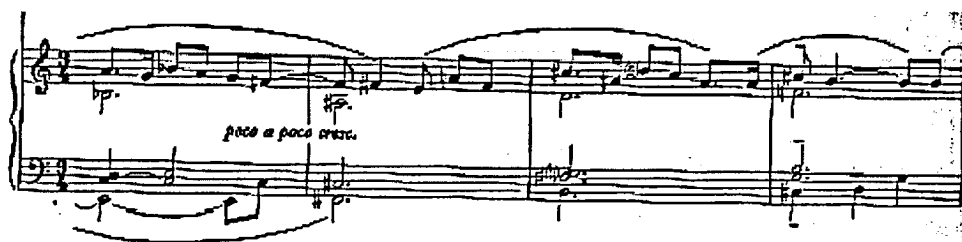
⁸ A number of Howells' piano and organ works included homages to Baroque composers – including *Howells' Clavichord*, and the *Pavane and Galliard* from his piano repertoire, and his *Six Pieces for Organ*.

Ex. 3:3.20, Magdalen Magnificat, organ introduction, bars 1-3



The *Magdalen* accompaniment is full of twists and syncopated rhythms. This actually became quite a strong feature of Howells' later accompaniments. Examples can be found in the *Winchester* and *St Augustine's* services (Exs. 3:3.21).

Ex. 3:3.21a, Winchester Magnificat, organ, bars 124-127



The *Winchester* example incorporates dotted notes and scotch snaps, which were common features of Baroque keyboard music. The *St Augustine's* example also uses a scotch snap, but also has turning semi-quaver motifs which is reminiscent (although slightly altered forms) of the Baroque turn.

Ex. 3:3.21b, St Augustine's Magnificat, organ, bars 11-14

and my spi-rit hath re-joic'd in God

and my spi-rit hath re-joic'd in God

and my spi-rit hath re-joic'd in God

and my spi-rit hath re-joic'd in God

my Sa-viour.

my Sa-viour.

my Sa-viour.

my Sa-viour.

God my Sa-viour.

Howells made effective use of different textures and timbres within his canticles. His use of unison was unrivalled, and complimented his homophonic and contrapuntal textures. He displayed varied methods of spacing choir lines which resulted in creating very particular moods in different canticles. His preference in later canticles was to use clashing notes in the similar vocal parts (for instance, treble and alto) so that clashes were more prominent, thus causing a more edgy sonority. The use of the organ was elevated from one of simple accompaniment to one of further individuality, often weaving in and out of other vocal lines. It was also used

pictorially to create specific moods, and Howells was also bold enough to dispense of it when he deemed it necessary.

Overall, Howells attained a great spectrum of colour within his music, and much of this was down to his conscious efforts to vary constantly the textures and timbres that he used.

3:4. Melodic Construction

Howells' love of broad melodies was nurtured by his fondness for medieval plainchant, and it is remarkable to note that the comments made by Debussy on Palestrina's music could also be applied to Howells':

this music...is...represented...by melodic arabesques, which create their effect through contour, and through their interweaving, which produces something that strikes you as unique: harmony that is made of melodies!¹

This concept is corroborated by Howells in a collection of his lecture notes for the Royal College of Music, which state that '...the quest of harmony is a by-product of melodies.'²

The ways in which Howells employed melodies in his canticles was particularly distinctive. Whilst other factors also distinguished him from other composers, it was the originality of his melodic lines that really made his music what it was. Many of his melodies show their roots in plainchant. There is a heavy use of melismatic writing, something that, until this point, Anglican music had rarely seen. His melodies also showed a growing maturity in the later canticles. This was characterised by his progressive use of chromaticism.

* * * * *

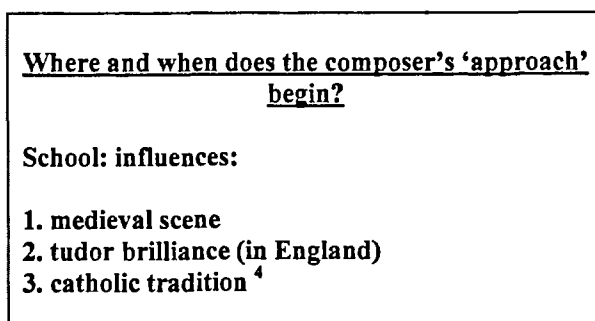
¹ Fisk, C.,(ed.), in *Composers on Music*, (2nd edition, Boston: North East University Press, 1997), 200.

² Howells, notes on 'church and history of art' [undated], RCM, Howells Archive, Box C.

Plainchant was the focal point of medieval services. Priests would often sing the words of the Mass to unison plainchant, so it is fascinating to read Howells' views on the subject. He asked '...why not the simplicity of plainsong forever – why elaborate into a Palestrina or Byrd Motet?'³ This quotation shows Howells' awareness of the ethereal and unadorned beauty of plainchant – a feature he effectively brought to his music. From another collection of Howells' lecture notes in the Royal College of Music archive, medieval music and the catholic tradition seem to have been two indispensable features of his musical style:

Figure 8

Extract from Howells' lecture notes from the Royal College of Music.



A fondness for the 'medieval scene' shines through in Howells' canticles. His melodies were constructed from a number of very similar qualities to plainchant. Plainchant was characterised most specifically by its simple intervals that rarely extended past a fifth, and more often than not used adjacent notes. Augmented or diminished intervals were not employed.

³ Howells, notes on 'church and history of art' [undated], RCM, Howells Archive, Box C.

⁴ Howells, notes on 'where and when does the composer's 'approach' begin?' [undated], RCM, Howells Archive, Box C.

A similar use of intervals can be found in most of Howells' early canticles. Take, for example, the well-known opening treble melody from the *Collegium Regale* (Ex. 3:4.1).

Ex. 3:4.1, *Collegium Regale*, opening treble melody, bars 4-11

Soprano *mp*
Mysoul dothmag-ni-fy the Lord, and my spi-rithathre-joiced in God my Sa- viour.

S. *p*
For he hath re - gard - ed the low - li-ness of his hand - maid - en.

The largest interval in this melody is a minor third, only occurring four times in the first two verses. Similar characteristics can be seen in a great many of Howells' melodies. The examples below show the opening treble melodies to the Service in E flat, the *Worcester*, B Minor, *St John's*, *Chichester* and *St Augustine's* services (Exs. 3:4.2). None of these examples have intervals of more than a fifth, the majority of intervals are consecutive or a third apart, and none are augmented or diminished.

Ex. 3:4.2a, Service in E flat Magnificat, treble, bars 3-9

Voice *mp*
My soul doth mag - ni - fy the Lord and my

Voice *p*
spi - rit hath re - joiced in God my sav - iour

Ex. 3:4.2b, Worcester Magnificat, treble, bars 4-10

Voice *mp*
My soul doth mag - ni - fy the Lord and my


Voice *p*
spi - rit hath re - joi - ced in God my Sa - viour


Ex. 3:4.2c, B Minor Magnificat, treble, bars 3-11

Voice  My soul doth mag - - ni-fy the Lord _____ and my

6
Voice  spi - rit hath re - joiced in God my Sa - viour

Ex. 3:4.2d, St John's Magnificat, treble, bars 3-11

Voice  My soul doth mag - ni - fy the Lord _____ and my

6
Voice  spi - rit hath re - joiced in God my Sa - viour

Ex. 3:4.2e, Chichester Magnificat, treble, bars 4-13

Voice  My soul doth mag - ni - fy the Lord _____ and my spi - rit _____

6
Voice  _____ hath re - joiced in God my Sa - - vi - our

Ex. 3:4.2f, St Augustine's Magnificat, bars 2-17

Voice  My soul doth mag - - ni-fy the Lord _____

8
Voice  and my spi - rit hath re - joiced _____ in God _____

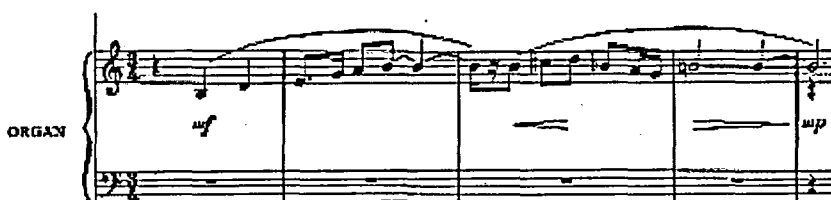
12
Voice  _____ my Sa - - - viour

Combined with his use of modality, Howells' melodies could be considered to have similar qualities to folksong, which was similarly made up of modal melodies and simple intervals). Nevertheless, Howells had little interest in using this. Looking more closely, his melodies bear a number of characteristics that are more akin to plainsong

than folk melody. Characteristics of plainsong include a general feeling of stasis (always returning to a central note), irregular phrasing, straight (undotted) rhythms, and an expansive use of melismas. Folksong, on the other hand, would employ very regular phrases. Dotted rhythms were commonplace, and melismatic lines were generally not used.

Plainchant was based around specific notes (a reciting note). This is very much a feature of Howells' melodies. All of the examples above have obvious reciting notes, all marked with * (although the *St Augustine's* reciting note seems to move from A flat to C): This is even true of Howells' later canticles, which often get a little more chromatic. The organ opening to the *Winchester Magnificat* serves as a good example (Ex. 3:4.3).

Ex. 3:4.3. Winchester Magnificat, organ introductory melody, bars 1-4



What is interesting to note is that in most of these examples, like in plainchant, the melodic “centre of gravity” (or reciting note) is rarely the tonic of the key or mode. For example, in the *Chichester* example, the pedal note in the organ at the time is in fact A, whereas the reciting note is B. The second half of the *St Augustine's* example moves around C, whereas the music begins firmly in A flat.

Irregular phrasing is another aspect of Howells' melodies that affirms their affinity with plainchant. Howells engineered the melodies in a number of ways so that there

was rarely a regular pulse. This gave the melodies a rather meandering impression, which strongly harks back to plainsong.

Comparing the passages of unison between composers like John West and John Ireland (Exs. 3:4.4), the superiority of Howells' melodies becomes apparent.

Ex. 3:4.4a, Ireland Magnificat in F

Two voice parts in 4/4 time, F major. The first voice part has the lyrics: "he hath show - ed strength with his arm, he hath scat - ter - ed the". The second voice part has the lyrics: "proud in the im - a - gi - na - tion of their hearts". The melody is simple and regular, with one syllable per note.

The unison line in Ireland's service in F lacks the degree of interest that Howells' melodies have. This is because it is sung with one syllable per note, in a very regular 4/4 metre, which immediately dispels any qualities of plainchant. Howells' melodies, especially at the end of the Nunc Dimittises seem to swirl around, lacking in harmonic direction and often in strict metre right until the very final note.

Ex. 3:4.4b, West in G Nunc Dimittis, organ, bars 1-4

Organ score in G major, 9/8 time. The tempo is marked "Andante tranquillo" with a quarter note equal to 50. The score includes dynamics such as *Su. pp*, *Voix Celeste*, *rall.*, *a tempo.*, *Gt. p (Su. Diaps. coupd.)*, and *Ped.*. The music features a complex, swirling texture with many accidentals and a variety of note values.

John West's Gloria begins in unison, but the moto perpetuo crotchet movement in the organ part takes away the serenity that Howells would have attained. Furthermore, West's Nunc Dimittis begins in a lilting compound time, which is far too organised rhythmically to sound like plainchant. The beauty of Howells' melodies is their absolute plainness – lack of rhythms, spoken naturally, a seeming lack of drive often aided by the lack of the organ pushing the choir resolutely to its final cadence, as seen in the West and Ireland examples.

Having examined two composers' simple employment of melody, it is now easier to see what characteristics went into Howells' very particular melodic style. One way in which he managed to create plainsong-like melodies was to change the time signature frequently. Examples from Howells' *Collegium Regale* and *Worcester* services below show these constantly changing time signatures (Exs. 3:4.5).

Ex. 3:4.5a, *Collegium Regale* Nunc Dimittis, tenor, bars 4-11

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system (bars 4-7) shows a tenor vocal line in a simple, plainsong-like style with lyrics: "Lord, now let-test thou thy". The organ accompaniment is in a crotchet movement, with dynamics markings like "p" and "pp". The second system (bars 8-11) shows the tenor vocal line continuing with lyrics: "ser-vant de-part in peace, ac-". The organ accompaniment continues with a crotchet movement, with dynamics markings like "p".

Ex. 3:4.5b, Worcester Magnificat, alto, bars 65-69

mp dolce
He re-mem-b'ring his mer-cy hath hol-pen his ser-vant

A very similar example of frequently changing time signatures is also achieved in the *Salisbury* service, which again, uses dovetailing trebles lines (Ex. 3:4.6). This example shows Howells' first use of combining simple and compound time signatures within his melodies – a feature used somewhere in every evening canticles from this canticle onwards (before this, only two very fleeting examples are seen in the *Worcester* service).

Ex. 3:4.6, Salisbury Magnificat, treble, bars 10-14

10 *mf*
For he hath re-gard-ed the low-ness of his
mf
For he hath regard-ed the low-ness of his

13 *rall.* *pp*
SOP I *dim.*
hand maid-en.
SOP II *dim.* *pp*
hand maid-en.

Even a canticle that comes across as having rather regular phrasing at its start (the *New College* Magnificat), is rather deceptive (Ex. 3:4.7); something that the current director of New College attests to:

New Coll. Canticles [are] fascinating. Without having any evidence I've always thought that the opening page with its triple metre but chords moving in twos, was a sort of doffing of the hat to HK Andrews, the then organist, who was very

keen on Byrd (the chapel was sometimes referred to as the Byrd Sanctuary)... The Gloria also betrays fluctuations between metre and rhythm (as in Byrd etc.)⁵

This is true. The opening choir phrase of the *New College Magnificat*, at first instance, seems strangely regular, ending in a perfect cadence at bar 9. However, the music feels very much as if it is in duple time, as opposed to the triple time in which the piece is written.

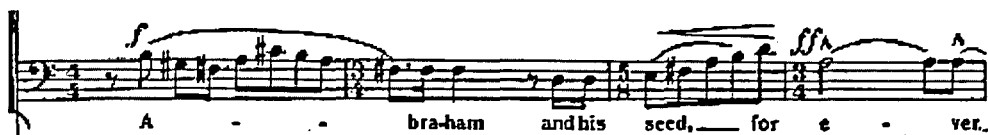
Ex. 3:4.7, New College Magnificat, full choir, bars 1-11

The image shows a musical score for the opening of the *New College Magnificat*, full choir, bars 1-11. The score is in 3/8 time and features Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass, and Lute. The lyrics are: "My soul doth mag-ni-fy the Lord, and my spi-rit". The music is characterized by a duple feel despite the triple time signature. The score includes a tempo marking "ALLEGRO, sempre con moto ♩ = 126" and a dynamic marking "mf". The Lute part is marked "Ped." and "3".

The examples below show the growing complexities of time signatures from the *York* service (Ex. 3:4.8).

⁵ Edward Higginbottom, Director of Music of New College, Oxford to Sophie Cleobury (personal e-mail), 15.09.05.

Ex. 3:4.8. York Magnificat, bass, bars 95-98



The most complex use of time signature is found in the Gloria of the Nunc Dimittis of the *Dallas* service, where it changes 18 times in 26 bars. This only adds to the restless nature of the setting, as any sort of regular beat is impossible to pin down.

Figure 9

Table showing the frequent metre changes in the final bars of the *Dallas* Service Nunc Dimittis Gloria.

Bar No.	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53-56	57	58-64
Time Sig.	7/8	2/4	8/8	3/4	7/8	3/4	2/4	3/4	5/8	7/8	3/4	2/4	7/8	3/4	4/4	3/4	7/8	3/4

Beyond simply changing time signatures, Howells' use of rhythm goes much further.

It goes without saying that all words lend themselves to natural emphases, and in the setting of words to music, the shape of a musical phrase corresponds to the shape of the written one, taking into account all the syllabic accents. Within the discussion, this is illustrated by taking a sample selection of two well-known Magnificats (Stanford in G and Noble in B Minor, Exs. 3:4.9).

Ex. 3:4.9a. Stanford in G Magnificat, treble, bars 5-13

Ex. 3:4.9b, Noble in B Minor Magnificat, treble, bars 3-10

Allegro $\text{♩} = 72$

My soul, my soul doth magnify the Lord, and my
spi-rit hath re-joic-ed in God my Sav-our,

It is plain to see how the words inspire the contour of the musical line. In both settings, there is a particularly regular metre (both happen to be in 4/4), where the first and third beats of the bar are naturally stronger than the second and fourth. In this way, the two settings certainly pick upon the natural rhetoric of the text by emphasising the following syllables:

My soul doth magnify the Lord

And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

Howells also clearly used this natural rhetoric, but he expanded on the usual Anglican practice of one syllable to one note, which is what the settings above did. The originality of his word setting was in its very different construction. He still put emphases on the natural speech rhythms (**soul, magnify, Lord, rejoiced**), but would execute them differently, by ensuring that not all of his melodies began or ended on the first beats of bars or on anacruces as so many other settings had. This was his innovative way of creating metrical ambiguity (or a sense of timelessness) within his melodic lines, whilst still conveying the meaning of the text successfully.

This is best shown in the opening melody to the *Gloucester* service Magnificat (Ex. 3:4.10). From a brief glance, Howells puts emphasis on all the obvious words ('soul',

'magnify', 'lord' and 'rejoiced', 'God', 'he' and so on), which are achieved by a jump of a fifth, a melisma, an auxiliary note, a melisma, highest note of the phrase and finally, a jump of a fifth.

Ex. 3:4.10, Gloucester Magnificat, treble, bars 1-12

My soul doth mag - - - ni - fy the

Lord, and my spi - rit hath re - joiced in

God my Sa - viour. For he hath re - gard - ed

the low - li - ness of his hand - maid - en.

Developing this point further, it is interesting to note that nearly all of the words above are in fact sounded on a weak beat of the bar. For example, 'soul' is sounded on the third and final beat of the first bar. In triple time, the third beat of the bar is considered the most weak. In bar two, 'mag-' and '-fy' are sounded on the second and fourth (conventionally weak) beats of a 4/2 bar, and so on. Even in bar three, where 'Lord' is sounded on the first beat, Howells ensures that rhythmic impetus is taken away by using an accented passing note.

As one further example on this, it is worth looking at the opening treble phrase of the *Collegium Regale* Magnificat (refer back to Ex. 3:4.1). In a simple comparison with the opening treble solo line of Stanford in G, the essence of Howells' distinctive style becomes more apparent. It seems that Howells often exaggerated natural speech rhythms in order to give them more emphasis. The opening treble line to Stanford in

G is very regular not only in terms of straight metre (a steadfast 4/4), but also values of notes. This opening line is made up of crotchets and minims, which are occasionally dotted. The rhythm of *Collegium Regale* has an entirely different approach. The shortest note used is a semiquaver, and the longest is a crotchet tied to a semibreve. By using a wider range of note lengths here, Howells expands his palette for word setting. With the runs of quavers, he naturally emphasises the words 'magnify' and 'spirit', and by his use of semibreve, he emphasises the strength of 'Lord'.

Howells' intelligent use of word setting was one particular way in which he gave his evening canticles such superiority and individuality. He was not bound by regular metre, and found a number of different ways in which to exaggerate natural speech patterns.

One of the ways in which Howells exaggerated the natural speech patterns was his employment of melismas, which was extensive. Picking canticles at random, it will be seen that he had preference for using melismas on very specific words, enhancing their meaning. In order to illustrate this point, see the examples below, which show how the word 'rejoiced' from a selection of Howells' evening Magnificats are composed (Exs. 3:4.11). Not only does Howells use melismas to emphasise the accents in these words, but in every single example, the contour of the music rises, further enhancing the meaning of the text.

Ex. 3:4. 11a. St Peter's

mag - ni - fy the Lord, and my spi - rit hath re - joiced

mag - ni - fy the Lord, and my spi - rit hath re - joiced

mag - ni - fy the Lord, and my spi - rit hath re - joiced

mag - ni - fy the Lord, and my spi - rit hath re - joiced

Ex. 3:4. 11b. Winchester

and my spirit hath re - joiced in God

Ex. 3:4. 11c. St Augustine's

hath re - joic'd in God

hath re - joic'd in God

hath re - joic'd in God

hath re - joic'd in

Ex. 3:4. 11d. Magdalen

Lord, and my spi - rit hath re - joic'd

Ex. 3:4. 11e, York

re - joiced in

re - joiced in

re - joiced in

re - joiced in

Howells' melismas were used to achieve a sense of flow in his music. By constantly making sure the music was moving somewhere, Howells kept up great momentum. This method was a frequent occurrence in Howells' canticles. The example below comes from the B Minor Magnificats (Ex. 3:4.12). The melismas on 'face' and 'all' use lower auxiliary notes and passing notes to formulate the melismas. Imagine this passage with just the circled notes (i.e. one note per syllable) and it would not be half as interesting. Similar examples to these can be found in all of Howells' evening canticles, demonstrating its importance to Howells' distinctive style.

Ex. 3:4.12. B Minor Nunc Dimittis, treble, bars 24-26

face of all peo-ple; -

face of all peo-ple; -

face of all peo-ple; -

face of all peo-ple; -

Whilst many of Howells' melodies closely resemble plainchant, it is also worth giving some attention to the stylistic development of his melodies. Were they implemented differently between 1920 and 1975, and if so, how?

For the majority of Howells' early canticles, the music remained very much in the same key or mode. If there were modulations, their use was subtle (in that a lot of the chromaticism was contained in the organ part), and any chromaticism in the choir lines was effectively composed so that the singer had little difficulty. In the later canticles, chromaticism becomes more apparent in the vocal lines. This caused a greater number of awkward intervals.

Apart from the occasional chromatic slide (normally in the organ part), it is interesting to note that a particular feature seen in the opening five verses of each Magnificat up to and including the *Salisbury* service is their lack of chromaticism. Tiny instances of chromaticism occurred, for example, in the organ part of the *Worcester* service (bars 4 and 7-11), but these are so inconsequential not to warrant fuller discussion. In the B Minor and *St Peter's* services, a little more chromaticism was introduced to the organ parts, but again, the vocal lines are virtually unaffected. All these canticles keep very simple vocal lines, which are entirely singable.

The *Winchester* service can be seen as the watershed canticle with regards to vocal chromaticism. It is the first canticle that shows not only an ambiguous key at its start, but has a wider usage of chromatics in both organ and vocal parts, and some of the vocal lines are noticeably more complex (Ex. 3:4.13).

Ex. 3:4.13, Winchester Magnificat, tenor, bars 97-99

as he pro - - mised_ our fore-fa - thers,

The examples below are from the *Chichester*, *St Augustine's*, *York* and *Dallas* services. All of these examples show Howells' preference for including intervals such as the augmented fourth within his vocal lines, which are harder for singers to pitch (Exs. 3:4.14). The *Chichester* service makes it its absolute intention to sound severe – the first treble purposely moving away from the unison A in bar 6.

Ex. 3:4.14a, Chichester Magnificat, tenor, bars 23-28

- hold, from hence-forth all_ ge - ne - ra - - tions shall call me

Ex. 3:4.14b, St Augustine's Magnificat, treble solo, bars 46-52

SOPRANO SOLO (for 2 or 3 voices)

And his wor - cy is_ on_ them that fear him_ through - out_ all_ ge - ne - ra - tions.

rit *subito animato* *f* - *ss*

Ex. 3:4.14c, York Magnificat, treble, bars 66-69

and hath_ ex - all - ed_ the hum - - ble and

Chromaticism and awkward vocal lines are extremely noticeable in the *Winchester*, *Chichester* and *York* services, and in parts of the *St Augustine's* service, as the

examples above show. However, the opening treble melodies of the *Hereford* service (and to some extent the *Magdalen* service) are noticeably more diatonic. Any additional accidentals in the vocal lines are supported by the organ part, and nearly all of the intervals are very singable (Ex. 3:4.15). This is the same much of the way through the whole canticle. Was Howells consciously returning to an earlier style, knowing the popularity of his middle period settings? This will be discussed towards the end of the Chapter.

Ex. 3:4.15, Hereford Magnificat, treble and organ, bars 5-13

5

poco

mag - ni - fy the Lord, and my spi - rit hath re - joic' d in God my -

10

mf

Sa - viour. For he hath re - gard - ed the low - li - ness of his

p espress. *mf* *ba.*

This section has shown how melody was of integral importance to the makeup of Howells' canticles. There is a clear stylistic trend through all of his settings – his use of irregular metre (through changing time signatures and the constant displacing of a regular metre), his frequent use of melismas and long melodies, all of which strongly adhered to that of plainchant. These melodies certainly matured in style between 1918

and 1975, with a greater use of chromaticism becoming evident in later settings, especially in the vocal lines. Further discussion of Howells' increasing fondness for harsher sonorities was seen in **Section 3:3**, as he showed growing partiality for the clashing of vocal parts. Further additions to this discussion are seen in **Section 3:6**, which examines Howells particular use of harmony.

3:5. Structure, Thematic and Motivic Use

In his treatise on *Musical Composition*, Howells' teacher Charles Stanford likened the form of a piece of music to 'the skeleton; the bones... regulate the position of the flesh... producing a good or bad figure according as their proportions are good or bad.'¹ He went on to describe form also in terms of a painting. 'The form is the composition upon his canvas... [the picture's] shape... has to be symmetrical in order to satisfy the eye.'² Within Stanford's book, Hubert Parry's views on structure are also quoted:

[Form is] the means by which unity and proportion are arrived at by the relative distribution of keys and harmonic bases on the one hand, and of subjects or figures or melodies on the other.³

Howells showed an equal appreciation of form. Within his Magnificats, he showed a preference for ternary form, which harks back directly to his musical education. Stanford was the first composer to set the words of the Magnificat in this way (as was seen in **Chapter two**). Although most of Howells' 20 settings used this form, they were all originally constructed, so no canticle was created in exactly the same way. From key scheme to motivic and thematic references and even different vocal textures for different parts of the text, each of Howells' Magnificats was highly structured, yet unique.

¹ Stanford, *Musical Composition*, 74.

² *Ibid*, 75.

³ *Ibid*, 74-5.

This section of Chapter three shows how Howells successfully achieved form within the majority of his Magnificat settings. It goes on to consider how he achieved unity between the Magnificats and Nunc Dimittises, which often came down to links within the Glorias.

* * * * *

Structuring the text of the Magnificat in ternary form only seemed only natural as the words make it an obvious choice.⁴ The mood of the text encompasses an obvious change in the central section (from 'he hath showed strength with his arm'). These words lend themselves to a heavier, more energetic composition. A reprise of the opening mood at the words 'he remembering his mercy' is also observable, bringing the whole canticle back together. This point in the text, or alternatively the Gloria, are the obvious points for a restatement of musical material or key signature.

It is significant to see that Howells also considered ternary form architecturally, that he had in his mind not just a well-proportioned piece of music, but that he had a strong architectural image with which to focus his mind.

Figure 10
Howells on Ternary Form⁵

<u>Music's power of architectural imitation.</u>	
A – B – A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the building with like wings - the balanced pictures on wall - the mantelshelf

⁴ See Appendix C for words of the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis.

⁵ Howells in 'music's power of architectural imitation' [undated], RCM, Howells Archive, Box C.

The image of 'balanced pictures on wall' could simply refer to the stability of perpendicular lines of a frame against a wall. Similarly, the 'mantelshelf' idea provides an image of a perfectly balanced shelf held up each side by two pillars with symmetrically, perhaps with ornaments to each side and a clock in the centre. With reference to church composition however, it is intriguing to see how Howells drew parallels with religious buildings. He clearly saw the crucifix design of a cathedral, 'with like wings' as a balanced structure, and attempted whole-heartedly to show this in his music by using ternary form, an A-B-A structure.

Not only are Howells' canticles carefully wrought in terms of their form, but also, his most famed choral piece, *Hymnus Paradisi* shows similar construction. Joan Chissell, writing for *The Listener* in 1952, claimed that the whole piece was shaped like an arch and that, within this, each individual movement was a 'shapely smaller arch itself.'⁶ An arch is yet another image of balance and proportion, more often than not appearing in churches. It seems therefore that symmetrical, religious symbols (like the arch or crucifix) were of profound importance to Howells' compositional mind. An examination of the forms of Howells' Magnificat settings demonstrates his interest in this device.

All of Howells' Magnificats are in some sort of ternary form. The four pre-1945 settings are bound by ternary form mainly due to the reintroduction of the opening key at the Gloria, nothing else. Due to a lack of thematic use, these settings do not arguably achieve the profound sense of fulfilment of many of Howells' later settings. They are not as successful from the point of view of the listener, as they lack

⁶ Chissell, J., 'Herbert Howells and his music' in *The Listener*, xlviii, no. 1227, Sept 1952, 397.

perceptible themes that so many of the later settings use in order to strengthen their structures.

Although all of Howells' Magnificats use ternary form to some extent, the trend stops here. Each Magnificat employs the restatement of the 'A' section but in very different ways, which contributes to the unique quality of each canticle that Howells was attempting to achieve. The table below discusses in further detail how Howells achieved these restatements, whether it be through key signature, melodic material or even vocal textures, or combination of two or more of these features.

Figure 11

Method by which Howells achieved restatements in his Magnificats

Service in G	Opening key returns at the Gloria.
Service in E flat for Unison voices	Opening key returns at the Gloria.
Service in E for men's voices	Opening key returns at the Gloria.
Service in D for men's voices	Opening key returns at the Gloria.
Collegium Regale	Not only does the opening key return at verse 9, the same melodic material is used (albeit slightly differently in order to incorporate new words) as well as the same vocal texture of a single treble line.
Gloucester Cathedral	This setting is hugely motivic, and the structure of it is very much carried by the heavy use of the opening motif, which is repeated at verse 9 <i>and</i> at the Gloria. The opening key signature however, returns at the beginning of the Gloria, which gives it greater structural clarity at this point as opposed to verse 9.
New College Oxford	The opening melody is repeated at verse 8 in the treble line and at verse 9 in the tenor and bass lines. Restatement of the opening key comes at 'Father' of the Gloria, after which the melody from the opening appears again, binding the canticle more obviously together.
Worcester Cathedral	Beginning in the Aeolian mode on A, the Magnificat ends in A major (a more major form of the opening key, but nonetheless, a related key). This key arrives at the start of the Gloria, where the organ arabesques are reminiscent of the opening to the setting.

St Paul's Cathedral	By its very clear thematic use, the opening motif of a minor third is repeated heavily in the organ, followed by the choir at the start of the Gloria. A return to the home key of B flat at this point reaffirms the return of the initial material.
B Minor	Similarly to the St Paul's service, the opening organ interlude and choir entry are repeated at the Gloria, in the opening key.
St Peter's Westminster	The home key returns at the Gloria. The melody employed at this point is taken from the treble line at verse 3 of the Magnificat (Exs. 3:5.1).
St John's Cambridge	A very obvious restatement of the opening key and unison melodic material is seen at the start of the Gloria.
Sarum (Salisbury Cathedral)	Opening melodic material and the same vocal texture (of two interweaving treble lines) returns at verse 9, where the opening key also comes back.
Winchester Cathedral	The opening treble melody is repeated in unison at the Gloria.
Chichester Cathedral	The opening key is Aeolian on A, and A major arrives at verse 9, hinting at, as in the <i>Worcester</i> service, a return to the tonic (but in the major version). Tempo 1 returns at the start of the Gloria, but the material at this instant bears no relation to material gone before. Therefore, although hinting twice at ternary form, this setting is not as structurally sound due to its lack of thematic material.
St Augustine's Edgbaston	The opening key signature returns at the Gloria. In addition to this, the opening three notes of the organ introduction are seen in the repeat of the word 'Glory'. Motivic recognition of the opening is therefore apparent, enhancing the structural clarity of the piece.
Hereford Cathedral	The treble solo at verse 9 (which uses the words from verses 1 and 2) is clearly taken from the opening treble melody. The home key, however, returns at the Gloria.
Magdalen College Oxford	The restatement is clear at the start of the Gloria. Tempo 1 and the key signature reappear, as does a very similar introduction on the organ. The vocal lines are somewhat different, but have some similarities.
York Minster	The highly recognisable organ motif (on the tuba stop) returns at the start of the Gloria in exactly the same key as its initial sounding at the start of the Magnificat.
St Luke's, Dallas	The opening melody returns at verse 9 where, similarly to the <i>Hereford</i> service, the treble solo uses the words and a very similar melody to the opening one.

Examples 3:5.1, St Peter's Magnificat

a) treble, bars 16-19

16

For be - hold from hence - forth

b) treble, bars 92-94

92

Fa - ther, and to the Son, and to the

All of Howells' Magnificat settings provide excellent examples of ternary form. In the majority of cases, the restatement is clear, giving the settings their necessary proportion and symmetry.

Unlike his settings of the Magnificats, Howells' Nunc Dimittises are entirely through-composed. The words do not lend themselves as easily to a formal structure like ternary form, so instead, Howells tended to build towards strong musical climaxes towards the end of the text at 'to be a *light* to lighten the gentiles, and to be the *glory* of thy people Israel.' How Howells achieved these climaxes in the Nunc Dimittises is found in **Section 3:8** on modes, but within the current discussion on structure, it is necessary to discuss how Howells created unity between his Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis settings – something of integral importance to their combined structure and unity.

In the majority of cases, Howells achieved this by using the same (or slightly altered) Gloria for both. In many cases, the material from the Gloria was taken from the opening theme of the Magnificat (as seen above), which further increased the structural significance. It will be seen that Howells rarely used similar thematic devices between his Magnificats and Nunc Dimittises, so the cohesive effect of the Gloria was most important in unifying the settings. The table below details this.

Figure 12

Construction of Howells' Glorias, showing links between each Magnificat and its respective Nunc Dimittis.

Canticle	Relationship of Magnificat Gloria to Nunc Dimittis Gloria
Service in G	Entirely different.
Service in E flat for Unison voices	Entirely different.
Service in E for men's voices	Entirely different.
Service in D for men's voices	Entirely different.
Collegium Regale	Exactly the same.
Gloucester Cathedral	Both Glorias are based on the same theme (which pervades the whole Magnificat), but much of the Nunc Dimittis Gloria is in unison, taking its melody from the treble line in the Magnificat Gloria. They are exactly the same at 'as it was in the beginning', but unison is resumed at 'is now and ever shall be' in the Nunc Dimittis. The melismatic treble 'Amen' is the same in both settings apart from one difference in the penultimate note of the melisma (which uses A sharp in the Magnificat and A natural in the Nunc Dimittis), showing Howells' fondness for chromatic alterations in the third of a chord).
New College Oxford	Exactly the same from 'Father'. The approach to this is similar, but differences occur in the organ part, and note lengths are twice as long in the Nunc Dimittis Gloria. The Gloria melody is derived from the opening material of the Magnificat.
Worcester Cathedral	Exactly the same.
St Paul's Cathedral	Based the opening theme to the Magnificat. This theme is particularly identifiable with its minor third. The Nunc Dimittis Gloria begins a fifth lower (or fourth higher) than its Magnificat counterpart. They are exactly the same from 'as it was in the beginning'.
B Minor	Exactly the same.
St Peter's Westminster	Exactly the same.
St John's Cambridge	The Magnificat Gloria is a clear restatement of the opening theme of the Magnificat. The Nunc Dimittis Gloria is clearly related to this theme (Exs. 3:5.1).
Sarum (Salisbury Cathedral)	Both Glorias open very differently, but from 'as it was...', melodic similarities are apparent. The Nunc Dimittis Gloria makes use of the augmented fourth interval, creating a slightly darker colour. They are exactly the same from 'world without end...'
Winchester Cathedral	The openings to both Glorias are very different. They are exactly the same from 'as it was in the beginning...', although the final four bars differ as the vocal texture in the Magnificat is thicker, and the Magnificat ends on an A major chord, whereas the Nunc Dimittis ends on a C major chord.

Chichester Cathedral	Both Glorias are obviously based on the same theme, but the Nunc Dimittis uses much of this in unison. The settings are exactly the same from 'is now...'
St Augustine's Edgbaston	Both Glorias are the same, until '...end. Amen', and based on a small motif from the beginning of the Magnificat. Although different in the final bars, both Glorias employ a chord of F sharp moving to G sharp, but the chord are executed differently – the Magnificat ends high in the tessituras of all vocal parts, whereas the Nunc Dimittis ends on a unison G sharp, relatively low in the treble and tenor lines.
Hereford Cathedral	The Gloria of the Nunc Dimittis (apart from very minor differences between the openings and slight differences in the organ part) is exactly the same as the Magnificat Gloria but written with halved note values. Performance speeds, however, dictate that they are of a rather similar tempo in execution. The Magnificat Gloria begins with minim equalling 50, whilst the whole Nunc Dimittis (and presumably the Gloria, as there is no contradiction)
Magdalen College Oxford	Both are based on a similar theme, which is derived from the Magnificat's opening treble melody. The Glorias are exactly the same from 'as it was...'
York Minster	Both are based on a similar theme, which is derived from the Magnificat's opening treble melody. The Glorias are exactly the same from 'as it was...'
St Luke's, Dallas	Both Glorias open very differently, although they are exactly the same from 'as it was...'

Exs. 3:5.2, St. John's service

a) Magnificat, unison melody, bars 91-94

91 *a tempo : vivo*

Glo - - - ry be to the Fa - ther,

b) Nunc Dimittis, unison melody, bars 41-44

con moto

Glo - - - ry be to the Fa - ther, and to the Son,

Glo - - - ry be to the Fa - ther, and to the Son,

Glo - - - ry be to the Fa - ther, and to the Son,

Glo - - - ry be to the Fa - ther, and to the Son,

Before full conclusions are drawn as to the successful construction of Howells' evening canticles, one further aspect needs to be looked at. So far, it has been seen that Howells' Magnificats were all based around ternary form – some more obviously than others. Nearly all of his evening canticles start and end in closely related keys (the majority begin in a minor mode and end in the equivalent major key), which, following Stanford's teachings, provide the 'skeleton', or outline of the piece of music. However, the more successfully structured canticles are those that combined the skeletal key scheme with a use of similar themes between Magnificat, Nunc Dimittis and their respective Glorias.

As seen above, much of the structure of Howells' canticles came down to his employment of themes. In addition to this, he also employed many smaller motifs in his evening canticles, but again, as with the detailed structure of them, no one canticle was the same. His use of thematic material and smaller motifs was deployed on a number of different perceptible levels. Some canticles were structured heavily around a specific theme, and other canticles used certain motifs, which were structurally less significant, but simply were perceptible from the listener's point of view.

Although many of Howells' canticles are linked by common themes (more detail is provided below), the *Gloucester* service is especially noted for its motivic coherence, which is more intensive than in any other of his settings. The motif in question is made up of a leap of a fifth and three ascending notes in the quaver pattern (Ex. 3:5.3).

Ex. 3:5.3, the Gloucester motif as in bars 1-2



The three quaver notes are built on scale degrees five, six and seven. This allows the motif great potential for development, because in the use of modes (as well as major and minor scales), scale degrees 6 and 7 are the two that are most constantly changed; as **Figure 13** below shows:

Figure 13

Traditional major and minor scales, highlighting differences between scale degrees 6 and 7 (the scales all begin on F sharp so comparisons can be made more easily).

Scale Degree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Major	F#	G#	A#	B	C#	D#	E#	F#
Harmonic Minor	F#	G#	A	B	C#	D	E#	F#
Ascending Melodic Minor	F#	G#	A	B	C#	D#	E#	F#
Descending Melodic Minor (But written as if ascending here to aid comparison)	F#	G#	A	B	C#	D	E	F#

This is used similarly within modal writing too, as **Figure 14** illustrates.

Figure 14

The 7 authentic modes showing the differences between scale degrees 6 and 7. Again, the modes have all been transposed to begin on F sharp so comparison is easier.

Scale Degree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Dorian	F#	G#	A	B	C#	D#	E	F#
Phrygian	F#	G	A	B	C#	D	E	F#
Lydian	F#	G#	A#	B#	C#	D#	E#	F#
Mixolydian	F#	G#	A#	B	C#	D#	E	F#
Aeolian	F#	G#	A	B	C#	D	E	F#
Locrian	F#	G	A	B	C	D	E	F#
Ionian	F#	G#	A#	B	C#	D#	E#	F#

With this detail in mind, Howells had three variations of the opening motif of the *Gloucester Magnificat* at his disposal (C#-D#-E, C#D-E and C#D#-E#).

Thus far, the development of the *Gloucester* motif has been considered melodically. However, when this motif is also put in its harmonic context, another lot of variations become possible. As illustrated above, the Dorian and Mixolydian modes both raise the sixth and flatten the seventh. How then did Howells differentiate the motif in these different modes because it is evident in the *Gloucester* Magnificat? The answer comes down to the harmony surrounding the motif at any given point.

Referring back to **Figure 14** above, the sole difference between the Dorian and Mixolydian modes is that the Dorian contains a minor third from the tonic, and the Mixolydian, a major third. So, although the motifs in bars 32 and 45 are made up of the same melodic spacings, the motifs are harmonically different.

The example in bar 45, based around a tonic of C, uses E flat in the accompaniment, making its mode Dorian (**Ex. 3:5.4**).

Ex. 3:5.4, Gloucester Magnificat, organ, bar 44-6

It is subtle differences such as these that enabled Howells to use the motif in such a skilful way. The bare essentials of the motif remain clear for all to hear, but the fact that he modifies it melodically as well as harmonically gives the canticle much more depth and awards the motif greater significance.

Figure 15

Table identifying Howells' use of the *Gloucester* motif in the Magnificat:

Bar number	Voice	Mode
2	Treble	Aeolian
8-10	Treble	Mixolydian
32	Organ	Mixolydian
40	Tenor	Aeolian
45	Organ	Dorian
63	Tenor	Dorian
67	Tenor	Mixolydian
70	Bass	Dorian
72	Treble	Dorian
78	Organ	Aeolian
85-6	Treble / Tenor	Aeolian
85-6	Alto	Aeolian
86-7	Bass	ends like Lydian, although C natural in organ confuses the mode somewhat
89	Bass	Lydian
97	Tenor	Lydian
104	Tenor	Dorian
105	Alto	Dorian
105	Bass	Dorian
112-3	Organ	Lydian

As the table above shows, Howells used all three permutations of the *Gloucester* motif in his Magnificat. What is important to notice is that he did not simply make just modal alterations, he made rhythmic changes to the motif too, which brings more significance to the motif each time it is sounded.

It is noticeable that the motif is not used during the Nunc Dimittis text whatsoever, it is simply the similar Glorias (which do use the motif) which bind the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittises together. The motif was used so intensely in the Magnificat, that perhaps Howells thought it better to dispense with it in the Nunc Dimittis – the Gloria only serving to bring together the settings at the end.

The *Gloucester* Magnificat provides Howells' most obvious use of a motif, which spread through the setting. Other settings also had observable motifs, but none

pervaded settings so much as the *Gloucester* service. The table below details motivic reference in Howells' other evening canticles, with selected illustrations.

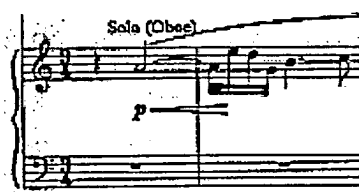
Figure 16

Howells' employment of motivic reference in his evening canticles

Service in G	No observable motifs or thematic reference.
Service in E flat for Unison voices	No observable motifs or thematic reference.
Service in E for men's voices	Very slight motivic reference used. Quaver twist in vocal line of bar 3 is observed again in bar 6 and in bar 26.
Service in D for men's voices	No observable motifs or thematic reference.
Collegium Regale	Theme from verse 1 is used at verse 6 (slightly altered) and again at verse 9, providing further structural precision. Also notice the organ introduction to the Magnificat is used in Howells' Communion Service for the same building.
Gloucester Cathedral	See discussion above.
New College Oxford	Verse 1 theme provides structural clarity at verses 8, 9, and the Gloria.
Worcester Cathedral	Arabesque-like motif first heard in the opening to the Magnificat on the organ. It is used many times (all modified) throughout the Magnificat and Gloria. The original motif includes the key note and its flattened seventh, bringing a particularly modal feel to the canticle and, when played on the organ, the oboe stop is specified, adding further to its English pastoral feel. Modifications of the motif include changing intervals to incorporate augmented fourths and leaps of sevenths, whilst remaining recognisable as the <i>Worcester</i> motif. This shows influence from Brahms and his ideas on "developing variation" (Exs. 3:5.5)

Ex 3:5.5, Worcester Magnificat

a) organ, bars 1-2



b) organ, bars 6-8

c) organ, bars 10-11

d) organ, bars 29-32

St Paul's Cathedral	The heaviness of the opening theme in unison with its strong minor connotations, makes it particularly strong structurally. When it repeats in the organ at the start of the Gloria, there is no doubting that the music is recapitulating. The minor third motif within the main theme is exploited heavily throughout, giving this canticle its own very particular flavour. See 'for he hath' (unison choir), 'for behold' (treble), 'and holy' (treble), 'and his mercy' (tenor), 'he hath shewed' (unison choir), 'he hath scattered' (bass), 'and the rich' (alto then treble) etc.
B Minor	Opening theme contains a very recognisable quaver motif, which is seen throughout the Magnificat.
St Peter's Westminster	Very chromatically-based setting. The opening theme appears at various points, often slightly altered.
St John's Cambridge	This setting of Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis is one of the only evening canticles of Howells' to use themes between Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis. He did not simply unify them by similar Glorias. The motif at bar 6 of the Nunc Dimittis is in fact the opening choir melody of the Magnificat (Exs. 3:5:6).
Sarum (Salisbury Cathedral)	Triplet motif which incorporates a third adds to the rather more distressing sentiment of this canticle. Initially, the motif more often than not incorporates a minor third, but finally uses a major third on 'exalted' which enhances the climax (Exs. 3:5:7).
Winchester Cathedral.	Similar triplet figure (using a third) to the <i>Salisbury</i> service used, but it would be wrong to suggest that these separate canticles are linked purposely in any way. The triplet idea is taken into the Nunc Dimittis, where the interval of a third is changed to a second (Exs. 3:5:8).
Chichester Cathedral	No obvious themes or motifs, but canticle very much characterised by prevalence of clashing notes, especially between treble parts.
St Augustine's Edgbaston	No obvious thematic reference, however, the descent of a fourth as seen in the organ introduction to the Magnificat is used at certain points, at 'and his mercy' (treble solo), 'he remembering' (treble), 'glory' (unison), 'as it was' (treble).

Hereford Cathedral	The organ introduction to the Magnificat is used at various instances, and the treble solo reuses material from verse 1.
Magdalen College Oxford	The organ introduction is the most aurally perceptible motif in this setting, which recurs at certain points throughout the Magnificat.
York Minster	York Minster's organ is famed for its tuba stop, so Howells composed a more fanfare-esque motif for this service, incorporating a major third chord, rather than a melodic motif. As with the <i>St John's</i> and <i>Winchester</i> services, it is a unifying ingredient of both the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Exs. 3:5.18).
St Luke's, Dallas	Opening theme is brought back in the treble solo at verse 9. Other than this, very little thematic reference.

Ex. 3:5.6, St John's service

a) Magnificat, organ, bars 1-6

Sempre con moto : leggiero

ORGAN

Man.

b) Nunc Dimittis, organ, bars 1-6

Teneramente, quasi lento

ORGAN

Man. Ped.

Ex. 3:5.7, Salisbury Magnificat

a) treble, bar 26

26 SOPRANO *f*

For he that is might-y hath mag-ni-fied me,

b) treble, bars 36-37

16

He hath showed strength

c) treble, bars 48-52

48
 — from their seat, and hath ex - alt - - - ed,

Ex. 3:5.8, Winchester servicea) Magnificat, treble, bars 11-16

11
mp
 and my spirit hath re - joiced in God

b) Magnificat, full choir, bar 114-115

114
 — glo - - - ry be to the
 — glo - - - ry be to the
 — glo - - - ry be to the
 — glo - - - ry be to the

c) Nunc Dimittis, treble, bars 9-12

ser - - - vant de - part in peace,

d) Nunc Dimittis, full choir, bar 36-39

accel. a tempo, vigoroso ♩ = 72

36

- - ra - el. Glo - - - ry be to the Fa - ther, _____

- - ra - el. Glo - - - ry be to the Fa - ther, _____

- - ra - el. Glo - - - ry be to the Fa - ther, _____

- - ra - el. Glo - - - ry be to the Fa - ther, _____

Howells' varied approaches to thematic and motivic coherence gave every single set of canticles its own sense of structure and very specific personality. Howells never had a formula by which he structured his canticles. Whilst all the Magnificats are in ternary form, every single one is managed in a different way. Thematic and motivic references are employed at different levels within each canticle, awarding some further structural clarity (for instance, the theme used in *New College* or *St Peter's* services).

Many canticles have small motifs which immediately become recognisable motto themes of particular settings; for instance, the organ arabesques in the *Worcester* service, the heavy use of the minor third in the *St Paul's* service, or the triplet figure used in the *Salisbury* service chiefly, and a slightly altered melodic form of it in the *Winchester* service.

The interesting issue to realise here is that the motto themes have differing structural importance to the canticles. Some help provide the canticles with further clarity – the *Worcester* motto is placed at particularly strategic points, most notably at the beginning of the Gloria, adding to the sense of recapitulation. The triplet figure in the *Salisbury* service however, does not help achieve such structural unity, its only purpose being to enhance specific words within the text.

Howells' evening canticles showed innovative use of structure. Whilst they all have very strong 'skeleton[s]', much of the 'flesh' within the canticles was attained very differently, ensuring their individuality.

* * * * *

As a final part of the analysis of Howells' thematic use in his evening canticles, discussion now turns briefly to Paul Hughes' MA thesis on Howells' post-1945 canticles. Hughes had a theory that '...one motif in particular...dominated [Howells'] melodic thinking...'⁷ Hughes showed in detail how the *Collegium Regale* was 'built around and united by a three note melodic cell'⁸, and went on to argue that this cell is used and developed not only in the *Collegium Regale*, but also the *St Paul's* and a number of other services. Although Hughes' claims are justified (by way of many musical examples), there are several questionable assertions which somewhat devalue his argument.

⁷ Hughes, P., *The Post-1940 Canticle Settings of Herbert Howells* (diss., University of Wales, Aberystwyth, 1983), 145.

⁸ *Ibid*, 108.

Ex. 3:5.9, the "germ cell"

For example, he insisted that the "germ cell" (Ex. 3:5.9) was part of the underlying pattern of the opening treble line of the *Collegium Regale* (Ex. 3:5.10).

Ex. 3:5.10

He shows the principal notes as being the G, B flat and C, which are the three notes of the "germ cell". In looking at his example however, the C cannot be held up as part of the "germ cell", as it is merely the first note of a new verse. G and B flat dominate the first phrase, whereas C and E flat dominate the second. Hughes' example totally ignores the structural significance of the E flat in the second phrase in order to show his "germ cell".

The idea that the treble's scalic ascent in verse 6a stretches a major sixth, and when turned round, makes a minor third, is very fragile evidence of the alleged "germ cell" (Ex. 3:5.11).

Ex. 3:5.11

Hughes even went on to claim that the "germ cell" was hidden vertically amongst different voice parts (Ex. 3:5.12):

Ex. 3:5.12

Tenor Solo *mp*
For mine eyes have

Soprano *pp*
For mine eyes

He also went as far as to show Howells' use of the "germ cell" in retrograde, which brings his analysis closer to how one would dissect Schoenberg's music (Ex. 3:5.13):

Ex. 3:5.13

Dissections of these sorts are not necessary in Howells' canticles. It seems he was a firm believer of composing music that was aurally understandable and easily perceptible to all (see above at how Howells structured his canticles so successfully). Schoenberg used tone rows and fragments of tone rows (in retrograde and inversion) as a way of structuring his music, but never were these fragments ever perceptible to the listener. It is doubtful that Howells used his themes in this way either. A collection of notes from his 1937 lecture series '*Music and the Ordinary Listener: The modern problem*' said just this:

The modern problem is, in fact, less the problem of what is being *composed*, than the problem of what is being *heard*. And further, it is less a question of what is being heard than the degree of *perception* in our listening. Strange sounds have initial hostility... if atonalism repels, it is less because the

sound of it is hard to accept, than because the *meaning* of it is hard to find.⁹

It is possible to deduce from this that Howells therefore wanted the meaning of his music to be easily understood. He did not want anything hidden in his music, so the assertion that he had used devices such as retrograde and inversion on his motifs stands little ground.

Although Hughes gave a wide array of examples of the so-called “germ cell”, it is a very tenuous theory, especially, as Hughes even puts in his thesis, that ‘when asked if [Howells] used the minor third in his work so often on purpose, [he] is said to have replied that he had never noticed!’¹⁰ This does not, as Hughes claims, mean that ‘...the [germ cell is] subconscious [and] a demonstration of the fact that Howells has a highly ordered mind...’¹¹

This argument does not dispute the fact that a great many of Howells’ melodies do show a preference for the intervals contained within Hughes’ “germ cell”, especially the minor third. However, rather than labelling it a motif, a far more plausible explanation is that Howells’ melodies simply showed a preference for plainchant, or folk song? Plainsong and folk song are widespread with neighbouring notes and thirds (being exactly what Hughes’ germ cell is constructed of), and this explanation surely makes far more sense than justifying Howells’ melodic use by a cell that he admitted

⁹ Howells, ‘Music and the Ordinary listener’ – transcripts of lecture notes [19.03.37], RCM, Howells Archive, Box B. Although for a non-specific audience, these lecture notes certainly give clues as to Howells’ opinions on the atonal music coming from his German contemporaries.

¹⁰ Hughes, *The Post-1940 Canticle Settings of Herbert Howells*, 127.

¹¹ *Ibid*, 127.

to have never actually noticed. The collection of examples below shows melodic similarities between folk song and plainchant, and Hughes' germ cell¹² (Ex. 3:5.14)

Ex. 3:5.14¹³



In conclusion therefore, the structure of Howells' evening canticles is evidently something about which he had given a lot of thought. Every setting had some sort of structural cohesion, be it key scheme or motivic unity. Howells managed to retain great individuality by treating every canticle's structure differently to the next. There is certainly no predictability, and this creates a great sense of spontaneity, which awards the canticles their overall success.

¹² Howells did not use folksong in his canticles, but as far as use of intervals goes, folksong and plainchant have a number of similarities. Further detail of this, and Howells' use of plainchant in his melodies was in the Section 3:4 of this chapter.

¹³ Kimmel, W., 'Vaughan Williams' Melodic Style' in *Musical Quarterly* 27, 1941, 499.

3:6. Harmony

One of the most obvious features displayed in the post-1945 evening canticles was Howells' urge to move away from the predictable, harmonically driven settings that Stanford and his contemporaries produced. The idea of slowing down harmonic pace was unequivocally central to Howells' musical style, and the way in which he carried this out was innovatory. He did it in a number of ways. The first method looked at is the way in which he often suspended the choir at the ends of verses, creating a feeling of stasis. Another method was his weighty employment of suspensions and appoggiaturas, and also his use of certain chromatic chords.

Howells had particular fondness for using chords in inversion, which avoided strong root position chords, the use of which would further enhance harmonic clarity. Further to this, he employed heavily chromatic chords, often adding seventh, ninth, eleventh and thirteenth degrees. With heavy use of chromaticism such as this, it often became difficult to analyse the harmony, as chords would be dissected in a number of different ways.

* * * * *

Use of seventh chords (often in first and third inversions) was widespread in Howells' first set of evening canticles. Many were dissolved simply by way of suspension and resolution. These suspensions and resolutions were implemented very evenly, by the regular use of minims, which gave the music a sense of impetus (Ex. 3:6.1). Suspensions constantly created tension, but they resolved so promptly and conventionally that the flow of the music remained predictable. This method was the essence of Howells' early style, and whilst still apparent in his later canticles, the way

in which he employed suspensions and resolutions shows a marked development through time.

Ex. 3:6.1, Service in G, Magnificat, organ, bars 15-21



The arrival of the *Collegium Regale* evening setting in 1945 brought with it a markedly altered style. The most crucial and obvious difference between the Service in G and *Collegium Regale* is harmonic pace. The former is very driven. In a sense, it looks back to Stanford as each phrase pushes forward to the next; the use of suspensions and resolutions providing the flowing nature of the music.

Whilst each phrase of the *Collegium Regale* also has forward momentum (the opening treble lines are very much written as they would be spoken), there are clear points of repose at the end of each half verse. It becomes a striking feature of this setting (and subsequent ones) that the harmony at the end of verses becomes very static. The final syllables of the verses are often held for a number of beats, which decidedly slows down the flow of the music (Exs. 3:6.2). These features are rarely found in the Service in G. If they are, the organ part will often carry on regardless with its perpetual minim beat and harmonic movement.

Ex. 3:6.2a, Collegium Regale, Magnificat, bars 15-17

15

- - - tions shall call me bless - ed.

- - - tions shall call me bless - ed.

Ex. 3:6.2b, Collegium Regale, Magnificat, bars 19-20

19 *f dolce*
For he — that is might - ty bath mag - ni - fied me, —
f dolce
For he — that is might - ty bath mag - ni - fied me, —
poco f
Solo

Ex. 3:6.2c, Collegium Regale, Magnificat, bars 21-24

21 *pp*
and ho - ly — is his Name. —
pp
and ho - ly — is his Name. —
pp
espress.

Ex. 3:6.2d, Collegium Regale, Nunc Dimittis, bars 8-11

8
ser - vant de - part in — peace, — ac -
p

Slowing down the flow of the music with points of repose became a highly essential feature of Howells' canticles from 1945. There is a number of ways in which Howells treated the ends of phrases, which also showed increasing variety between 1945 and 1975. For instance, the choir often ended a verse in unison (or a simple triad) and, in order to create more interest, the organ part was given more significance. This happens many times in the *Collegium Regale* setting, as seen above. In example 'a'

above, the organ simply adds a further textural dimension to the music and links the two choir phrases together. This is what happens in 'b', 'c' and 'd' as well.

This feature of the organ being given interest over the suspended choir lines is commonly used in all the evening canticles, as the following examples show (Exs. 3:6.3).

Ex. 3:6.3a, New College Magnificat, bars 98-100

98

rit.

meek.

the hum-ble and meek.

pp

pp

pp

meek.

the hum-ble and meek.

rall.

The musical score consists of four vocal staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are "meek. the hum-ble and meek." The organ part is marked "rall." and "pp". The score is in G major and 4/4 time. The organ part features a series of chords and moving lines in both hands, providing a textural dimension to the music.

Ex. 3:6.3b, St Paul's Magnificat, bars 33-36

33

ly is his Name.

ho - - - ly is his Name.

ho - - - ly is his Name.

ho - - - ly is his Name.

pp Ch. (to Sw.)

a tempo

Ex. 3:6.3c, Salisbury Magnificat, bars 62-66

62

rich he hath sent emp - ty a - way.

rall.

rall.

p *dim.* *pp*

(Man.)

Ex. 3:6.3d, St Augustine's Nunc Dimittis, bars 26-27

Ex. 3:6.3e, Hereford Magnificat, bars 42-45

However, the role of the organ is distinguished in each setting. The *New College* example shows a particularly disruptive organ part; harmonically as well as rhythmically. The organ's held F sharp in bar 99 clashes distinctly with the choir unison E, for instance. The organ in the *St Paul's* example leads into a change of key. The organ parts in the *Salisbury* and *St Augustine's* examples, the former with its

syncopation, and the latter with its more agitated rhythms, add to the more troubled sentiment of these canticles.

In addition to the use of motionless choir (seen above), another idea of Howells' was to suspend the choir on an unresolved chord such as a seventh. This happened frequently in all other canticles, with seventh, ninth, eleventh and even thirteenth chords. Below shows a range of similar examples (Exs. 3:6.4).

Ex. 3:6.4a, Worcester Magnificat, bar 103-108

The musical score for Ex. 3:6.4a, Worcester Magnificat, bars 103-108, consists of five systems of music. The first four systems are vocal parts, and the fifth system is the piano accompaniment. Each system begins with the number '103' in the top left corner and the instruction 'cresc. al fine' above the staff. The lyrics 'world with - - out end.' are written below the vocal staves, with long horizontal lines indicating the duration of each word. The piano accompaniment is written in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and features a steady, rhythmic accompaniment with some melodic lines in the right hand.

Ex. 3:6.4b, St John's Magnificat, bars 86-92

86 *mf* *rall. e dim.* *pp*

A - bra - ham and his seed, — for — ev - - er.

mf *pp*

A - bra - ham and his seed, — for — ev - - er.

mf *pp*

A - bra - ham and his seed, — for — ev - - er.

mf *pp*

A - bra - ham and his seed, — for — ev - - er.

Solo *mf* *rall. e dim.* *ten.* *pp*

91 *a tempo : vivo*

a tempo : vivo

Ex. 3:6.4c, Chichester Magnificat, bars 111-115

111

rall.

pp

pp

mp

pp

pp

pp

ev - - - er.

ev - - - er.

ev - - - er, for ev - - - er.

ev - - - er, for ev - - - er.

In many of the examples above, the suspended chords naturally beg some sort of resolution, but it is not always strongly executed. In the *St John's* example, the resolution is made in the organ part. Once the choir stop, a clear chord of A minor is held, which moves off into D minor in the following phrase, indicating a move back to the home key.¹ This is comparable to a piece like Walford Davies' *Festal Te Deum* in G. In this setting, the sheer momentum created by his use of harmony dictates a very clear move from a dominant seventh chord to the tonic of G (Ex. 3:6.5), a harmonic move which is extremely predictable, and something which Howells avoided employing at all costs.

¹ This resolution is not strong however. Despite having dominant/tonic connotations, the chord suspended by the choir is not clearly in A minor due to a great amount of chromatic notes, which blur the harmony somewhat, and make the dissection of the chord more difficult.

Ex. 3:6.5. Walford Davies, Festal Te Deum in G

The image shows a musical score for a vocal ensemble and piano. It consists of five staves. The top four staves are vocal parts, each with the lyrics: "Name: e - ver. e - ver world with out end." The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment. The tempo marking "molto rit." is written above the first and fourth staves. The music is in G major and 4/4 time.

Moving away from the use of suspended choir lines at the ends of phrases, discussion now progresses to other methods that Howells used in order to slow down the harmonic pace of his canticles and to conceal its clear harmonic function, in whose boundaries his music lay. Howells managed this in two ways – harmonically and melodically. Harmonically speaking, Howells’ use of chromatic chords (as seen in the choir chord in Ex. 3:6.4b) buried the immediate clarity of the harmony, allowing chords to be dissected in different ways. This is discussed more fully further below.

In terms of melody, Howells’ heavy use of suspensions and appoggiaturas successfully obscured the predictable route of the music. Suspensions and appoggiaturas were so abundant in Howells’ melodic lines, that it became difficult at times to tell them apart from other notes. This contributed greatly to the impressionistic effect of Howells’ music.²

² This section ties in closely with Section 3:4 on Melody, but particular discussion on the use of “extra melodic notes” is saved for the current section due to the natural effect this had on blurring the harmonies.

This idea of adding notes to melodic lines was intrinsic to Howells' musical style. Appoggiaturas were used in a number of ways, and this clearly developed through time. Howells used the appoggiatura in single melodic lines. Moving into slightly later services, appoggiaturas became heavier as they would encompass two or more parts. This resulted in greater scope with which to resolve the "non-harmony" note.

The most simple and common use of the appoggiatura came at the ends of lines of text. For example, in the opening treble melody of the *Gloucester* service, "Lord" ends on A, but B is sounded on the first beat of the bar, creating an accented appoggiatura. This happens likewise at the opening of the *Worcester* service (Exs. 3:6.6). Both these examples show Howells' preference for appoggiaturas moving from scale degree 2 to 1, a noticeable feature of his style.

Ex. 3:6.6a, Gloucester Magnificat, treble line, bar 3

Ex. 3:6.6b, Worcester Magnificat, treble line, bars 1-5

A particularly frequent use of appoggiaturas in Howells' evening canticles incorporated not just one melodic line. There are a great many instances when Howells employed full choir – each separate line having its individual appoggiatura (Exs. 3:6.7).

Ex. 3:6.7a, Worcester Magnificat, full choir, bars 55-58

55

mp

good things, and the rich he t

mp

good things, and the rich he t

mp

good things, and the rich he t

mp

good things, and the rich he t

p mp

Ex. 3:6.7b. St Peter's Magnificat, full choir, bars 67-68

The image shows a musical score for a full choir and piano. It consists of five staves. The top four staves are for the vocal parts: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. Each vocal line has a long appoggiatura (a note with a horizontal line above it) that spans across the bar line. The lyrics 'He re-mem' are written under the bass line. The piano part is on the bottom staff, marked 'mf' and 'Ch.' (Chord). It features a complex harmonic structure with a 'Ped.' (pedal) marking. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 4/4.

From these examples above, what is noticeable is the way in which Howells employs every single appoggiatura differently. In 'a', the trebles, altos and tenors move downwards whilst the basses move upwards on "rich"; all four choir lines move together, and both chords are concordant vertically. The triple appoggiatura in 'b', moves simultaneously between parts.

In his later canticles, Howells still liked to employ appoggiaturas (either singularly or several at one), but what becomes more noticeable is his fondness of delaying their resolutions; holding appoggiaturas for a longer length of time. This is shown simply in the example below from the *Chichester* service (Ex. 3:6.8a), where what could be considered the tonic of the chord is held off in the alto line until the final beat of the bar – further obscuring the path of the harmony. Another example with which to illustrate this point is found in the *Winchester* service (Ex. 3:6.8b), which also shows the unpredictability of Howells' harmonic path.

Ex. 3:6.8a. Chichester Gloria, full choir, bars 141-143

141

ev - er shall be, —

ev - er shall be, —

ev - er shall be, —

ev - er shall be, —

Ex. 3:6.8b. Winchester Nunc Dimittis, full choir, bars 9-14

9

ser - vant de - part in peace, —

ser - vant de - part in peace, —

ser - vant de - part in peace, —

ser - vant de - part in peace, —

13

accord - ing

accord - ing

accord - ing

accord - ing

In bar 12, the alto line resolves on the second quaver of the bar, so the chord held by the choir is F sharp minor (the altos sound the sharpened seventh, E sharp). However, four beats later, the bass line, having held F sharp and C sharp, resolves downwards by semitones to F natural and C natural, ensuring that the choir chord is now a simple F major triad (the altos' E sharp is the enharmonic equivalent of F natural).

When all four choir lines contain appoggiaturas, it becomes a noticeable feature that Howells liked to stagger the resolution in each part, which created further harmonic ambiguity. The example here, from the *Winchester* service (Ex. 3:6.9) is a case in point.

Ex. 3:6.9, *Winchester Magnificat*, full choir, bars 74-77

The image shows a musical score for four voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) for bars 74-77 of the Winchester Magnificat. The lyrics are: 'alt - - - ed the hum - ble and meek.' for Soprano and Alto; 'alt - - - ed the hum - ble and meek.' for Tenor; 'ed the hum - ble and meek.' for Bass. The score includes dynamic markings 'dim.' and 'mp'.

On the first beat of bar 77, all four parts are sounding a “non-harmony” note, which vertically makes a clear chord of B minor. As the treble and alto parts resolve on the following crotchet beat, clashes occur with the tenor and bass lines, which do not resolve until the next crotchet beat. Once all parts have resolved, the chord of A minor is clear, but for the second crotchet beat of that bar, the notes B, C, D and E are sounded simultaneously. With the constant staggering of resolutions between parts,

this clearly illustrates how Howells achieved the restless sounds and ambiguous harmony in his later canticles.

Another method by which Howells tried to slow down the momentum of his music was to obscure the use of his appoggiaturas and other non-harmony (or decorative) notes. In some of his settings, appoggiaturas are given more importance in melodic lines than they had been before. An example of this is seen in the *New College* service (Ex. 3:6.10).

Ex. 3:6.10, New College Magnificat, full choir, bars 185-187

The image shows a musical score for four voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano accompaniment. The score is in G major and 4/4 time. The piano part is in the bass clef. The vocal parts are in the treble clef. The score shows a four-part appoggiatura in bar 186, with the soprano line starting on E and moving to D, and the three lower parts moving towards B minor in bar 187. The score is labeled '185' at the top left.

Here, the chord that all four choir lines are moving towards is B minor in bar 187. The E in the soprano line in bar 186 acts as a lengthened appoggiatura onto the D, with the three lower parts behaving similarly. By doing this, Howells allowed the penultimate chord (which was simply a four-part appoggiatura) to be sounded for exactly the same length of time as the B minor chord, which is of greater structural and harmonic importance to the musical line at that point.

Howells' heavy use of appoggiaturas and suspensions concealed the clarity of his basic use of harmony. In this way, the style of Howells' canticles has been described by some as 'impressionistic polyphony'³, a particularly hazy term, and never fully explained.

Although the harmony across many of Howells' canticles has impressionist qualities, due to the prevalent use of appoggiaturas and suspensions, and slowing down of the music's pace, in terms of melody, there is very little that is impressionistic. As seen earlier in this chapter, the construction of long melodies (which echoed the ideas of plainsong) was an inherent part of the canticles. Impressionist music, and above all, that of Debussy's was extremely motivic and repetitive, enhancing the idea of stasis. The long melodies seen in Howells' canticles were not exemplary of impressionist music in this sense.

Although not strictly impressionist, Howells' evening canticles certainly displayed impressionist characteristics, which helped him create an aesthetic of 'intellectual reflection... and delicate sensuality'⁴, which so tied in with his love of creating the correct mood for the evening service. His use of hazy sounding harmonies and his desire to stay on one particular chord for a number of bars all served to create a particularly reflective and reflective feel to his music – which went arm in arm with his love of aesthetics. However, to label his canticles as 'impressionistic polyphony' goes too far.

³ Palmer, *Howells: A Study*, 21. Also in Howes, *English Musical Renaissance*, (London : Secker & Warburg, 1966), 301.

⁴ Pasler, J., 'Impressionism' in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie, 12, (London: Macmillan, 2001), 91.

* * * * *

Referring to the end of the *Collegium Regale* Magnificat before the Gloria, (Ex. 3:6.11), another harmonic trend of Howells' is illustrated.

Ex. 3:6.11, *Collegium Regale*, SSAA, bars 61-65

The musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is the Soprano line, the middle is the Alto line, and the bottom is the Piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "and his seed, for ev - - er." The tempo markings are "rall." and "molto rall.", and the dynamics are "dim." and "ppp". The piano part features a prominent chord held between bars 57 and 63.

The chord held between bars 57 and 63 is based on an E flat major triad. Here, Howells added a seventh and a sharpened eleventh (A natural). The ninth is missing. It is in its fifth inversion, with the A at the base of the chord. This chord is very typically Howellsian (on which more will be said later). With this particular chord, the augmented A causes friction with both the D flat and E flat.

Use of this sort of chromatic chord was not apparent in the earliest service. However, the Service in G had a generous smattering of seventh chords throughout, many held in the organ part (as seen at the start of this section). This liberal use of sevenths, with a variety of chords in inversions immediately gave Howells' music its unique colour, one which no church composer had yet used in such a way.

Further evidence of Howells' maturing style is found in his 1935 service for Men's voices. As with the Service in G, this swims around a variety of chords in inversions, many including sevenths. What is noticeable in this canticle though, are a few examples of added ninths to various chords, something which becomes commonplace in the later canticles.

Apart from a few occasions in the 1935 service, it is noticeable that until the *Gloucester* service, Howells' use of added chromatic notes other than sevenths is almost entirely contained in the organ part. This feature seems clearly intentional. All Howells' canticles inhabit the same sound world, which gets a little more chromatic throughout the canticles' development. Once elevenths and thirteenth are added to chords, where else can he go? In order to develop the specific sound of each of his canticles, he used chromaticism within voice parts, and the organ extremely effectively. It was seen in the above example from *Collegium Regale* that Howells used an eleventh chord, but looking closely at its composition, the four vocal parts simply cover the root, third, fifth and seventh. The more chromatic notes of the chord are held in the organ part, making their use appear slightly more subtle.

The *Gloucester* service is the first instance in which the vocal parts contain ninths, however their use is still rather intermittent. The example below shows bars 50-1 of the Magnificat, the first bar being based around F sharp, so the ninth (G sharp) is seen in the bass line. The following bar moves to a chord based on G sharp, so the unison C sharp in the treble, alto, tenor and bass parts acts as an eleventh (Ex. 3:6.12).

Ex. 3:6.12. Gloucester Magnificat, full choir, bars 49-51

49

dim.

- - ed the hum - ble and meek.

dim.

- - ed the hum - - - ble and meek.

dim.

- alt - - - ed the hum - - - - - ble and

dim.

hum - - - - - ble and meek.

51

mf espressivo

He hath filled

mf espressivo

He hath filled the

mf espressivo

meek. He hath :

mf espressivo

He hath filled the

mp

Elevenths and thirteenths are found in vocal parts much more regularly in the later canticles. Although Howells only reserved heavy clashing for his much later canticles. The *Worcester* service is illustrative of Howells' tender use of elevenths and thirteenths (Ex. 3:6.13). In this example, the voices are so well spaced (or orchestrated) so as never to clash shockingly. Even if the lines clash closely, as the second example above shows, there is a swift resolution.

Ex. 3:6.13, Worcester Magnificat, full choir, bars 36-37

Later canticles develop a starker sound through harsher spacing, or orchestration of voices; their exclusive purpose seeming to be to clash. In the first example below from the *Chichester* service, the first treble moves away intentionally from the A when it unites with the second treble line in bar 6, immediately “resolving” onto the B. The examples shown below are taken from the *Chichester* service. The *Chichester* service is full of glaring clashes – a feature that makes this canticle particularly severe sounding, as there is little attempt to resolve clashing notes (Ex. 3:6.14).

Ex. 3:6.14, Chichester Nunc Dimittis, full choir, bars 51-54

In addition to chromatically enhanced chords, Howells was also keen to chromatically alter a great number of his chords, which would have the effect of further colouring the music. Two important stylistic features of Howells' canticles came out of his desire to chromatically modify chords. The first was his employment of false relations (which altered the third of the chord), and secondly, his abundant use of the tritone, the employment of which made Howells' music sound particularly distinctive.

A fondness for false relations showed Howells' particular affinity with the Tudor school. There is an emerging use of false relations from the earliest canticles, with the middle years seeing their most effective employment. The canticles from the transitional period exhibit a heavy number of false relations, while the later canticles barely use them at all; the more conspicuous-sounding tritone is favoured in later canticles.

Howells had a great affinity with Tudor composers. His association with Tudor composers cannot go unmentioned, as a great deal of his musical style emanated from this close association. Palmer sites some of Howells' comments on the subject of the Tudors:

The Great Writer or the Great Composer is he who can master the Present through the wisdom of the Past... *Grip on the Past* is the *anchorage* in this storm; it is the key to the present; it feeds the humanity of the artist.⁵

⁵ Palmer, *Herbert Howells : A Centenary Celebration*, 141.

The Tudor school is renowned for its use of false relations and *tierce de picardies*. The example here taken from Tallis' *O Nata Lux* serves as a good example (Ex. 3:6.15).

Ex. 3:6.15, Tallis, *O Nata Lux*, bars 13-17

The image shows a musical score for Tallis's *O Nata Lux*, bars 13-17. The score is in G minor (one flat) and 4/4 time. It features four vocal parts: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The lyrics are: "Nos mem-bra con - fer ef - fi - ci, Tu - i be - a - ti cor - po - ris." The music shows a characteristic 'English cadence' in the final bar, where the chord changes from D minor to D major, with a sharp F in the treble line.

Here, a chord of D minor is sounded (with F natural in the second tenor line) followed by D major on the final beat of the bar, with F sharp sounded in the treble line. This is an example of what became more typically termed the 'English cadence', due to the F (in either chromatic form) being the seventh of the tonic chord sounded in the final bar, and also due to its common use in much English music from this era.

False relations show themselves in a great many composers' works across the years, from Taverner to Tye and Tallis, up to Byrd. Morris' book, *Contrapuntal techniques of the Sixteenth Century*, explains that harmonic features such as a preference for harsher forms of discord (especially false relations) were 'of great importance to the English school.'⁶

Many of the false relations employed by Howells occurred naturally through his liking of mediant key relations, and the juxtaposition of chords. This did not occur too

⁶ Morris, R. O., *Contrapuntal techniques of the Sixteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 67.

much in the Tudor school – their false relations arising between the horizontal movement of separate vocal lines. However, the juxtaposition of chords (often a third apart) was a common trait of Howells', and also Vaughan Williams' – below shows an example from the latter's *Mass in G Minor* (Exs. 3:6.16).

Ex. 3:6. 16. Vaughan Williams, Mass in G Minor, Choir II, opening to Gloria

The image shows a musical score for four voices: Soprano (S.), Alto (A.), Tenor (T.), and Bass (B.). The music is in G minor and begins with a *pp* (pianissimo) dynamic. The lyrics for all parts are "Et in ter-ra pax ho-mi-ni-bus". The score illustrates the juxtaposition of chords, a characteristic trait mentioned in the text.

Howells' use of false relations is not abundant in the early canticles. There are only fleeting examples. In fact, the Service in G only has one example, although this is not strictly a false relation (Ex. 3:6.17).

Ex. 3:6.17, Service in G, Nunc Dimittis, bars 30-36

Gen - tiles and to be the glo - ry of Thy
 Gen - tiles and to be the glo - ry of Thy
 Gen - tiles and to be the glo - ry of Thy
 Gen - tiles and to be the glo - ry of Thy

rit.

Poco più mosso.

pro - ple te - ra - el. Glo - ry be - to the
 pro - ple te - ra - el. Glo - ry be - to the
 pro - ple te - ra - el. Glo - ry be - to the
 pro - ple te - ra - el. *Poco più mosso.* Glo - ry be - to the

Here, in bar 33, the F natural in the treble line and the F sharp in the alto line are not on consecutive beats, which rather negates the false relation's purpose. Nonetheless, it certainly provides an early taster of Howells' style, where the use of chromatic contradictions (such as false relations) became commonplace.

The example below shows a mediant chord relationship in Howells' Magnificat in E (Ex. 3:6.18), which is a far more conspicuous use of the false relation than the example above from the Service in G.

Ex. 3:6.18, Service in E, Magnificat, organ, bars 51-55

Poco più mosso.

Più vivo

In the organ interlude between verses 6 and 7, the chords of B flat major and D major are side by side (using F natural then F sharp respectively).

These sorts of chromatic twists were frequently used by Howells. An observable example from the *Gloucester* service is very characteristic of Howells (Ex. 3:6.19).

Ex. 3:6.19, Gloucester Magnificat, organ bars 94-96

The first is found in the introduction to the Gloria, shown here from the Nunc Dimittis, which moves between chords of G major and E major, encompassing a chromatic shift from G natural to G sharp. The second example is in the middle of the Gloria, providing a twist between B and G majors. These sorts of examples are used abundantly throughout Howells' canticles and became an extremely common characteristic of his style, providing his music with that 'more rugged type of harmony'⁷ for which the Tudor school was best known. Illustrative examples below are from the B Minor and *Worcester* services (Exs. 3:6.20).

Ex. 3:6.20a, B Minor Magnificat, alto and tenor, bars 29-31

⁷ Morris, *Contrapuntal techniques of the Sixteenth Century*, 70.

Ex. 3:6.20b, Worcester Magnificat, organ, bars 40-41

40

— with his arm, he hath scat-tered the pro

— with his arm, he hath scat-tered the pro

— with his arm, he hath scat-tered the pro

— with his arm, he hath scat-tered the pro

Pull Sw. closed

In the case of the B Minor service, false relations become far more striking through their repeated use. Verses 5 and 6 provide an excellent example of this, as the choir and organ lines continue to struggle between A natural and A sharp, with F sharp pedal which confines the tonality.

There is an apparent lack of false relations in the *St Paul's* service compared to its preceding services; perhaps the expanse of the Cathedral would have swallowed up such intricacies as a false relation in the middle of a stream of contrapuntal lines. For one of the only uses of false relation are in the heavy chordal organ openings of Magnificat Gloria (Ex. 3:6.21).

Ex. 3:6.21, St Paul's Magnificat, organ, bar 112



The transitional period canticles display a more abrupt use of false relation than seen before. Whereas the *Collegium Regale*, *Gloucester* and *New College* services provided relatively few examples of false relations, many of which were subtly used within the vocal textures (as seen above), the B Minor, and especially the *St Peter's* services use false relations far more abundantly.

In the case of the *St Peter's* service, false relations and chromatic alterations could be considered the very essence of the canticle, occurring from bar 1 onwards. The *St Peter's* Magnificat opens with a typical Howellsian mediant shift from D minor to F sharp minor (Ex. 3:6.22), which sets the sentiment for the entire canticle.

Ex. 3:6.22, St Peter's Magnificat, organ, bars 1-3

Moving easily and lightly

In fact, the opening melody in the organ's bass line incorporates a twist from F natural to F sharp – which is the tonic by this point. There is a great number of false relations and other such chromatic contradictions throughout, which combine with its chromatically twisting melodies to give it a more sinister impression than any other canticle to date (Ex. 3:6.23), thus making it a forerunner to the later sets of canticles.

Ex. 3:6.23, St Peter's Magnificat, organ, bars 7-11

The use of false relations and further chromaticism picked up pace in the *Chichester* service, where there is also a more obvious use of simultaneous false relation (Exs. 3:6.24 a/b), helping to create the far starker sound – for which the later canticles are probably best known. Thus far, these were seen very few and far between in the *St Peter's*, *Salisbury* and *Winchester* services, but the *Winchester* service uses them much more (Ex. 3:6.24 c/d/e).

Ex. 3:6.24a, Chichester Magnificat, organ, bar 131-132

Ex. 3:6.24b, Chichester Nunc Dimittis, full choir, bar 22

Ex. 3:6.24c, St Peter's Magnificat, organ, bar 75-78

Ex. 3:6.24d, Salisbury Magnificat, organ, bar 68-70

Ex. 3:6.24e, Winchester Magnificat, organ, bar 49

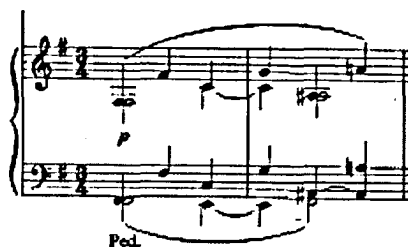
The end of the *Chichester* service uses a very garish and powerful false relation, which is so unsubtle in the strident organ part that it seems too heavy and cumbersome to be Howells' (Ex. 3:6.24g).

Ex. 3:6.24g, Salisbury Nunc Dimittis, organ, bars 68-70

Many of the canticles after the *Chichester* service do not use such aggressive false relations and chromatic alterations. In fact, compared to their immediate predecessors, there is an obvious lack of them. However, if any do crop up they tend

to be employed simultaneously or more obviously (as in the *Magdalen* example below). This heavier use of the false relation suited the more chromatic and dense textures of the later canticles (examples are from the *Magdalen* and *York* services, Exs. 3:6.25).

Ex. 3:6.25a, *Magdalen Nunc Dimittis*, organ, bars 1-2



Ex. 3:6.25b, *York Magnificat*, organ, bar 14

In addition to altering the third of the chord and creating false relations in his music, Howells also developed a fondness for altering other degrees of a particular chord. In doing so, this meant that the tritone was used consistently. The freedom of use of the tritone, without harmonic justification is one of the most innovative features of Howells' music. It was the tritone that really gave Howells' music its distinctive edge – an edge many have termed bittersweet:

...the pain-pleasure principle...The discords have a sharp enough sting, but a sting in which there is intolerable pleasure:

the chords are white-hot as well as ice-cold, and the result of this continual intermingling of fire and water is an exquisitely true and perfect blade.⁸

The tritone (augmented fourth or diminished fifth) was a banned interval in medieval music, and thus rarely used. As Western tonality developed, however, the not only became more acceptable, but its use also became unavoidable. As a tool of modulation between keys the dominant seventh always provided a tritone (between scale degrees 3 and 7). The diminished seventh also provided two instances of the tritone (between scale degrees 1 and 5, and 3 and 7). In similar fashion, the augmented sixth provided tritones between scale degrees 3 and 6. All of these forms of tritone were created harmonically and all would resolve immediately after they were sounded. As well as the vertical tritone, there is also the question of the melodic (or horizontal) tritone – a melodic leap of an augmented fourth or diminished fifth, which would automatically resolve.

Howells' handling of the tritone went far and beyond conventional harmonic discussion however. He developed its use in a variety of ways, some of which were apparent right from his earliest canticles, others of which were seen in his later settings, which showed a more marked development in his style.

⁸ Palmer, *Herbert Howells : A Study*, 59. Palmer is referring specifically to Howells' *Stabat Mater* here, but the style can also be applied more generally to his canticles.

Ex 3:6.26 – Extract from *A Spotless Rose*

43
S. win - ter's night.
A. win - ter's night.
T. win - ter's night.
B. win - ter's night.

*'O Herbert, that cadence... Brainwave it certainly is, but it is much more than that. It is a stroke of genius.'*⁹

The 'magical cadence'¹⁰ to which Hadley refers is in the Aeolian mode (with a tonal centre of E), and cadences into a warm E major in the final bars. This one small phrase seems to encapsulate Howells' musical style, a style that went on to pervade his music, not least his evening canticles. Being one of Howells' earliest choral pieces, there are many aspects in this extract of *A Spotless Rose* which anticipate Howells' later style: the use of the Aeolian mode (which denied the music its sharpened seventh which would pull strongly towards the tonic), a prevalence of chromatic chords, and many suspensions with simple resolutions.

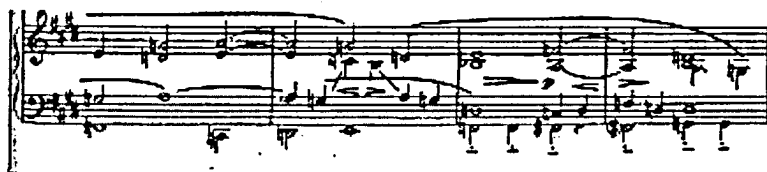
⁹ Patrick Hadley writing to Herbert Howells in Palmer, *Herbert Howells: A Centenary Celebration*, 399.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 399.

Of interest here however, is the penultimate chord of the cadence (marked *), which typifies Howells' style and imbues nearly every canticle. It is an A minor triad with added seventh, ninth, eleventh and thirteenth. In fact every note from the Aeolian mode (transposed onto E) is represented (A-C-E-G-B-D-F sharp). In this way, by using the notes that naturally occur in the given mode, there is a built-in augmented fourth between the C and F sharp. This one ingredient gives the carol its evocative edge. It colours the penultimate chord more vividly, before coming to its warm and comforting resolution into E major. The feeling one gets from *A Spotless Rose* is indeed 'a particularly eloquent paradox of warmth and chill'¹¹ such that Palmer spoke of. These words are very true to much of Howells' music.

The important distinction with this early example of Howells' style is that the tritone has no harmonic function. It is purely aesthetic. The chord is not used as part of a dominant or diminished seventh, it is used simply to add further colour to the music. Examples from the Service in E show further instances of Howells' "unconventional" use of the tritone (Ex. 3:6.27a).

Ex. 3:6.27a, Service in E, Magnificat, organ, bars 39-42



The first one in bar 41 is in the organ part. Here, the E natural is the foreign note – the other notes make up a major triad on B flat. Any sense of tonality is ambiguous at this point, as the E natural does not seem to drag the harmony anywhere.

¹¹ Bowen in CD notes: *O Magnum Mysterium*, Polyphony, dir. Stephen Layton (London: Hyperion 1996).

However, as the bass line in the organ ascends chromatically by step, a further tritone is made in the final beat of bar 41, by the F sharp and C natural in the organ. The F sharp however is an entirely foreign note to this chord, clashing as it does so clearly with the F natural in the organ right hand. Looking more closely at the context of this chord, the F sharp in the organ bass line can be considered as simply a passing note between F and G, as the passage continues with a perfect cadence into C in bars 42-43. There is no other harmonic justification for this F sharp other than to colour the music; it has no harmonic function.

Ex. 3:6.27b, Service in E, Magnificat, organ, bars 43-44



Bar 46 of the Magnificat in E contains a chord of C, E flat and G (Ex. 3:6.28). The following chord is of C, E natural and G sharp. By changing not only the E (the third of the chord) but also the G and keeping the root (C) constant, Howells immediately changed the sound of the chord.

Ex. 3:6.28, Service in E, Magnificat, organ, bar 43-46



This whole passage, starting at bar 43 until bar 47 is imbued with C naturals and G sharps. The tonality is thrown slightly off course by this use of G sharp, but is kept on

track by the pedal note, C, that remains for this entire verse. This is an essential ingredient of Howells' music, and becomes more stark in his later setting.

Howells' preference for adding notes up to the thirteenth of a chord that gave him far greater potential to use the tritone. A thirteenth chord provides all 7 notes of a mode or scale, and Howells experimented with different permutations (sharp, flat, natural) of each note.

For example, in the *Salisbury* service Magnificat at bar 58 (Ex. 3:6.29), the notes C, E flat, G, D and A are present (root, third, fifth, ninth and thirteenth).

Ex. 3:6.29, Salisbury Magnificat, full choir, bar 58

The image shows a musical score for bar 58 of the Salisbury Magnificat, full choir. It consists of four staves: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a common time signature. The lyrics "He hath filled the" are written below each staff. The music is marked with "mp" (mezzo-piano). The bass line shows a prominent tritone between the notes E flat and A natural.

It should also be noted that with so many notes used, the root of the chord is often ambiguous; but the previous line ends with a chord of C minor, so C as the root seems the most likely. With so many scale degrees added to this chord, the E flat creates a tritone with A natural, which is shown starkly in the bass line of the choir in bar 58. In bar 60 the D (ninth) is changed to D flat in the alto line, which creates a tritone with the soprano G. The introduction of the B flat (seventh) merely as a lower auxiliary note in the tenor line, adds another tritone with the E natural in the bass line (which in

turn creates a false relation with the upper auxiliary note of E flat in the also line). It is simple ideas like this which colour Howells' music so successfully.

Chords with similarly augmented or diminished intervals are a very common feature of Howells' style. Although not used heavily in the middle period canticles, their employment is certainly noted. However, it is from the *Salisbury* service onwards that their use is more prolific. Examples below are from the *New, Winchester, Chichester* and *York* services (Exs. 3:6.30).

Ex. 3:6.30a, *New College Magnificat*, organ, bar 80-82

Ex. 3:6.30b, *Chichester Magnificat*, organ, bar 131-134

Ex. 3:6.30c, York Magnificat, full choir and organ, bar 65-66

The *New College* and *Chichester* examples both contain examples of seventh chords, with diminished fifths (both show A-C-E flat-G), but the *Chichester* service enhances the ambiguity of the chord by using an E natural simultaneously. The *York* example, if read with the root as E flat, has an augmented fifth (B natural).

One of the first and most extended uses of the chromatically altered chord is towards the end of the *Collegium Regale* Magnificat (Ex. 3:6.31), where, as will be seen in the section on Cadences, the chord acts as a dominant, falling into D major at bar 64.

Ex. 3:6.31, Collegium Regale, organ, bar 58

The A natural rather confuses the tonality. Without it, it would be a simple chord of E flat major seven. At the same time however, the A also implies a strong dominant basis to the music, which makes the move to the D major tonic far stronger and more decisive. Taking the chord out of context though, the A natural is certainly very out of place to the suggested tonality. This particular chord (E flat-G-B flat-D flat-A) –

eleventh with no ninth, plus an augmented eleventh in fifth inversion (as sounded in this example) has become known as “Howells’ chord.”

Howells’ chord is used fleetingly in many canticles, although not always in its fifth inversion. It is first found surprisingly early, in the Service in E, where D natural (creating an augmented fourth with the A flat root) is seemingly plucked out of thin air, only to fall by step in the following beats, giving the music a slightly bittersweet flavour (Ex. 3:6.32).

Ex. 3:6.32, Service in E, organ, bar 90



In addition to the Howells chord (which incorporates a tritone), there is also mention of a “Howells scale”. Paul Spicer spoke of it in a pre-concert talk on Howells on 28th April 2005 at the RCM. Of it, he said, ‘[it] has strong modal associations as well as enormous harmonic possibilities’¹².

The scale is made up essentially of the first four notes of the Lydian scale (three whole-tones) and ends like the Dorian mode (with major sixth and flattened seventh), or alternatively, it would be described as a Lydian scale with flattened seventh. This scale also incorporates a tritone between scale degrees one and four. The Howells scale is not obviously used in earlier canticles – Howells seeming to prefer the occasional chord in his own style over a longer passage of music in his own mode.

¹² Spicer, P., ‘Neglected Resources – Paul Spicer evaluates Herbert Howells’s canticle settings’ in *Choir and Organ*, July 2005.

However, fleeting use of the scale is evident in later canticles, once key schemes becomes a little more obscure. Examples of the Howells scale are clearly found in the *Winchester* and *Magdalen* services (Exs. 3:6.33).

Ex. 3:6.33a, Winchester Magnificat, bars 17-21

17
my Sa - - - viour.

Ex. 3:6.33b, Magdalen Magnificat, full choir, bars 17-19

mf
For be - hold, from hence - - forth

mf
For be - hold, from hence - - forth

mf
For be - hold, from hence - - forth

mf
For be - hold, from hence - - forth

As the examples above showed, Howells' use of the tritone is apparent right from his earliest canticles. Similar uses of chords are employed in all the canticles, so can any sort of development be discerned? The later canticles are certainly starker in character – can this be put down to Howells' use of the tritone, with its slightly harsh sound? Indeed it can. The development of the use of the tritone is one of the main features that differentiates the later canticles from the earlier ones.

Added to a more prolific use of chromatic chords which incorporated tritones in his later canticles, Howells began to use the tritone more obviously in his vocal lines (i.e. horizontally) – not simply as chords, but as part of the melodic counterpoint. By using a wide array of passing and auxiliary notes in his melodies, Howells provided further potential for tritones in the counterpoint between voice parts. This became more and more obvious as time went on. Examples below are from the *Chichester* and *Magdalen* services (Exs. 3:6:34).

Ex. 3:6.34a, Chichester Magnificat, treble and alto, bars 51-52

51
 he hath scattered the proud.
 he hath scattered the proud.

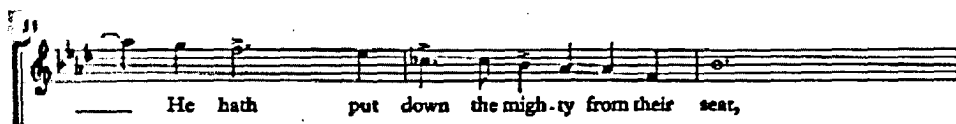
Ex. 3:6.34b, Magdalen Magnificat, treble, bar 20

20
 all ge-ne-ra
 all ge-ne-ra
 all ge-ne-ra
 all ge-ne-ra

This sort of idea pervaded many of the canticles, even those from the 1940s. However, the greatest development in the use of the tritone was its use in single melodic lines. The *St Paul's* service has an example of augmented fourths in the melody, here between F natural and C flat in the treble line (Ex. 3:6.35). This

awkward interval is broken by the presence of an E flat which splits the interval into two easier moves of a tone followed by a major third.

Ex. 3:6.35, St Paul's Magnificat, treble, bars 55-57



A marked difference is seen in the later canticles, where Howells often disregarded the difficulty of a vocal line, and employed many tritones. This is seen, for example, in the *Winchester*, *Chichester* and *St Augustine's* services (Ex. 3:6.36).

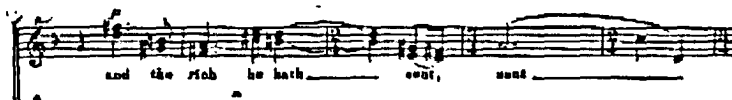
Ex. 3:6.36a, Winchester Magnificat, tenor, bar 97-100



Ex. 3:6.36b, Chichester Magnificat, treble, bar 94-97



Ex. 3:6.36c, St Augustine's Magnificat, trebles, bars 83-87



By bringing the tritone into the melodic lines, Howells immediately made a far starker sound, and increased the complexity of the music for the singers. As the **Figure 4** in **Chapter one** showed, many of Howells' later canticles are not in current cathedral repertoire lists due mainly to the complexity of the vocal lines.

Howells quite often used the tritone interval as a cadential progression, which applied his own modern touch to the music whilst keeping it somewhere within traditional harmonic roots. Cadences using the diminished fifth to tonic were frequently found in the middle and later period canticles. Simple illustrations below come from the *New College* service (Ex. 3:6.37). This example thwarts the expectation of the classically trained ear, effectively creating that sense of unpredictability that is so integral to Howells' style.

Ex. 3:6.37, *New College Magnificat*, full choir, bars 152-155

This example expects to land in G flat minor but the interval is augmented to G natural, which has the effect of creating a brighter sound on 'father'.

There are a great many instances of the tritone, harmonic and melodic which clearly developed through time and became more abundant in use in the later canticles. Howells used them as part of a dominant 7th chord, but failed to treat them conventionally, which had the effect of obscuring the tonality. He also managed this through his chromatic alteration of a number of chords, which often made it hard to find the exact root of a chord. By bringing the tritone into his contrapuntal writing, he kept the music moving forwards, but also gave it its simmering chromaticism, which increased aesthetic potential. Finally, by incorporating in the tritone directly into his melodic lines, Howells made many of his later canticles far harder to sing, which is a direct reason for their regular lack of performance today. It is fair to say that Howells'

use of the tritone was very much at the core of his original style. From its beginnings in the magical carol-anthem *A Spotless Rose* to its harsh use in the later canticles, it has become a very specific flavour of his music, successfully creating the 'pain-pleasure' principle which is so central to Howells' style.

In addition to Howells' use of the tritone, this section has also covered Howells' preference for using false relations, one of the most important features he took from the Tudor school. False relations were used for the most part in the middle period canticles, with more aggressive use (i.e. simultaneous) being saved for the later canticles, where Howells' whole style became much harsher. The same goes for Howells' employment of appoggiaturas and suspensions, which became heavier, and resolved at varying paces, ensuring that harmonies sounded particularly hazy and that predictable harmonic direction was well disguised.

3:7. Cadences

The cadences employed by Howells in the evening canticles are intriguing. He managed to obscure the functional harmony of many cadences by disguising the music's natural pull to a keynote. In this way, his music rarely fell into the predictable trap of ending with a rudimentary perfect or plagal cadence. There is a particular unpredictability about Howells' music – even at the very final cadence of a canticle. This section of Chapter three will discuss the ways in which Howells obscured his cadences by adding chromatic notes and passing notes, and by using substitute dominant chords, which alleviated the finality of certain cadences. The section ends by considering the unpredictability in direction of Howells' music. It illustrates that many of his canticles could have ended with different cadences and still have sounded just as if Howells thought of them himself.

The Service in G was very much Howells' most simple canticle, with its flow of minims all the way through. It provides a simplistic example of Howells' use of cadences, which are almost entirely unadorned with the innumerable passing notes and suspensions that so characterised his later services. However, even from this earliest service, he made efforts to disguise the cadence. The final 12 bars of the Magnificat (Ex. 3:7.1) execute a traditional circle of fifths, which pushes the music to its final perfect cadence into the home key of G. However, the strong dominant-tonic relationship of each lot of fifths is weakened by added notes, and the final cadence is diluted by the use of F natural in chord V and the A used in chord I (which resolves in the final bar).

Example 3:7.1, Service in G Magnificat, full choir and organ, bars 230 to end

allarg.

be, World

be, World

be, World

be, World

with - out end, A - men.

with - out end, A - men.

with - out end, A - men.

with - out end, A - men.

allarg.

Example 3:7.2, Service in G Nunc Dimittis, full choir, bars 30-36

Gen - tiles and to be the glo - ry of Thy

Gen - tiles and to be the glo - ry of Thy

Gen - tiles and to be the glo - ry of Thy

Gen - tiles and to be the glo - ry of Thy

peo - ple is - ra - el. Glo - ry be - to the

peo - ple is - ra - el. Glo - ry be - to the

peo - ple is - ra - el. Glo - ry be - to the

peo - ple is - ra - el. Glo - ry be - to the

Poco più mosso.

Perfect cadences do not abound in the Service in G. It seems, as it does in all of the evening canticles, that Howells purposely avoided using them. It is possible that they

were too decisive and finite for Howells' taste, given his love of creating very particular moods and impressions.

Another example of Howells' use of the perfect cadence from the Service in G shows his further attempts to avoid its clichéd use (Ex. 3:7.2). This device was used in a number of his evening canticles, whereby the perfect cadence was stalled through a number of bars, holding off its effect until the last moment possible.

Example 3:7.2 above, taken from the Nunc Dimittis, lands on an A major chord at 'glory'. However, instead of cadencing straight into D major, the phrase picks up momentum as it weaves its way through a passage in the Aeolian mode (a more "minor" version of A). The phrase finally moves into D major, as a calm release of the built up tension in the previous bars. This is not a strict perfect cadence however, as the chord immediately preceding D major is in fact C major. However, the inferred cadence is there for all to hear, a pedal note of A would not sound at all out of place in this passage.

Passing notes are often used by Howells to disguise perfect cadences. Another example from the Magnificat in G is at the end of verse five (Ex. 3:7.3), which looks like it moves simply from a chord of C minor in bar 71 to G major in bar 72. On closer inspection however, the chord of C minor could in fact be a simple passing chord from the D minor chord in bar 70, which would render the passage a perfect cadence, but the chord of C minor is sounded for the same length of time as the chord of D minor, thus obscuring the perfect cadence.

Example 3:7.3, Service in G Magnificat, full choir, bars 70-73

One important feature to notice in the examples above is the lack of root position chords (only the G major chord in the second example is in root position). In his avoidance of root position chords at many cadence points, Howells managed somewhat to soften the finality of a typical cadence. In this way, his music still had a clear sense of harmonic flow and momentum, but lacked decisive cadences, which seemed perhaps too resolute to use so freely. All of this contributed to music that was less sectionalised, and that had a good sense of flow.

The ideas found in the Service in G are simple examples of Howells' early style, one which developed quickly. By the time of the Service in E (1935), Howells' use of passing notes, suspensions and chord inversions to conceal obvious cadence points had become far more frequent. The final bars of the Magnificat in E (Ex. 3:7.4) provide evidence of this.

Example 3:7.4, Service in E Magnificat, full choir, bar 126 to end

Essentially a plagal cadence from an A major chord to E major, the choir in fact resolves onto the subdominant (A) five bars before the end. Choir and organ resolve firmly onto the tonic E only in the penultimate bar. What is noticeable is that all parts (vocal and organ) move almost entirely by step at this point, and although a clear plagal cadence can be found, the predominance of passing notes in all parts disguises the cadence further. Without such a resolute ending, this cadence lends the canticle an air of modesty.

All of Howells' evening canticles are imbued with similar ideas to those discussed above, in various guises. The first *Collegium Regale* service example below (Ex. 3:7.5a) shows a perfect cadence into D major, but the D is never sounded in root position – this passage is pinned down by a pedal of A in the organ.

Example 3:7.5a, *Collegium Regale Magnificat*, full choir, bars 38-40

The musical score consists of four staves. The top three staves are vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, and Tenor/Bass) and the bottom staff is the organ. The lyrics are: "He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath ex -". The organ part features a prominent pedal point on the note A throughout the passage.

The second *Collegium Regale* example below (Ex. 3:7.5b) shows what could be a move from a chord of E flat to D. The movement in the organ bass line of A to D helps to disguise its unconventional properties (semitone movement between tonic and supertonic is very unusual and only appears in the Phrygian mode), acting more

as a dominant to tonic move. Within the realms of a chord of E flat though, the A in the organ part is seen simply as an augmented eleventh (further detail in Section 3:6). It is a very inventive cadence, as to the ear, it does sound perfect, but when studied it is not.

Example 3:7.5b, Collegium Regale Magnificat, trebles and altos, bars 61-65

The image shows a musical score for three parts: Treble 1, Treble 2, and Alto. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It covers bars 61 to 65. The lyrics are: "and his seed, for ever." The performance markings are: *rall.* (bars 61-62), *dim.* (bars 61-62), *molto rall.* (bars 63-65), and *ppp* (bars 63-65). The Alto part has a *rall.* marking at the start of bar 61. The Treble 1 and Treble 2 parts have *molto dim.* markings at the start of bar 63. The Alto part has a *ppp* marking at the start of bar 63. The Treble 1 and Treble 2 parts have *ppp* markings at the end of bar 65.

The need for Howells to find other sorts of cadences other than the perfect or plagal progressions was intrinsic to his musical style. If attempts are made to put very simple perfect or plagal cadences where they could theoretically fit, the music turns banal in comparison. If a plagal cadence is used (with D to A sounded robustly in the bass line) at bars 21-23 of the *Gloucester Magnificat* (Ex. 3:7.6), the clarity of the cadence would then dispel the beautiful effect of the treble lines on their own.

Example 3:7.6. Gloucester Magnificat, trebles, bars 20-25

20

me, and ho - - - ly is his

and ho - - - ly is his

a tempo

23 SOPRANO I

Name. And his mer - cy is on 1

SOPRANO II

Name. And his mer - cy is on 1

ALTO

In order to keep within the realms of functional harmony but without succumbing to clichéd cadence patterns, Howells was particularly fond of using substitute chords which would give an overall impression of a perfect or plagal cadence, but that did not seem so deliberate. The *Gloucester* example above in fact does this. Helped by the organ part, the chord preceding the assumed A major chord in bar 23 is one of G major in root position. In traditional harmonic language, this chord could be seen as a chord of E (chord V) with its root missing, i.e. with G as its root; therefore giving harmonic basis to the progression without directly spelling out a perfect cadence.

Cadences that use substitute chords appear in many guises in all of Howells' evening canticles. Below shows a selection of examples, which illustrate the effective way in which they are employed. All these examples provide a sense of resolution as if they are perfect or plagal cadences, but the music is given more interest due to its disassociation with clear cadences.

Example 3:7.7a, Worcester Magnificat, full choir, bars 76-80

76

for ev - - - cr.

for ev - - - cr.

for ev - - - cr.

seed for ev - - - cr.

mf *pp* *mf* *pp* *mf* *pp* *mf* *pp*

The *Worcester* example (Ex. 3:7.7a) shows a move from F major into E major. Although there is no clear perfect cadence, on closer inspection, the final beat of bar 77 could be a substitute dominant for B (chord V), falling into the tonic E in bar 78. The conspicuous lack of B in the harmony of the final beat of bar 77 means that the perfect cadence is only simple implied and not there for all to see and hear. Using a substitute for chord V is interesting as it brings about great potential with regards to chromatic use, as the third can be sharpened or flattened according to the mode, and so in places, augmented and diminished intervals can be present.

Example 3:7.7b, Gloucester Nunc Dimittis, full choir, bars 31-34

31

Gen - tiles, and to be the glo - - -

Gen - tiles, and to be the glo - - -

Gen - tiles, and to be the glo - - -

Gen - tiles, and to be the glo - - -

ff *ff* *ff* *ff*

The *Gloucester* example (Ex. 3:7.7b) is taken from the end of the Nunc Dimittis where the chordal movement clearly shows a chord of C sharp minor moving to D major on 'and to be the glory', which is the movement of chord vii to I. However, on closer inspection the chord on 'glory' could also be a highly chromatic form of F sharp major, which makes more sense given the F sharp tonality in the preceding bars. An obvious move from C sharp major to F sharp major would sound particularly resolute, and perhaps far too earnest as there is still further material to come. By using a more chromatically coloured chord I (the D in the bass line is effectively the thirteenth) the chord has an entirely different colour and effect.

Other examples of substitute chords below are from the *St Paul's*, *St Peter's*, *St John's Cambridge*, *Salisbury*, *Winchester*, *Hereford* and *Dallas* services (Exs. 3:7.7 c-g).

Example 3:7.7 c, St Paul's Magnificat, organ, bars 141-146

The musical score for Example 3:7.7 c, St Paul's Magnificat, organ, bars 141-146, is presented in five staves. The top four staves are vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) with lyrics 'men, A - - - men, A - - - men.' The bottom staff is the organ accompaniment. The score includes dynamic markings such as 'cresc.' and 'ff'.

The final cadence of the *St Paul's Magnificat* is a convincing use of chord vii as a substitute dominant chord. Here, an F minor chord is held for five bars (with organ and choir moving independently through different degrees of the chord up to a thirteenth), but the final sounding of the F minor chord could easily add a D and sound like a dominant chord of the final tonic, G.

Example 3:7.7d, *St Peter's Magnificat*, full choir, bars 109 to end

109

allargando

men, A - - - men, A - - - men, A - - - men, A - - - men.

men, A - - - men, A - - - men, A - - - men, A - - - men.

men, A - - - men, A - - - men, A - - - men, A - - - men.

men, A - - - men, A - - - men, A - - - men, A - - - men.

allargando

ff

Example 3:7.7e, *John's Nunc Dimittis*, full choir, bars 36-40

36

ry of thy peo - - ple Is - ra el.

ff

ry of thy peo - - ple Is - ra el.

ff

ry of thy peo - - ple Is - ra el.

ff

ry of thy peo - - ple Is - ra el.

Example 3:7.7f. Winchester Magnificat, alto, tenor and bass, bars 52-54

Example 3:7.7g. Hereford Magnificat, organ, bars 84-89

Through Howells' avoidance of strong sounding cadences, he managed successfully to eliminate harmonic predictability within much of his music. In this way, there was a far greater scope of composition. Without having to abide strictly by conventional rules, he would often move off into rather unexpected keys. One of the most obvious examples is the wrench into G major from D flat in the Gloria of the *New College* service rather than the expected G flat major (as seen in Ex. 3:6.37).

Looking at a number of Howells' cadence points and seeing to where he could have moved serves as a useful exercise. The examples below show cadences from two services (Exs. 3:7.8).

Example 3:7.8, St John's Magnificat, full choir, bars 107 to end

107

rall. molto
ff

A - - - - - men.

ff

rall. molto

ff

In the example above, the cadence slides from F major (with flattened seventh in the organ) to F sharp major. An alternative version which could work as successfully could show a move from F major to A flat major.

Example 3:7.9, St Augustine's Magnificat, full choir, bars 139 to end

rall. molto

ff

A - - - - - men.

ff

rall. molto

ff

The *St Augustine's* example cadences into G sharp major from a chord of F sharp (the F sharp assumes its role as a dominant substitute of D sharp). An alternative version could cadence into E major, with the preceding chord being a chord of D sharp (again, acting as a dominant substitute to a chord of B) and work equally as suitably.

By creating the sound world he did, and by pushing back the boundaries of tonality as far as he could without stepping outside them, Howells gave his music great potential to move to a great variety of different chords and keys, which gave his music far greater colour and interest. All this contributed to the mysticism of his style which is so unquestionably his own.

3:8. Modes

Previous discussion in this chapter showed how Howells' use of melody paid homage to plainchant. It was, however, the combination of these long, melismatic melodies with the use of modes (rather than traditional Western scales) that made Howells' music so immediately different in sound to many of his contemporaries.¹ Howells' integration of medieval modes within the use of traditional harmony armed him immediately with a particularly unique sound world. He exploited the intricacies of modes, manipulating their sounds into a more modern palette.

Due to Howells' fondness for aesthetics in music, it is possible also that he was drawn to the use of modes because of their very distinctive, almost ethereal sounds. In a world where tonality had been the norm for a number of centuries, modal music would have immediately offered something new and fresh. Modes have a rather dark, melancholic, and even bucolic sound (the majority of them having flattened sevenths), and this would certainly have touched upon Howells' 'pervasively elegiac approach to life'². Within the sphere of evensong settings, modes seemed very suitable indeed. The darker sounds of the majority of the modes instantly provided music of a more reflective nature, rather than the outright brightness of major tonality.

* * * * *

¹ The revival of interest in modal music during the early years of the twentieth century bore great impact on a number of composers. **Chapter 2:1** discussed a number of composers who took a particular interest in resurrecting modes in religious music. The modes first reappeared in the Anglican Church in the form of the Manual for Plainsong and plainsong hymns in the English Hymnal, on which Vaughan Williams spent time working.

² Ridout, A., *A Composer's Life* (London: Thames, 1995), 54.

Many of the modes are bound by similar traits, but all have very subtle and intricate differences that make each one unique in its own right. These differences are dictated by the disposition of tones and semitones. In this way, medieval theorists gave each mode a specific name, which helped describe its ‘aesthetic peculiarities’³, again, something in which Howells saw great importance.

Figure 13

Table showing the seven main modes, their Latin descriptive names.⁴

Mode	Descriptive Name	Range
Dorian	Modus Tristis	D to D
Phrygian	Modus Mysticus	E to E
Lydian	Modus Harmonius	F to F
Mixolydian	Modus Laetus	G to G
Aeolian	Modus Devotus	A to A
Locrian	Modus Angelicus	B to B
Ionian	Modus Perfectus	C to C

With their own individual characters, the modes gave Howells a greater palette of sound with which to compose compared to using simply major and minor scales. With seven modes to choose from, there was larger potential for colour in his music, which he used successfully. He used virtually all the modes mentioned in the table above in his evening canticles. By modulating between different modes, he managed to create passages with completely different moods. More often than not, he would use the more melancholic “minor” modes, which would give way to the more radiant and exultant “major” modes at specific points in the text.

³ ‘Ecclesiastical Modes’ in *The New Grove Dictionary*, 5 vols, (London: Macmillan & Co Ltd, 1913), iii, 230. These details however are not entered in the most current edition of Grove (2001), but this 1913 edition would have been the most accurate definition of modes in Howells’ time.

⁴ *Ibid*, 230.

The flattened seventh is a very striking feature of all the modes (apart from the Ionian and Lydian), and it is this characteristic that gives Howells' music much of its distinctive flavour. Traditional Western harmony relies heavily on the sharpened seventh (the leading note, and also the third of the dominant chord) to pull the tonality towards the tonic. Without this pull, Howells' music immediately developed from the boundaries imposed by strict diatonic harmony, bringing it a new dimension.

Howells certainly did not abandon the use of tonality in structuring his works however⁵, but at the same time, he was also aware of the more satisfying aesthetic potential in shifting (or modulating) between different modes. Just as the major scale can modulate to its relative minor with the simple addition of one accidental, Howells was often seen to move between modes that had the same key signatures. For example, with a mode like Ionian on G (or the G major scale), there is a wealth of other (transposed) modes which use this same key signature (of F sharp): Aeolian on E, Hypophrygian on F sharp, Dorian on A, Phrygian on B, Lydian on C or Mixolydian on F. All Howells would have to do would be to change the tonal centre of the music, and immediately, without changing the key signature, he would have an entirely different character of music.⁶

This device is successfully used in the opening of Howells' *Gloucester Magnificat* (Ex. 3:8:1a), which begins clearly in the Aeolian mode based on F sharp⁷, and has three sharps in its key signature, but by the beginning of the second verse, the tonal centre has moved to E. Still with three sharps in the key signature, the tonal centre of

⁵ Section 3:5 on Structure, Thematic and Motivic use explained Howells' penchant for ternary form and certain key relationships.

⁶ See Appendix D for a more comprehensive table of all modal possibilities.

⁷ The A sharp in the opening organ chord should be disregarded. It is merely an accidental, making an F sharp major chord initially.

E implies the Mixolydian mode. Similarly, the Nunc Dimittis of the *Gloucester* service begins with the same key signature (Ex. 3:8:1b), but based around B – now the Dorian mode, and moves more convincingly to the Aeolian mode based round F sharp again, without needing any further accidentals.

Ex. 3:8.1a, Gloucester Magnificat, treble line, bars 1-9

My soul doth mag - - - ni - fy the

Lord, and my spi - rit hath re - joiced in

6 God my Sa - viour. For he hath re - gard - ed

Ex. 3:8.1b, Gloucester Nunc Dimittis, full choir, bars 5-7

5 SOPRANO Lord, now let - test thou

ALTO Lord, now

TENOR Lord, now

BASS Lord, now

Lord, now

It is possible to see from this that Howells clearly thought about some sort of tonal centre within his canticles. By visually maintaining the same key signature at the start of the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis, Howells achieved unity across the canticles, but he also managed to alter the mood between Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis by changing the tonal anchors; therefore using different modes and achieving different 'aesthetic peculiarities'.

A similar example is found in the *St John's* service, which continues in the opening key signature (of one flat) for the first five verses of the Magnificat. It begins around D (therefore on the Aeolian mode). The tonal anchor moves towards A for the second half of verse one with the same accidentals present (this is now the Phrygian mode). By the time verse three begins, the tonal anchor has settled on G – being the Dorian mode (Ex. 3:8.2a). A variety of modes are used here, but at the same time, a skilful use of traditional Western harmony; A and G respectively being the dominant and subdominant of D, showing a very detectable key structure. The only accidental used is in bar 28, when the choir sing a D flat. This is merely decorative, as the organ maintains a strong bass D natural (Ex. 3:8.2b).

Ex. 3:8.2a, *St John's Magnificat*, full choir, bars 19-23

The musical score for Ex. 3:8.2a, *St John's Magnificat*, full choir, bars 19-23, is presented in a two-staff format. The top staff is for the vocal line, and the bottom staff is for the organ accompaniment. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major/D minor), and the time signature is 4/4. The vocal line begins with the lyrics "For be-hold, from hence-forth all ge - ne -". The organ accompaniment features a steady bass line with a strong D natural, and includes markings for "cresc." and "Ped.".

Ex. 3:8.2b, St John's Magnificat, choir unison, bars 24-28

24

- ra-tions shall call me... bless-ed. For he that is might-ty hath mag-

Howells' method of modulating between modes also works in another respect; in the transposition of modes to different tonal centres. For example, taking the Ionian mode on C (or C major), there is a selection of modes that all begin with this same base (of C), but all of which have different accidentals, which are as follows: Lydian (F sharp), Mixolydian (B flat), Dorian (B and E flats), Aeolian (B, E and A flats), Phrygian (B, E, A and D flats), and Locrian (B, E, A, D and G flats). So, whilst keeping the tonal base intact, Howells could change the mode and therefore character of the music by adding or subtracting a variety of accidentals (refer again to **Appendix D**).

This is shown in the *Salisbury* service Nunc Dimittis starting at the final note of bar 37. The music is solely based around the Dorian mode on D (no accidentals). The ensuing verse moves to two flats, whilst still remaining around a tonal centre of D, which indicates a move to the Phrygian mode. Howells had effected an extremely subtle change in mood by simply adding two flats, whilst still maintaining the tonal centre of D. In this way, there is no wrench to a totally new key (**Ex. 3:8.3**). The example here shows the organ part only at this point.

Ex. 3:8.3, *Salisbury Nunc Dimittis*, organ, bars 36-46

light to light - - en the Gen - tiles, - -
 - a light to light - - en the Gen - tiles, - -
 light to light - - en the Gen - tiles, - -
 light to light - - en the Gen - - - tiles, - -
 and to be the glo - ry of thy peo - - - ple Is - ra-el. - -
 and to be the glo - ry of thy peo - - - ple Is - ra-el. - -
 and to be the glo - ry of thy peo - - - ple Is - ra-el. - -
 and to be the glo - ry of thy peo - - - ple Is - ra-el. - -

Transposition of modes to similar tonal centres was used less frequently by Howells than the other method of retaining the same key signatures through a variety of tonal centres. In addition to the *Salisbury* example above, other instances are found in the B Minor service (bars 39-45) where the tonal centre of D sharp remains, but the organ at bar 39 includes six sharps, whereas the choir on 'he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts' has only four sharps – illustrating a transition between Mixolydian and Locrian modes. Similar instances are found in the *St Peter's*

Westminster service Magnificat at verses 5b to 6a and again at verses 7b and 8a, and also the *Hereford* Nunc Dimittis from verses 2a to 3b, where the tonal centre is B, and the music moves from Phrygian (one sharp) to Aeolian (two sharps).

Because of Howells' fondness for colour and mood, and therefore his wide use of modes to colour passages of music in different ways, it is certainly worth asking whether he was synaesthetic in any way?⁸ Did he compose in specific keys for specific areas of text? Did each canticle have a specific overriding key that could be attributed to a specific building? Or are there any detectable trends within his evening canticles with regards to his use of modes?

The more general answer to these questions would be 'no'. Indeed, Frank Howes stated that it is 'fanciful to suggest Herbert Howells chooses keys according to buildings.'⁹ However, it is remarkable to note that at the bottom of Howells' manuscript to his *Requiem*, he wrote 'amber night sky' as if he was attempting an evocation of the world at dusk (out of interest, the *Requiem* ends on a chord of C sharp).

In a number of canticles, it is possible to detect a potential trend taking shape. A rather convincing pattern is found at the start of each Magnificat. Howells' pre-1945 canticles were rather based around "major" modes and major scales. From the *Collegium Regale* setting onwards, all evening canticles apart from the *New College*

⁸ For more information, see Jewanski, J., 'Synaesthesia' in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie, 29 vols (2nd edition., London: Macmillan, 2001), xxiv, 850.

⁹ Howes, F., *HH and the Anglican Tradition* [no proper reference, undated] RCM, Howells Archives, Box H.

service begin very much in the so-called “minor” modes; the majority being in either the Dorian or Aeolian. Given the sentiment of the text at this point, it does seem a little surprising that Howells so frequently turned to “minor” modes. After all, a great number of Magnificats begin triumphantly in the major key; think no further than Stanford Magnificats as examples, perhaps indicating a sense of awe on the part of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Simulation of a correct mood was obviously of great importance to Howells. The *Collegium Regale* settings came about because of a bet that Howells had with the Dean of King’s College, Cambridge. In an interview on ‘*Music in Worship*’ with Alec Robertson and Erik Routley in 1960, the discussion turned to the concept of ‘cupidity’ – when ‘the composer simply wrote for his own enjoyment, without further thought.’¹⁰ The conversation went as follows:

HH What would have been the result of *Coll Reg*
 [sic.] if cupidity had taken over?

ER Oh, you’d have been perhaps insufficiently
 critical of the ancient notion or the traditional
 notion that the Magnificat ought to start with a
 great shout...

It seems from this therefore, that Routley was quite convinced that Howells’ decision not to open the *Collegium Regale* Magnificat and other, later Magnificats with a triumphant shout was actually a positive step. The issue here is that Howells used

¹⁰ ‘*Music in Worship*’, transcript of recorded interview, 28.01.60, RCM, Howells Archive, Box B.

major keys discreetly. When major keys were used, it made their impact all the more exciting. They were never over-used. Indeed, Christopher Palmer quoted Howells talking about his teacher Walford Davies. He said that he was a ‘man who was quite eager to call a major triad ‘God’s chord...’¹¹. Perhaps this idea had an impact on Howells’ use of the major key, for his use of clear major triads or long passages in major keys is not pervasive. It made any use of a clean major triad seem more devotional, for example, the movement to a D major chord before the Doxology in the *Collegium Regale Magnificat*. There is a great release of built up tension when this chord arrives (preceded by such a chromatic chord), and it sounds particularly pure in the treble register.

Howells’ use of the major key in canticles was often saved for verses 4 to 5 of the Nunc Dimittis: ‘to be a light to lighten the gentiles and to be the glory of thy people Israel’. As discussed above, many of the modes are rather minor and melancholic in sound compared to the traditionally trained Western harmonic ear. Therefore, changing to a “major” orientated mode (like the Ionian, Lydian or Mixolydian) has a particularly profound effect on the colour of the music.

During verses 4 and 5 of the Nunc Dimittis, usually on the words ‘light’, ‘lighten’ or ‘Glory’, Howells would often include major chords to illustrate fully the words at this point and to bring the music to its climax. There is evidence of major tonality around this point in nearly every setting apart from the *St Paul’s* service, which is better known for its heavy and dark character; the opening minor thirds in the lower registers of the voices pervade the piece.

¹¹ Palmer, *Herbert Howells: A Centenary Celebration*, 62.

Figure 17

Table showing chords to which Howells moves on the words 'Light' and 'Glory' in the Nunc Dimittis of each evening canticle. "Major" keys are in bold.

Canticle		Key
Service in G	Light Glory	Perfect cadence into C major Perfect cadence into A major
Service for Unison Voices	Light Glory	A minor chord, moving from one of A flat minor on 'be' B flat minor chord
Service for Male Voices (1935)	Light Glory	Ascends B flat major ~ Descends D flat major D major
Service for Men's Voices (1941)	Light Glory	A minor chord Within an Aeolian modality, chord based around D
King's College Cambridge	Light Glory	G major E minor
Gloucester Cathedral	Light Glory	F sharp minor Perfect cadence into D major
New College Oxford	Light Glory	Perfect cadence into C major E flat minor
Worcester Cathedral	Light Glory	C sharp minor Final syllable falls onto D major chord
St Paul's Cathedral	Light Glory	E flat minor C minor
B Minor	Light Glory	E flat minor A major
St Peter's Westminster	Light Glory	B minor Perfect cadence into E major
St John's Cambridge	Light Glory	Aeolian on E (ambiguous) E minor chord on first beat of bar 36
Sarum (Salisbury Cathedral)	Light Glory	E major D minor
Winchester Cathedral	Light Glory	D flat major F sharp major
Chichester Cathedral	Light Glory	F sharp major (enharmonically) A minor but second crotchet beat of bar 30 is D major
St Augustine's Edgbaston	Light Glory	tonality ambiguous E flat major
Hereford Cathedral	Light Glory	B minor Perfect cadence into C major at first beat of bar 37
Magdalen College Oxford	Light Glory	B flat major C major
York Minster	Light Glory	G major C sharp minor
St Luke's Church, Dallas	Light Glory	Chromatically ambiguous Ambiguous, but moves to G flat minor on 'glory'

This table shows Howells' preference for turning to major keys around a specific word in the text. Major chords are more often than not employed on either 'Light' or 'Glory' (and sometimes both), lending further radiance to the music at this particular point.

Howells' dislike of endless bars of major sounding modes is apparent even in his earliest setting (the Service in G). At the text 'and hath exalted the humble and meek', the music moves from the minor mood of the previous verse to a more major sounding section. However, in order to keep a lid on the climax of the now suggested move to D major (as the treble line moves to 'exalted'), the treble line is changed to F natural, which then descends to settle around Aeolian on D (with B flats) before settling on a chord of D major at the end of the verse. By moving the treble to F natural rather than F sharp, Howells retained a rather ethereal effect, and postponed the clichéd and predictable major key until the choir lands on the subdominant at bar 142, with a simple tierce da picardie in the alto line (Exs. 3:8.4).

Ex. 3:8.4. Service in G Magnificat, full choir, bars 134-144

and hath ex - alt - ed. ex - alt - ed. ex - alt - ed.

and the hum - ble and meek. the hum - ble and meek. the hum - ble and meek.

Another similar example of Howells' constant changing of modes to stifle the overuse of major keys is seen in the *Gloucester* service at bar 29 of the Magnificat (Ex. 3:8.5). If the accidentals in the key signature remained constant, the whole phrase would linger uninterestingly in A major. Moving the treble line to C natural and the bass to F natural cleverly brings a different character (a more mystical one) to the music whilst still remaining anchored around A.

Ex. 3:8.5, Gloucester Magnificat, full choir, bars 27-30

27 SOPS. I & II unison poco rit.

fear him, through-out all ge - - ne -
 that fear him, through-out all ge - - ne -
 fear him, through-out all ge - - ne -
 fear him, through-out all ge - - ne - poco rit.

Howells' unexpected movements into other tonal centres became a common trait of his work. By becoming so accustomed to this, the listener is in no way shocked by, for example, the unison movement of the choir from F natural to C sharp at the end of the *Worcester* Nunc Dimittis (Ex. 3:8.6). Once the F naturals appear in this passage, the final cadence could be one of A major. Howells' ending into C sharp is strikingly ambiguous, and also Phrygian.

Ex. 3:8.6, Worcester Nunc Dimittis, unison choir, bars 29-33

29 *ff* *And.*

- - ry of thy peo - - ple Is - - - ra-el

- - ry of thy peo - - ple Is - - - ra-el

- - ry of thy peo - - ple Is - - - ra-el

- - ry of thy peo - - ple Is - - - ra-el

It is not surprising either to hear the jolt to a chord of A flat major from a slightly ambiguous F in the *Salisbury* service (Ex. 3:8.7).

Ex. 3:8.7, Salisbury Magnificat, full choir, bars 91-96

91

Son, and to the Ho - - - ly

Son, and to the Ho - - - ly

Son, and to the Ho - - - ly

Son, and to the Ho - - - ly

95

Ghost.

Ghost.

Ghost.

Ghost.

He even kept the listener alert in the final cadence of the *Winchester* service which moved into C major from a B flat minor chord. This could just as easily cadence into A flat minor (or major) and still sound particularly Howellsian, but over all it finishes here in C to maintain the opening signature and give it more of a sense of structure (Ex. 3:8.8).¹²

Ex. 3:8.8, Winchester Nunc Dimittis, full choir, bars 53 to end

The image shows a musical score for a full choir, consisting of four staves. The music is in 4/4 time and features a key signature of one flat (B-flat minor). The lyrics are "world with - out end. A - - men." The score includes dynamic markings such as *f*, *cresc.*, and *ff*. The music is written in a style typical of a choral setting, with a clear cadence at the end of the phrase.

As far as other modes are concerned, no particular trend occurs, but it is worth commenting on Howells' use of the Phrygian mode. With its minor second, this mode is one of the most distinctive. Zarlino's book *On the Modes* describes the Phrygian mode as 'vehement and furious'¹³. Its use creeps very sporadically into the *New College, Worcester* and B Minor services, but it more commonly used in the canticles from the *St Peter's* service onwards; similarly, a less frequent employment of major modes is also detected from this service onwards.

¹² Further detail on the unpredictability of Howells' cadences was seen in Section 3:7

¹³ Zarlino, G., *On the Modes* (London: Yale University Press, 1983), 20.

Howells' use of modes went further than any of his contemporaries. Vaughan Williams still stands in very high regard for his *Mass in G Minor*, which successfully used passages in the Aeolian, Dorian and Mixolydian modes. Vaughan Williams remained more consciously archaic, whereas Howells tried to make moves towards a new tonality. His music bears a distinct development in modality. He used a far greater range of colours and moods to get to the pinnacle of the meaning of the words of the evening canticles.

3:9. Howells in Cathedral repertoire today

Figure 1 in section Section 3:1 split Howells' evening canticles into four manageable, characteristic and chronological groups:

- Pre-1945 canticles
- 1945-1951 canticles
- 1951-1957 canticles
- 1966-1975 canticles

It is common knowledge that those canticles in the second group are the most popular canticles, even to this day; figure 4 in Section 3:1 showed this. There is no doubting that the *Collegium Regale*, *Gloucester* and *St Paul's* services demonstrate Howells' highest achievements, but what makes these three canticles in particular so popular? More importantly, why do other canticles barely get a look-in on Cathedral music lists? Which canticles are more deserving of a place in the repertoire?

Reasons for the success of the middle period canticles need no more than a few sentences here. The *Collegium Regale* and *Gloucester* services abound with sensitivity and serenity, creating ecstatic climaxes at various points in the music. Neither setting is too elaborate or heavy and they perfectly encapsulate the significance of the evening service. It is not surprising that these two services constantly battle for favourite place amongst Howells enthusiasts.

The *St Paul's* service is heavier than previous settings due to its almost constant use of full choir throughout, but there is still an impression of sensitivity which Howells

gained from his prevalent use of unison, sense of melodic flow, and use of diatonicism in the vocal lines.

The *Worcester* service setting has many similar qualities to the *Collegium Regale* and *Gloucester* settings, but is strangely missing from many Cathedral repertoire lists. It has a particular pastoral sentiment to it. Not simply from Howells' use of modes (these are used in all settings), but the contour of the opening organ phrase seems almost to conjure up an image of a bird swooping across the countryside. This motif very much imbues the whole canticle and creates a particularly calm emotion. Much of the choral writing in this setting is unrivalled. Whilst keeping it mainly diatonic within the choir lines, the organ very subtly introduces a few chromatic twists. Simple vocal lines are awarded more interest by triplet figures, or a change into compound time.

The middle section of the Magnificat uses a careful mixture of accompanied and unaccompanied lines. Towards the end of the Magnificat, Howells uses SSAT texture, a combination of voices he rarely used, which gives a lightness and ethereality to the music. The Nunc Dimittis shares this ethereal edge. Much of it is unaccompanied and tenderly written; the music being at its best at 'which though has prepared...' This section almost portrays an image of light through stained glass windows, as the abundance of false relations could portray sparks and flashes of colour (Ex. 3:9.1).

Ex. 3:9.1, Worcester Nunc Dimittis, full choir, bars 15-18

15

thy sal - va - tion; Which thou hast pre - par -

thy sal - va - tion; Which thou hast pre - par -

thy sal - va - tion; Which thou hast pre - par -

seen thy sal - - va - tion; Which thou hast pre -

poco cresc.

The success of this canticle is something to which the current Director of Music at Worcester Cathedral, Adrian Lucas, agrees:

The *Worcester* service was new to me when I moved to this post, and I found it quite difficult initially. It has, however, grown on me considerably since then, and I think it works really well overall. Some of the writing for boys or S/A is particularly beautiful.¹

The next group of canticles (the ‘transitional canticles’) include the B Minor, *St John’s* and *St. Peter’s Westminster* services. The B Minor service has a good deal of coverage in current repertoire lists, in fact, it seems it is third only to the *Collegium Regale* and *Gloucester* services in popularity, most likely because of its relative ease.

The *St. John’s* service lacks a great amount of variety. The opening six verses are in unison, and when the choir then splits, it only does so in two parts: treble/tenor and

¹ Adrian Lucas to Sophie Cleobury (personal e-mail), 06.05.06.

alto/bass for much of the rest of it. There are a number of instances of good choral writing (at ‘he hath put down the mighty’), but not enough as this canticle remains very simplistic. Its main feature is the simple use of closely clashing notes – more than have been heard before. However, they seem a little experimental in their execution and not quite daring enough (Ex. 3:9.2).

Ex. 3:9.2, St John’s Magnificat, full choir, bars 53-58

The whole canticle seems to fester in a low tessitura and not move out of this until the final Amen, probably the most effective part of the whole canticle, when the final chord (in the Magnificat) has the major third high in the treble part, which makes the end of the setting slightly more jubilant.

The *St. Peter's* service is a hugely successful canticle and deserves far more recognition than its one mark on the current cathedral repertoire lists (that of York Minster). Characterised by its chromatically twisting line and subsequent feeling of mystery (Ex. 3:9.3), this canticle never over steps the mark. It retains its simplicity and ethereality despite full choir being involved in much of it. The vocal lines rarely clash as is customary in later settings, and therefore the seeing is relatively easy and needs to be performed more frequently.

Ex. 3:9.3, St Peter's Magnificat, organ, bars 1-3

Moving easily and lightly

ORGAN

mp (Sw.)

mf (Ch.)
Man.

Ped.

The first four in the final group of eight evening canticles (1966-1975) were all written between 1966 and 1967. This came after a nine-year gap in canticle composition. Perhaps it is foolhardy to suggest that Howells may have been going through some sort of crisis spiritually during 1957 and 1966, but it does begin to explain why his canticles that appeared in 1966-7 had changed in character so drastically. All four of these settings show a relative unease and discomfort, the majority of them being very dark and heavily chromatic, which often stems the flow of the melodic lines. Flowing melodic lines are a particularly strong feature of his most successful canticles, as **Section 3:4** showed.

David Halls, current Director of Music at Salisbury Cathedral says the following of the *Sarum* service:

You will notice that we don't have the *Sarum* service in repertoire. I did reintroduce it a few years ago but have recently dropped it as it is not one of HH's best, being somewhat abrasive and dissonant and not at all suited to the fact we only have (and only ever had) 6 men. There are long,

long held chords which a choir of our size does not cope with too successfully.²

Paul Spicer however disagrees that the *Salisbury* service should be dropped from repertoire. Indeed, he believes this service is ‘perhaps the most deserving of notice with its frequent (and unusual) five-part texture with split treble parts... [which] is a beautiful effect.’³

The final comment from Halls brings into doubt as to whether the *Sarum* service was in fact intended for Salisbury Cathedral at all. In fact, it is interesting to note in Paul Andrews’ CD notes that the *St John’s* service was originally intended for the Salisbury choir. If Halls is correct about the choir only ever having had six men, then the *St John’s* service, with its large amounts of unison, certainly seems a more probable service for the small choir of Salisbury Cathedral.

The Salisbury service is the first with a slightly heavier to it, most likely this is down to the more frequent clashing of parts (**Ex. 3:9.4**) and the fact that two treble lines are used for some passages, increasing the texture. The middle section of the Magnificat provides a more rhythmically punchy illustration of the words in any of Howells’ settings thus far (**Ex. 3:9.5**).

Ex. 3:9.4, Salisbury Magnificat, trebles and alto, bars 16-19

² David Halls to Sophie Cleobury (personal e-mail), 06.05.06.

³ Spicer, ‘Neglected Resources – Paul Spicer evaluates Herbert Howells’s canticle settings’

16

hence - - forth all ge - ne - ra - tions shall call

hence - - forth all ge - ne - ra - tions shall call

hence - - forth all ge - ne - ra - tions shall call

from hence forth all ge - ne - ra - tions shall call, shall

BASS *mf* from hence - - - forth all shall call me bless - - -

Ex. 3:9.5, Salisbury Magnificat, full choir, bars 44-47

44

hearts. He hath put down the migh - ty

hearts. He hath put down the migh - ty

hearts. He hath put down the migh - ty

hearts. He hath put down the migh - ty

The *Winchester* service is rather disappointing. Once full choir enter, it is tremendously weighty because of its low tessitura and intense chromaticism. There is little flow and momentum, and the Magnificat especially becomes a little turgid. It is particularly restless setting. One stark feature of the service, predominantly the Nunc Dimittis, is its use of open fifths, which not only are reminiscent of medieval organum, but also further enhance the setting's dark intensity (Ex. 3:9.6).

Ex. 3:9.6, Winchester Nunc Dimittis, full choir, bars 21-24

21

seen thy sal - va - - - - tion, which thou hast pre. *cresc. sempre*

seen thy sal - va - - - - tion, which thou hast pre. *cresc. sempre*

seen thy sal - va - - - - tion, which thou hast pre. *cresc. sempre*

seen thy sal - va - - - - tion, which thou hast pre. *cresc. sempre*

One service which a number of commentators admire is the *Chichester* service, one which Frank Howes described as one of 'latent unease and dark shadow.'⁴ Paul Spicer claims that it should be performed more, being as it is one of the best examples of Howells' later style. This is true. Of the later canticles, the *Chichester* service has some very intense yet impressive moments. Moving on from the rather apologetic clashes in the *St John's* service, the clashes in this service are carried out with more purpose and confidence.

The Glorias in both Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis barely build to the stupefying climax that the listener has been so used to in previous canticles. There is an intense despair carried through this whole canticle, which many feel shows Howells' deep anguish with the world. The constant blatant and purposeful clashing of close vocal parts brings a particularly uncomfortable feel to this setting. Paul Spicer says: '[it is] so wonderfully expressive and so challenging in its humanist response to such a well-worn liturgical text... [it] brings a wholly new light to bear...'⁵

⁴ Howes, *HH and the Anglican Tradition*, 6.

⁵ Spicer, *Neglected resource*, Paul Spicer evaluates HH's canticle settings.

Spicer's thoughts are corroborated by Alan Thurlow, the current Director of Music at Chichester Cathedral, who says of the setting: 'I'm very fond of it. It has some exciting moments and some quite angular vocal lines at times.'⁶ To further the list of believers in this setting, the thoughts of Paul Andrews should be acknowledged:

Perhaps it's no surprise that this set has not found a regular place in the repertoire – it is too disturbing, too autobiographical, for frequent performance. But the real Howells is here too, and it deserves to be heard.⁷

The *St Augustine's* service receives very few accounts, positive or negative, but it is a service that should not be neglected. It has a better sense of flow than the *Winchester* service, and has the innovation of a treble solo line and semi-chorus section in the Magnificat, which gives further variety to the vocal lines. It displays moments of angst, especially in the Gloria, which includes syncopation, a great amount of quaver movement, and bears the marking *poco a poco piu animato*.

Vocal lines in this canticle become far more angular, and the constant changes from simple to compound time show this *St Augustine's* service to be a certain precursor to the restlessness and commotion of the *York* service of only five years later – Howells' final setting for a British cathedral. The *York* setting is very dark and heavy. Even to look at on the page it is crammed full of notes. It has a rather fast pace and the whole service seems particularly agitated and never settles unlike Howells' earlier settings

⁶ Alan Thurlow to Sophie Cleobury (personal e-mail), 07.05.06.

⁷ Andrews, in CD sleeve notes of vol. 2, *The Complete Morning and Evening Canticles of Herbert Howells (1892-1983)*, 5 vols, Collegiate Singers, dir. Andrew Millinger (Bedfordshire: Priory Records, 2000).

which made great use of suspended choir at the ends of verses in order to release tension and create calm through stasis. This setting certainly illustrates the fraught side to Howells' personality.

The two services preceding the *York* setting (*Hereford* and *Magdalen College Oxford* of 1969 and 1970 respectively), are both rather strangely placed considering the services immediately before and after them. The *Hereford* service in particular reverts back to a slightly lighter, more serene style of the middle period canticles. In fact, it seems more like the *St. Peter's* and *Salisbury* services in style; chromatic, but not too heavy. It certainly has more of a sense of flow to it, and is not as sluggish as its predecessors had the tendency of being. Much of the setting is homophonic, which increases its simplicity. Its Gloria is far more impressive in execution than the *Chichester* or *Winchester* settings and ends on a far more exhilarating note than those settings of 1966/7. It is a shame this canticle is rarely performed today, as it is not difficult in execution as its preceding three settings.

The *Magdalen* setting has the majority of its interest in its organ part, which clearly takes its inspiration from Baroque keyboard music. There is less inspired writing in the vocal lines, which aren't so strongly characterised like the clashing parts in the *Chichester* service, or the low tessitura of the *Winchester* service. The *Dallas* service is a particularly weighty and difficult setting, with its host of time signature changes. It never settles and, apart from its opening treble melody, is rather intense and too heavy for typically sized choirs to perform effectively.

It is clear that none of Howells' evening canticles should be ignored entirely. Although many of the later canticles present problems (highly chromatic vocal lines, complex rhythms etc), every single canticle is worth exploring. This is said with particular reference to the *Worcester*, *St Peter's*, *Salisbury*, *St Augustine's* and *Hereford* services, which deserve more attention than they currently get.

CHAPTER FOUR

4:1. Drawing conclusions

4:1. Drawing conclusions

It is somehow fitting that possibly the most sublime piece of architecture in England, the chapel at King's College Cambridge, should be the launching pad for the twentieth century's equivalent in music for the church.¹

– Paul Spicer

Chapter three discussed the importance of the *Collegium Regale* evening service of 1945. With the hindsight and knowledge of all of Howells' evening service settings from 1918 to 1975, *Collegium Regale* was used continually as a point of reference through which specific strengths and weaknesses of other canticle settings (earlier or later) were pinpointed. Although room for debate remains as to whether *Collegium Regale* is the finest of Howells' settings (it constantly fights with the *Gloucester* and *St Paul's* canticles for first place), it seems that through its enduring popularity, its unmistakable change in musical style from previous settings, and the fact that it was composed nearly a whole year before the *Gloucester* service, and a few years before the *St Paul's*, means that *Collegium Regale* can be held up as the supreme example of Howells' inimitable style – a style which changed the face of Anglican Church music irrevocably.

Paul Spicer's quote at the top of this chapter suggests that because of the *Collegium Regale* settings and what they brought to Anglican music, Howells can be considered the architect of twentieth century Church Music. This is true. Howells' music advanced considerably in style from the inbuilt conservatism in settings of the early twentieth century initiated by Stanford and carried on by many of Howells' immediate

¹ Spicer, *Herbert Howells*, 130.

contemporaries. Howells' music brought a distinctive new sound to Church Music and had an inherent reflective quality provided very much by a self-biographical element.

This fourth and final chapter seeks to draw some conclusions as to the relative success of Howells' evening canticles, and their legacy to Anglican Church music as a whole. It discusses various turning points and events in Howells' life which were vital in the shaping of his personality. Many factors go in to explaining why Howells composed almost exclusively for the church towards the end of his life.

* * * * *

Stanford's legacy to Anglican Church music was vast. Not only were his own successes long-standing, but from the extensive list of composers producing works for the Anglican Church in the early to mid-twentieth century, names of Stanford's pupils supply a weighty proportion. Charles Wood, Harold Darke, Cyril Rootham, Martin Shaw, John Ireland, Edgar Bainton, Arthur Benjamin, Basil Harwood, George Dyson are all names with frequent places on cathedral repertoire lists.

The trouble with the canticle settings of the generation following on from Stanford was that they had very little in the way of originality. There lacked a certain innovation, something that positioned Stanford in such high repute. Through his use of ternary form, thematic reference, fresher harmony than the Victorians had used, and sometimes (as in his Evening service in G) vibrant use of the organ, he carved out

a highly exemplary form from which it was going to be extremely hard to advance sufficiently.

There seemed to be a air of conservatism in service settings for the church at this time, and although many great canticles (Dyson, Noble, Ireland, Harwood, Murrill) have proved themselves in popularity still to this day, it was not until Howells' *Collegium Regale* in 1945 and his subsequent settings that Anglican Church music began take a new direction once again, one that satisfied the spiritual needs of people too.

Services such as Darke in F, Dyson in D, Noble in B Minor and Brewer in D are highly exemplary of the kind of service settings being produced during the early twentieth century, and very fine services in their own right. All begin with the Stanfordian energy at 'My soul doth magnify the Lord', and continue this vigour through the Magnificat, which is something Howells rarely did. Dyson in D and Noble in B Minor particularly use certain rhythms and syncopations in order to keep the energy in the music. Added to this, the majority of settings used the traditional one syllable per note, ensuring a perpetual motion in the music.

A great many Magnificat settings were very much held up by the ternary form idea initiated by S. S. Wesley, and later Stanford in particular. This was done in a variety of ways. For example, Darke in F and Dyson in D simply returned to the opening key at the Gloria in order to spell out a return to section A of the ternary form. Noble in B Minor and Brewer in D relied strongly on thematic devices holding together the ternary structure of the music, and also in order to develop the middle sections.

The organ provided an important driving role in many canticle settings in the first half of the Twentieth Century. Dyson in D is famed for its immense organ parts, and Noble in B minor is very much carried along by the organ's perpetual movement.

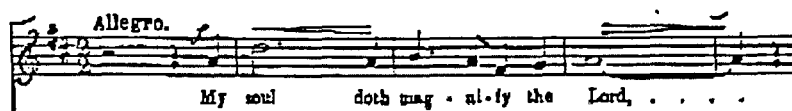
Brewer's 1927 *Evening Service in D* is a typical example of a lot of canticles from the first half of the twentieth century. It is a well-structured piece with effective use of melodic motifs. However, it has a great number of styles, which turn it into a rather poor composition, lacking in true innovation. It shows influences of many composers. There is one particular instance where he shows a definite liking of Vaughan Williams (Ex. 4:1.1) and his penchant for parallel chords, but this idea is certainly not developed and seems rather out of place. The setting on the whole is extremely typical of the sorts of services around at that time; lots of full choir homophonic passages, inspiring melodies covered by the organ, which occasionally adds fuller textures to the music.

Ex 4:1.1, Brewer in D, Magnificat, organ, bars 24-5

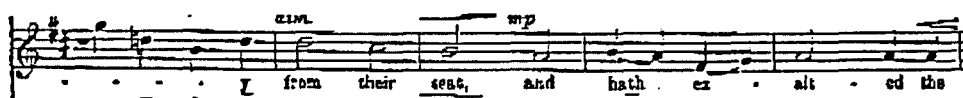


The melodies are developed well and used successfully in structuring the music. It is worth noticing that two of the main themes of the Magnificat are more than reminiscent of Stanford's service in G (Exs. 4:1.2), which shows influence of another composer.

Ex. 4:1.2a, Brewer in D, Magnificat, treble, bars 1-5



Ex. 4:1.2b, Brewer in D, Magnificat, tenor 44-48



There is also a fleeting reference to Howellsian harmony on 'thy' in bar 15 of the Nunc Dimittis (Ex. 4:1.3). This is a little out of place in the texture seeing as Brewer makes no effort to use this extended harmonic palette again.

Ex. 4:1.3, Brewer in D, Magnificat, full choir, 8-17

part in peace, . . . ac - cord . . . ing to Thy

part in peace, . . . ac - cord . . . ing to Thy

part . . . in peace, . . . ac - cord . . . ing to Thy

part in peace, . . . ac - cord . . . ing to Thy

word.

word. . .

word.

word.

H

p

In comparing a typical setting from the early twentieth century to Howells' musical style, it is clear that *Collegium Regale* evening canticles were a complete revolution in style. Whilst sticking to the stylistic boundaries imposed by Stanford's innovations, Howells pushed them on every single detail as far as he was able. He pushed tonal harmonies to the point of breaking whilst keeping the music within a tonal sphere and easy for listeners to grasp.

The *Collegium Regale* evening service so changed the perceptions of the office of Evensong. Howells' perception of the texts of Evensong showed a deep understanding of the meaning of the liturgy. With its unassuming Magnificat whose melody played around a minor third, to the stillness conveyed by the step-wise movement of trebles and altos before the Magnificat Gloria, he brought modesty and reserve to the evening service, which gave his music a complete uniqueness. It gave rise to a highly sensitive and personal idiom, which Howells was to develop through the subsequent years.

Why give so much attention to *Collegium Regale* though? What is significant about it? **Appendix A** shows a chronology of Howells' works. From this, it is significant to note that from 1941 onwards, barely a year went by without some sort of sacred choral composition occurring – be it with orchestral or organ accompaniment. Most importantly in the current discussion, 1944/5 onwards was certainly a defining moment in Howells' style of evening canticle composition. But what factors lead to such a progressive change in style at this time? Why did Howells move so resolutely to a career of church composition, undoubtedly the output for which he is best remembered today?

The answer lies in a combination of three significant events that happened in the decade spanning 1935 and 1945. Howells is often quoted as believing in the importance of association with people and places as the greatest motivation upon his compositions, and these three events pay homage, in no uncertain terms, to that fact:

Men, choirs, ecclesiastical buildings have become inseparably
a part of that [shaping force]. So too have exemplars and –

acoustics.²

Right from his first sacred choral works composed for Westminster Cathedral (as discussed in Chapter two), Howells was composing with particular choirs, buildings and acoustics in mind. With his arrival at St John's College Cambridge, not only did he have world famous choirs at his disposal, but also, his time there must have focussed his mind on those factors that were so dear to him, notably, the choral tradition of England and the close association of cathedrals and chapels that he so loved. The move to Cambridge surely allowed Howells to channel his compositional ideas within a very traditional, almost sheltered world – one that suited his personality and needs perfectly.

Whilst being of great importance, the move to Cambridge with its choirs and chapels was only part of the story. Two more highly significant events between 1935 and 1945 took place which were to give Howells the vigour and precise focus which he needed in order to compose in such a personal style. The first was the death from polio of nine-year old Michael Howells in September 1935. The loss of his son was a grave shock from which Howells never fully recovered. It is generally, but perhaps too abruptly acknowledged that Michael's death was the single logical inspiration needed for Howells to compose his tour de force, *Hymnus Paradisi*, but there is little doubt that much of *Hymnus* grew out of Howells' complete devastation at losing his only son at such a young age. Christopher Palmer suggests also that the death of Howells' father in 1919 was also important in *Hymnus*' conception.³

² Palmer quoting Howells in *Herbert Howells : A Centenary Celebration*, 400.

³ Palmer, *Herbert Howells : A Centenary Celebration*, 97.

It is a work of immense proportions – mentally as well as physically moving listeners and performers alike. Howells evidently became more philosophical and deeply involved in perceptions of life than he had ever been before. Michael's death certainly focussed his mind vividly.

Howells' move to Cambridge was essentially down to the outbreak of the Second World War. The loss and devastation from both world wars undoubtedly affected him. Much of his music has a pervasive sense of loss and melancholy throughout it, a loss he felt from an early age when one of his best friends, Francis Purcell Warren was killed (in World War One). Alan Ridout writes of Howells' absolute devastation at the loss of 'Bunny' Warren in his book, *A Composer's Life*:

There is no doubt in my mind that Howells loved Francis Purcell Warren... once he dwelt on him and stood before the picture [he] gradually [became] inarticulate with grief... [Howells said] "he was everything to me".⁴

The repeat of devastation, this time from the Second World War, could hardly have been disregarded by Howells' highly elegiac mind, one by now highly receptive to loss. Remaining in Cambridge whilst many of his contemporaries were fighting in the war, Howells had the opportunity to observe passively the outcome of war, and had time to contemplate these losses more remotely.

⁴ Ridout, *A Composer's Life*, 55.

Howells' stance on life changed as he suffered a great many losses on the path to his middle age. By the early 1940s, he had become accepting enough of these losses to begin composing sizeable works once again. His new musical style, encapsulated in expansive works like *Hymnus Paradisi*, and more importantly in this discussion, his evening service for King's College Cambridge, wholeheartedly embraced a great many of his bereavements.

One of the most pertinent features of many of Howells' evening canticles is their highly contemplative quality he created. As **Chapter three** showed, this came down largely to his use of contrapuntal melodies, his impressionistic palette and lack of goal-directed harmonies, which all combined to transcend the music into a new sound-world unheard before in the Anglican Church. Sounds which are more akin to jazz were given their place in Church music by Howells, and increased mystery within the music. His sound world was particularly reflective. More than simply being innovative stylistically, Howells' new approach was certainly influenced by a number of internal factors, fuelled largely by his intense sense of loss.

It is somewhat strange that Howells evidently found such a great deal of comfort in composing so successfully and so abundantly for the church despite him being an atheist is somewhat strange, and adds a great deal of mystification to his character. Some commentators find it hard seriously to accept Howells' works for the church given this lack of belief. Clark, writing in *Elgar and the 3 Cathedral Organists and other essays* exclaimed his alarm at Howells' lack of faith:

...the agnostic Howells set to music texts which he did not believe. 'As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. World without end. Amen.' Is it not faintly shocking that the music Howells found for those words is the work of a man without any belief in the life everlasting or indeed any of the tenets of the Christian faith...?⁵

Clark seems very blinded by the lack of faith to pay any attention to the worth of Howells' music however. Howells' atheism should be regarded as a positive factor in his music making. Without conceding to the rigours and devotion of the church within his compositions, he expressed himself through his own personality and poignant personal experiences. There is something highly intimate in Howells' service music, which is not found in any composer for the church before him.

Through his lack of faith, Howells was in a position to offer the church something new. Due to the fact that his motives did not spring plainly from the desire to set the words of the liturgy to music in a conventional way, by simply uplifting worshippers, Howells' settings offered more. The elegiac tone of Howells' settings rouses the senses. The magnificent climaxes he created successfully transcended typical religious thought of piety and devotion.

Howells' music made people alert and open to their very own spirituality, be it

⁵ Clark, R., 'Elgar and Howells: outsider and insider; moralist and pragmatist' in *Elgar and the three cathedral organists and other essays*, (Oxford, Positif Press, 2002), 44.

religious or not. John Rutter corroborates this by saying ‘I don’t think faith is a necessary precondition for writing religious music, but I do think the composer needs a *sense* of faith, by which I mean an ability to understand what faith feels like.’⁶ Howells had certainly developed some sort of personal resilience through the great many losses of his younger years. From ‘not even [having] a glimmer...’⁷ of a belief in the afterlife, and being so ‘ill-equipped with lack of faith to bear the loss of a son’⁸, Howells gave himself license to develop a personal courage and a personal faith, which gave rise to incredibly evocative and heartfelt music which was sometimes even angry; the *Chichester* canticles and the *Stabat Mater* evoke his personal pain particularly.

Howells sought to keep the Anglican tradition alive through its contemporary needs. His main output of evening canticles coincided with the end of the Second World War, around 1944-5. This was certainly a time to bolster enthusiasm within the Anglican Church. The general sentiment across the country after the war was one of despondency and gloom. Armstrong, writing in *Church Music Today* in 1946 clearly stated that ‘the fact of the matter is that we are all feeling the need of some great renewal of spiritual force as would reanimate every part of our lives.’⁹ Despite religion being questioned so much in the twentieth century, more than ever before, the church and its longstanding tradition was certainly looked at again after the war as people’s spiritual lead; and the music provided by Howells was apposite to this.

⁶ John Rutter to Sophie Cleobury (personal e-mail), 02.05.06

⁷ Ridout, *A Composer’s Life*, 55.

⁸ *Ibid*, 56.

⁹ Armstrong, T., *Church Music Today* (London: OUP, 1946), 13.

Armstrong goes on to say that 'our art, our tradition of church music, will survive and develop, so long as it satisfies some spiritual need of the great body of Christian people.'¹⁰ There is a great deal of truth in this statement. Stanford picked up where the Victorians left off. He began to provide a better quality music, which celebrated the jubilation of religion without the apparent sentimentality caused by weak chromaticism that preoccupied Victorian composition. Howells went on to spear-head the next age of reform. He created a notably new sound-world with a particularly spiritual sentiment, one which encouraged internal reflection and captured the state of mind of the country at large.

Much of Howells' musical idiom paid homage to bygone eras – most notably the Tudor idiom. Added to the intense melancholic feeling conjured up by his losses, there is also a deep association with Tudor composers, and more importantly, the longstanding traditions of the Anglican Church, belief in which Howells upheld so steadfastly.

Howells wholeheartedly believed that compositions for the Anglican Church should follow closely the tradition begun in the Tudor age, thus explaining his partiality for false relations and counterpoint. Howells said in his address to the Blandford and EMI Press in 1965:

There is only one unbroken tradition in British music. It is the tradition, if one may so call it, and perhaps limit it by so calling it, of the English Cathedral organ loft... Nine out of ten

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 13.

musicians in The Treasury of English Church Music... have in their bones, in their minds and in their imagination what I can and like to call the immemorial sound of voices which to any Britisher [*sic.*] and to the world in general is one of the best things to have in one's make-up.¹¹

This tradition of the 'English Cathedral organ loft' was seemingly of paramount importance to Howells. His life had been steeped in the traditions of the Anglican Church. His humble upbringing at the village church of Lydney in Gloucestershire was only the start. His formative years took him to St Mary Redcliffe in Bristol, and most importantly to Gloucester Cathedral, and his first official appointment was as assistant organist at Salisbury Cathedral early in 1917.

Howells maintained his love for composers such as William Walton and Benjamin Britten purely because they were keeping traditions alive. Works such as *Belshazzar's Feast* and *Rejoice in the Lamb* provide further links to the past. The counterpoint used in both composers' masterpieces was a display of great proficiency, one to which Howells willingly testified:

Walton – *Belshazzar's Feast* - annihilates all Byrd, Purcell, Boyce, Wesley, Stanford, C. Wood...but I am willing to swear that only a man steeped in the church choral tradition these men

¹¹Address to the Blandford and EMI Press Reception in connection with The Treasury of English Church Music held on 26th October 1965, RCM, Howells Archive, Box C. Also, Palmer quotes a very similar passage to this in *Herbert Howells: A Centenary Celebration*, (London: Thames, 1992), 12, as a 'recent conversation [between] Sir Malcolm Sargent' and Howells.

so enriched could have composed the setting of *By the Waters of Babylon...*¹²

He commented similarly on Britten's *Rejoice in the Lamb*:

I like to think that if Purcell had been one of Britten's listeners he might well have caught an echo of his own lilting tunes and rhythms. For certainly the echo was there...¹³

To Howells, a vital part of a composers' makeup was to have this tradition built into his bones, mind and imagination. If there was 'not even a glimmer...'¹⁴ of belief in the afterlife for Howells, then certainly the longstanding tradition of the Anglican Church and what it upheld are where he found not only his compositional niche, but more importantly, and ultimately, his solace.

¹² Notes for a BBC Home Service broadcast on 14th November 1943 on 'Church Music of Today', Howells Archive, RCM, Box B, 2.

¹³ Notes for a BBC Home Service broadcast on 14th November 1943 on 'Church Music of Today', Howells Archive, RCM, Box B, 2.

¹⁴ Ridout, *A Composer's Life*, 55.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Chronological list of works by Herbert Howells

Appendix B

Categorical list of works by Herbert Howells

Appendix C

Words to Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis

Appendix D

List of all modal possibilities

Appendix A

Chronological list of works by Herbert Howells

Work	Year	Category	Other
Four Romantic Piano Pieces	1908	Piano	<i>Norwegian Tune, The Arab's Song, ?, Peasant's March</i>
<i>When Cats Run Home</i>	1909	Chorus and Orchestra	Unison voices
<i>Marching Song</i>	1909	Piano	
<i>To the Owl</i>	1909	Secular Choral	<i>When Cats Run Home, Thy Tu-Whits are Lulled</i>
Five part songs for male voices	1909	Secular Choral	<i>Love's Secret, Is the Moon Tired?, Weep you no more, The Winds Whistle Cold, A dirge</i>
<i>My Shadow</i>	1909	Solo Songs	
Sonata in B minor	1911	Chamber	for violin and piano
<i>God of England</i>	1911	Hymn Tune	
Sonata in C minor	1911	Organ	
<i>Summer Idyls</i>	1911	Piano	<i>Meadow Rest, Summer Song, June Here, Down the Hills, Quiet Wood, Year Midnight, In the Morning</i>
<i>Longing</i>	1911	Solo Songs	
Five Songs for low voice and piano	1911	Solo Songs	<i>The Twilight People, The Devotee, The Waves of Breffny, The Sorrow of Love, The Call</i>
<i>Mass in Dorian Mode</i>	1912	Sacred Choral	
Variations for eleven solo instruments	1913	Chamber	
<i>Comedy Suite</i>	1913	Chamber	for clarinet and piano
Piano concerto in C minor	1913	Orchestral	
<i>Te Lucis Ante Terminum</i>	1913	Sacred Choral	
<i>Even Such Is Time</i>	1913	Sacred Choral	
Two Songs for voice and piano	1913	Solo Songs	<i>The Valley of Silence, The Evening Darkens</i>
<i>The Lord Shall be my help</i>	1914	Chorus and Orchestra	SSATB and strings
<i>The B's</i>	1914	Orchestra	suite for orchestra
<i>Nunc Dimittis</i>	1914	Sacred Choral	
<i>Tinker's Song</i>	1914	Secular Choral	
<i>Lady Audrey's Suite</i>	1915	Chamber	for string quartet
Prelude No 1 for Harp	1915	Harp	
3 Dances	1915	Orchestra	for violin and orchestra
Phantasy Ground Bass	1915	Organ	
Rhapsody, no. 1	1915	Organ	
Minuet in A minor	1915	Piano	
<i>Four Anthems to the BVM</i>	1915	Sacred Choral	<i>Alma Redemptoris Mater, Ave Regina, Regina Coeli, Salve Regina</i>
<i>In Youth is Pleasure</i>	1915	Secular Choral	
Four Songs for voice and piano	1915	Solo Songs	<i>Roses about the arbour twined, O Mistress Mine, A rondel of Rest, His Poisoned Shafts</i>

<i>There was a Maiden</i>	1915	Solo Songs	
<i>The Widow Bird</i>	1915	Solo Songs	
Quartet in A minor	1916	Chamber	for piano, viola and cello
<i>Fantasy String Quartet</i>	1916	Chamber	
Three Psalm Preludes, Set One	1916	Organ	
Two Short Pieces	1916	Organ	
<i>The Skylark</i>	1916	Secular Choral	
<i>Girl's Song</i>	1916	Solo Songs	
<i>A Madrigal</i>	1916	Solo Songs	
Three Pieces for violin and piano	1917	Chamber	<i>Pastorale, Chosen Tune, Luchinushka</i>
Sonata No. 2 in E flat minor	1917	Chamber	for violin and piano
<i>Sir Patrick Spens</i>	1917	Chorus and Orchestra	Baritone solo and orchestra
<i>Puck's Minuet</i>	1917	Orchestra	for small orchestra
Suite for string orchestra	1917	Orchestra	
<i>Elegy</i>	1917	Orchestra	for viola, string quartet and string orchestra
<i>Phantasia for piano</i>	1917	Piano	
<i>Sarum Sketches</i>	1917	Piano	Suite for Piano
Five part songs for female voices	1917	Secular Choral	<i>The Shepherd, The Pilgrim, A Croon, A Sad Story, Come All Ye Pretty Fair Maids</i>
<i>An Old Man's Lullaby</i>	1917	Secular Choral	
Three Songs	1917	Secular Choral	<i>Under the Greenwood Tree, A North Country, A True Story</i>
Three Rondeaux	1917	Solo Songs	<i>Roses about the arbour twined, A rondel of rest, Her scuttle hatt</i>
Five Songs for high voice and orchestra	1917	Solo Songs	<i>Wanderer's night song, Merry Margaret, Close Mine Eyelids, Under the Greenwood Trees, On the Merry First of May</i>
<i>By the Waters of Babylon</i>	1917	Solo Songs	
<i>Here she lies, a pretty bud</i>	1917	Solo Songs	
Two songs by Ivor Gurney	1917	Solo Songs	Orchestrated by Howells, <i>By a bierside, In Flanders</i>
<i>Upon a Summer's Day</i>	1917	Solo Songs	
Sonata No. 1 in E major	1918	Chamber	for violin and piano
<i>Cradle Song</i>	1918	Chamber	for violin and piano
<i>Damsons</i>	1918	Chamber	for violin and piano
Rhapsody, no. 2	1918	Organ	
Rhapsody, no. 3	1918	Organ	
<i>Snapshots</i>	1918	Piano	<i>The Street Dancer, The Polar Bear, Wee Willie Winkee</i>
<i>Procession</i>	1918	Piano	
<i>Haec Dies</i>	1918	Sacred Choral	
<i>Here is the little door</i>	1918	Sacred Choral	

Four French Chansons	1918	Solo Songs	<i>Sainte Catherine, Le Marquis de Maine, Angele au Couvent, Le Petit Couturier</i>
<i>Mally O!</i>	1918	Solo Songs	
<i>Old Skinflint</i>	1918	Solo Songs	
<i>Whin - song set</i>	1918	Solo Songs	<i>Old Daddy Skinflint, As I came down by Pity me, Fallowfield Feel, Stow on the Wold, Blawearly, The Mugger's Song</i>
<i>Poem</i>	1919	Chamber	for violin and piano
<i>Rhapsodic Quintet</i>	1919	Chamber	for clarinet, 2 violins, viola and cello
<i>The Dansant</i>	1919	Orchestra	
<i>Jackanapes</i>	1919	Piano	
<i>Rhapsody for piano</i>	1919	Piano	
<i>Phantasy Minuet for pianola</i>	1919	Pianola	
<i>A Spotless Rose</i>	1919	Sacred Choral	
<i>The Restful Branches</i>	1919	Solo Songs	
Five Songs for low voice and piano	1919	Solo Songs	<i>Among the tombs, Long ago to thee, Gavotte, Though I wander, By the hearth-stone</i>
<i>King David</i>	1919	Solo Songs	
<i>The Mugger's Song</i>	1919	Solo Songs	
<i>Peacock Pie - set one</i>	1919	Solo Songs	<i>Tired Tim, Alas Alack, Mrs MacQueen, The Dunce, Full Moon, Miss T</i>
<i>Peacock Pie - set two</i>	1919	Solo Songs	<i>Someone came knocking, The Old Stone House, Old Shellover, Andy Battle, The Old Soldier, The Ride-by-nights, The Lady Caroline, Cake and Sack, Poor Jim Jay, Will Ever</i>
<i>A Garland for De la Mare</i>	1919	Solo Songs	includes number of unpublished <i>Peacock Pie</i> settings
<i>Merry-Eye</i>	1920	Orchestra	for small orchestra
<i>The 'Chosen' Tune</i>	1920	Piano	
<i>Once Upon a Time</i>	1920	Piano	
<i>Blessed are the Dead</i>	1920	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in G	1920	Sacred Choral	
<i>Sing Lullaby</i>	1920	Sacred Choral	
<i>A Golden Lullaby</i>	1920	Secular Choral	
<i>Goddess of Night</i>	1920	Solo Songs	
<i>O Garlands Hanging by the door</i>	1920	Solo Songs	
<i>The Little Boy Lost</i>	1920	Solo Songs	
<i>O My Deir Hert</i>	1920	Solo Songs	
<i>Blawearly</i>	1921	Solo Songs	
<i>Sine Nomine</i>	1922	Chorus and Orchestra	2 solo voices, chorus, organ and orchestra
<i>Procession</i>	1922	Orchestra	

<i>Gadabout</i>	1922	Piano	
<i>The Duel</i>	1922	Secular Choral	
<i>The Wonderful Derby Ram</i>	1922	Secular Choral	
Sonata No. 3 in E minor	1923	Chamber	for violin and piano
<i>Pastoral Rhapsody</i>	1923	Orchestra	
<i>Lord, Who Createst Man</i>	1923	Sacred Choral	
<i>My Master Hath a Garden</i>	1923	Sacred Choral	
<i>All in this Pleasant Evening</i>	1923	Secular Choral	
<i>Creep Afore Ye Gang</i>	1923	Secular Choral	
<i>The Shadows</i>	1923	Secular Choral	
<i>Spanish Lullaby</i>	1923	Secular Choral	
<i>Old Meg</i>	1923	Solo Songs	
<i>Miniatures</i>	1924	Organ	
<i>A Mercy Tune</i>	1924	Piano	
<i>Benedictus and Jubilate for Unison Voices</i>	1924	Sacred Choral	
<i>Communion Service for Unison Voices</i>	1924	Sacred Choral	
<i>Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis for Unison Voices</i>	1924	Sacred Choral	
<i>Te Deum</i>	1924	Sacred Choral	
<i>Bells</i>	1924	Secular Choral	
<i>First in the Garden</i>	1924	Secular Choral	
<i>Holly Song</i>	1924	Secular Choral	
<i>Irish Wren Song</i>	1924	Secular Choral	
<i>Mother Mother</i>	1924	Secular Choral	
<i>Robin Hood's Song</i>	1924	Secular Choral	
<i>Sing Ivy</i>	1924	Secular Choral	
<i>Singe Lulla By, Lulla</i>	1924	Secular Choral	
<i>Swedish May Song</i>	1924	Secular Choral	
<i>A Country Tune</i>	1925	Chamber	for violin and piano
Piano concerto No. 2	1925	Orchestra	
<i>Paradise Rondel</i>	1925	Orchestra	a piece for orchestra
<i>My Eyes for Beauty Pine</i>	1925	Sacred Choral	
<i>When First Thine Eyes Unveil</i>	1925	Sacred Choral	
<i>The Days are Clear</i>	1925	Secular Choral	
<i>Eight O'Clock the Postman's Knock</i>	1925	Secular Choral	
<i>Mother Shake the Cherry Tree</i>	1925	Secular Choral	
<i>The Trial of Jesus</i>	1926	Chorus and Orchestra	Incidental music to the play by John Masefield
<i>Slow Dance</i>	1926	Piano	

<i>Cobler's Hornpipe</i>	1926	Piano	
<i>Slow Air</i>	1927	Chamber	for violin and piano
<i>A Croon</i>	1927	Chamber	for violin and piano
<i>Lambert's Clavichord</i>	1927	Piano	12 pieces
<i>The Saylor's Song</i>	1927	Secular Choral	
<i>Tune Thy Music</i>	1927	Secular Choral	
<i>Come Sing and Dance</i>	1927	Solo Songs	
<i>Country Pageant</i>	1928	Piano	4 short pieces for piano
<i>A Little Book of Dances</i>	1928	Piano	
<i>Good Counsel</i>	1928	Secular Choral	
<i>In Green Ways</i>	1928	Solo Songs	<i>Under the Greenwood Tree, The Goat Paths, Merry Margaret, Wanderer's Night Song, On the Merry first of May</i>
<i>Mother's Here</i>	1929	Orchestra	incidental music for play
<i>Penguinski</i>	1929	Orchestra	ballet music for orchestra
<i>Two Africans Songs</i>	1929	Solo Songs	<i>Vrijheidsgees, Eensaamheid</i>
<i>In Gloucestershire</i>	1930	Chamber	String Quartet No. 3
<i>Father of men</i>	1930	Hymn Tune	
<i>Michael</i>	1930	Hymn Tune	
<i>A Sailor Tune</i>	1930	Piano	
<i>Lambert's Clavichord</i>	1931	Chamber	3 transcriptions for cello and piano. <i>My Lord Sandwich's Dream, Sir Hugh's Galliard, De la Mare's Pavane</i>
<i>Tanz's Music</i>	1931	Orchestra	RCM Union 'At Home' concert
<i>Delicates so Dainty</i>	1931	Secular Choral	
<i>Sweet Content</i>	1931	Secular Choral	
<i>Sonata for Organ</i>	1932	Organ	
<i>O Mensch, beweine' dein' Sunde gross</i>	1932	Piano	Chorale prelude by J S Bach, arranged for piano by Howells
Requiem	1932	Sacred Choral	
<i>A Kent Yeoman's Wooing Song</i>	1933	Chorus and Orchestra	Soprano and baritone soli, chorus and orchestra
<i>Bunches of Grapes</i>	1933	Secular Choral	
<i>To Music Bent</i>	1933	Secular Choral	
<i>Flood</i>	1933	Solo Songs	
<i>Pageantry</i>	1934	Orchestra	suite for brass band
<i>Triumph Tune</i>	1934	Piano	
<i>Lost Love</i>	1934	Solo Songs	
<i>Toccata</i>	1935	Piano	Wedding present for Mrs Shena Fraser
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis for Male Voices	1935	Sacred Choral	
<i>Sea Urchins</i>	1935	Secular Choral	

<i>A Song of Welcome</i>	1935	Secular Choral	
<i>Lethe</i>	1936	Solo Songs	
<i>The Old Mole</i>	1937	Chamber	folktune arranged for piano and strings
<i>Hudson House</i>	1937	Chamber	for piano quartet
<i>David</i>	1937	Hymn Tune	
<i>King's Herald</i>	1937	Orchestra	<i>Pageantry's</i> 1st movement arranged for orchestra
<i>Fantasia</i> for cello and orchestra	1937	Orchestra	
<i>Hymnus Paradisi</i>	1938	Chorus and Orchestra	Soprano and tenor soli, chorus and orchestra
Concerto for string orchestra	1938	Orchestra	
Three Psalm Preludes, Set Two	1938	Organ	
<i>Promenade for Boys</i>	1938	Piano	
<i>Promenade for Girls</i>	1938	Piano	
Polka for Two Pianos	1938	Piano	late 1930s
<i>Piping Down the Valleys Wild</i>	1938	Secular Choral	
Fugue, Choral and Epilogue	1939	Organ	from Six Pieces for organ, no. 4
Minuet	1939	Piano	
<i>The History of an Afternoon...</i>	1939	Secular Choral	
<i>A New Year Carol</i>	1939	Secular Choral	
<i>Shadow March</i>	1939	Secular Choral	
Suite for strings	1940	Orchestra	written for SPGS
Folk Tune set for small orchestra	1940	Orchestra	<i>Triumph Tune, Tune of St. Louis, The Old Mole</i>
<i>Master Tallis's Testament</i>	1940	Organ	from Six Pieces for organ, no. 3
<i>Paeon</i>	1940	Organ	from Six Pieces for organ, no. 6
<i>Preludio 'Sine Nomine'</i>	1940	Organ	from Six Pieces for organ, no. 1
<i>Saraband for the Morning of Easter</i>	1940	Organ	from Six Pieces for organ, no. 2
<i>Intrata No. 2</i>	1941	Organ	for Sir Walter Alcock's 80th birthday
<i>Triumph Tune</i>	1941	Piano	Arranged for two pianos
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis for Men's Voices	1941	Sacred Choral	
			<i>O Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem, We have heard with our ears, Like as the Hart Desireth the Waterbrooks, Let God Arise</i>
Four Anthems	1941	Sacred Choral	
<i>Ponder My Words, O Lord</i>	1941	Sacred Choral	
Sonata for oboe and piano	1942	Chamber	
First Suite for string orchestra	1942	Orchestra	
Second Suite for string orchestra	1942	Orchestra	
<i>O Mortal Man Remember Well</i>	1942	Sacred Choral	
<i>Fanfare for Schools</i>	1943	Orchestra	
<i>God is Gone Up</i>	1944	Sacred Choral	

Te Deum and Jubilate (Coll Reg)	1944	Sacred Choral	
<i>Minuet (Grace for a Fresh Egg)</i>	1945	Chamber	for bassoon and piano
<i>Saraband In Modo Elegiaco</i>	1945	Organ	from Six Pieces for organ, no. 5
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Coll Reg)	1945	Sacred Choral	
Sonata for clarinet and piano	1946	Chamber	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Gloucester)	1946	Sacred Choral	
Te Deum and Benedictus (Canterbury)	1946	Sacred Choral	
<i>Music for a Prince</i>	1948	Orchestra	<i>Corydon's Dance, Scherzo in Arden</i>
<i>Where Wast Thou?</i>	1948	Sacred Choral	
<i>The Key of the Kingdom</i>	1948	Secular Choral	
<i>King of Glory</i>	1949	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (New)	1949	Sacred Choral	
<i>God is Gone Up</i>	1950	Chorus and Orchestra	Chorus, organ and strings
<i>Walking in the Snow</i>	1950	Secular Choral	
<i>A Maid Peerless</i>	1951	Chorus and Orchestra	Part song for female voices and small orchestra
<i>Long, Long Ago</i>	1951	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Worcester)	1951	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (St Paul's)	1951	Sacred Choral	
<i>Behold O God our Defender</i>	1952	Chorus and Orchestra	Chorus, organ and orchestra
<i>Siciliano for a High Ceremony</i>	1952	Organ	
<i>Peter's Suite</i>	1952	Piano	
<i>Behold O God Our Defender</i>	1952	Sacred Choral	
Te Deum and Benedictus (St George's)	1952	Sacred Choral	
<i>The Scribe</i>	1952	Secular Choral	
<i>Inheritance</i>	1953	Secular Choral	
<i>House of the Mind</i>	1954	Chorus and Orchestra	Chorus, organ and strings
<i>Missa Sabrinensis</i>	1954	Chorus and Orchestra	SATB soli, chorus and orchestra
<i>An English Mass</i>	1954	Chorus and Orchestra	Chorus, strings and organ
<i>The House of the Mind</i>	1954	Sacred Choral	
<i>Four Horses</i>	1954	Secular Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (B Minor)	1955	Sacred Choral	
<i>Finzi: His Rest</i>	1956	Piano	
Communion Service (Coll Reg)	1956	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (St Peter's)	1957	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (St John's)	1957	Sacred Choral	
<i>I Mum be married a Sunday</i>	1957	Secular Choral	
<i>New Brooms</i>	1957	Secular Choral	

<i>Prelude: 'De Profundis'</i>	1958	Organ	
Rhapsody, No. 4	1958	Organ	<i>Bene Psallite in Vociferatione</i>
<i>Siciliana for Saint's Dom</i>	1958	Piano	
<i>Missa Aedis Christi</i>	1958	Sacred Choral	
<i>A Hymn for St Cecilia</i>	1958	Sacred Choral	
<i>Pink Almonds</i>	1958	Secular Choral	
<i>A Christmas Carol</i>	1958	Secular Choral	
<i>Dalby's Fancy and Dalby's Toccata</i>	1959	Organ	
<i>Musica Sine Nomine</i>	1959	Piano	
<i>Three Figures</i>	1960	Orchestra	triptych for brass band
<i>Howells' Clavichord</i>	1961	Piano	20 pieces for clavichord or piano in 2 volumes. 1941/1961?
<i>Coventry Antiphon</i>	1961	Sacred Choral	
<i>A Sequence for Michael</i>	1961	Sacred Choral	
<i>Stabat Mater</i>	1963	Chorus and Orchestra	Tenor solo, chorus and orchestra
<i>Pavane and Galliard</i>	1964	Piano	
<i>Take Him, Earth, for Cherishing</i>	1964	Sacred Choral	
<i>The Summer is Coming</i>	1964	Secular Choral	
<i>God Be in my Head</i>	1965	Sacred Choral	
<i>Te Deum (St Mary Redcliffe)</i>	1965	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Sarum)	1966	Sacred Choral	
<i>Te Deum (Columbia)</i>	1966	Sacred Choral	
<i>Et Nunc et Semper</i>	1967	Piano	
<i>Benedicte Domine</i>	1967	Sacred Choral	
<i>Jubilate (Tower of London)</i>	1967	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Winchester)	1967	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Chichester)	1967	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (St Augustine's)	1967	Sacred Choral	
<i>Preces and Responses</i>	1967	Sacred Choral	
<i>A Flourish (Before a Bidding)</i>	1968	Organ	
<i>One Thing have I Desired</i>	1968	Sacred Choral	
<i>The Coventry Mass</i>	1968	Sacred Choral	For chorus and organ
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Hereford)	1969	Sacred Choral	
<i>Fanfare on Michael</i>	1970	Orchestra	for brass, organ and percussion
<i>H plus H Gavotte</i>	1970	Piano	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Magdalen)	1970	Sacred Choral	
<i>Thee I Will Love</i>	1970	Sacred Choral	
Partita	1971	Organ	

Sonatina for piano	1971	Piano	
<i>A Grace for William Walton</i>	1972	Sacred Choral	
<i>Now Abideth Faith, Hope and Charity</i>	1972	Sacred Choral	
<i>Come My Soul</i>	1972	Sacred Choral	
<i>Petrus Suite</i>	1973	Piano	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (York)	1973	Sacred Choral	
Epilogue for Organ	1974	Organ	
Te Deum (Sheffield)	1974	Sacred Choral	
Exultate Deo	1974	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Dallas)	1975	Sacred Choral	
<i>The Fear of the Lord</i>	1976	Sacred Choral	
Te Deum (Collegium Regale)	1977	Chorus and Orchestra	Orchestral version
Fanfare to lead into National Anthem	1977	Orchestra	
<i>St. Louis Comes to Clifton</i>	1977	Organ	
<i>Hills of the North Rejoice</i>	1977	Sacred Choral	
<i>I Love All Beauteous Things</i>	1977	Sacred Choral	
<i>Sweetest of Sweets</i>	1977	Sacred Choral	
<i>Tryste Noel</i>	1977	Sacred Choral	
<i>Antiphon</i>	1977	Sacred Choral	
<i>I Would be True</i>	1978	Sacred Choral	

Appendix B

Categorical list of works by Herbert Howells

Work	Year	Category	Other
Sonata in B minor	1911	Chamber	for violin and piano
Variations for eleven solo instruments	1913	Chamber	
<i>Comedy Suite</i>	1913	Chamber	for clarinet and piano
<i>Lady Audrey's Suite</i>	1915	Chamber	for string quartet
Quartet in A minor	1916	Chamber	for piano, viola and cello
<i>Fantasy String Quartet</i>	1916	Chamber	
Three Pieces for violin and piano	1917	Chamber	<i>Pastorale, Chosen Tune, Luchinushka</i>
Sonata No. 2 in E flat minor	1917	Chamber	for violin and piano
Sonata No. 1 in E major	1918	Chamber	for violin and piano
<i>Cradle Song</i>	1918	Chamber	for violin and piano
<i>Damsons</i>	1918	Chamber	for violin and piano
<i>Poem</i>	1919	Chamber	for violin and piano
<i>Rhapsodic Quintet</i>	1919	Chamber	for clarinet, 2 violins, viola and cello
Sonata No. 3 in E minor	1923	Chamber	for violin and piano
<i>A Country Tune</i>	1925	Chamber	for violin and piano
<i>Slow Air</i>	1927	Chamber	for violin and piano
<i>A Croon</i>	1927	Chamber	for violin and piano
<i>In Gloucestershire</i>	1930	Chamber	String Quartet No. 3
<i>Lambert's Clavichord</i>	1931	Chamber	3 transcriptions for cello and piano. <i>My Lord Sandwich's Dream, Sir Hugh's Galliard, De la Mare's Pavane</i>
<i>The Old Mole</i>	1937	Chamber	folktune arranged for piano and strings
<i>Hudson House</i>	1937	Chamber	for piano quartet
Sonata for oboe and piano	1942	Chamber	
<i>Minuet (Grace for a Fresh Egg)</i>	1945	Chamber	for bassoon and piano
Sonata for clarinet and piano	1946	Chamber	
<i>When Cats Run Home</i>	1909	Chorus and Orchestra	Unison voices
<i>The Lord Shall be my help</i>	1914	Chorus and Orchestra	SSATB and strings
<i>Sir Patrick Spens</i>	1917	Chorus and Orchestra	Baritone solo and orchestra
<i>Sine Nomine</i>	1922	Chorus and Orchestra	2 solo voices, chorus, organ and orchestra
<i>The Trial of Jesus</i>	1926	Chorus and Orchestra	Incidental music to the play by John Masefield
<i>A Kent Yeoman's Wooing Song</i>	1933	Chorus and Orchestra	Soprano and baritone soli, chorus and orchestra
<i>Hymnus Paradisi</i>	1938	Chorus and Orchestra	Soprano and tenor soli, chorus and orchestra
<i>God is Gone Up</i>	1950	Chorus and Orchestra	Chorus, organ and strings
<i>A Maid Peerless</i>	1951	Chorus and Orchestra	Part song for female voices and small orchestra
<i>Behold O God our Defender</i>	1952	Chorus and Orchestra	Chorus, organ and orchestra
<i>House of the Mind</i>	1954	Chorus and Orchestra	Chorus, organ and strings

<i>Missa Sabrinensis</i>	1954	Chorus and Orchestra	SATB soli, chorus and orchestra
<i>An English Mass</i>	1954	Chorus and Orchestra	Chorus, strings and organ
<i>Stabat Mater</i>	1963	Chorus and Orchestra	Tenor solo, chorus and orchestra
<i>Te Deum (Coll Reg)</i>	1977	Chorus and Orchestra	Orchestral version
<i>Prelude No 1 for Harp</i>	1915	Harp	
<i>God of England</i>	1911	Hymn Tune	
<i>Father of men</i>	1930	Hymn Tune	
<i>Michael</i>	1930	Hymn Tune	
<i>David</i>	1937	Hymn Tune	
<i>The B's</i>	1914	Orchestra	suite for orchestra
<i>3 Dances</i>	1915	Orchestra	for violin and orchestra
<i>Puck's Minuet</i>	1917	Orchestra	for small orchestra
<i>Suite for string orchestra</i>	1917	Orchestra	
<i>Elegy</i>	1917	Orchestra	for viola, string quartet and string orchestra
<i>The Dansant</i>	1919	Orchestra	
<i>Merry-Eye</i>	1920	Orchestra	for small orchestra
<i>Procession</i>	1922	Orchestra	
<i>Pastoral Rhapsody</i>	1923	Orchestra	
<i>Piano concerto No. 2</i>	1925	Orchestra	
<i>Paradise Rondel</i>	1925	Orchestra	a piece for orchestra
<i>Mother's Here</i>	1929	Orchestra	incidental music for play
<i>Penguinski</i>	1929	Orchestra	ballet music for orchestra
<i>Tanz's Music</i>	1931	Orchestra	RCM Union 'At Home' concert
<i>Pageantry</i>	1934	Orchestra	suite for brass band
<i>King's Herald</i>	1937	Orchestra	<i>Pageantry's</i> 1st movement arranged for orchestra
<i>Fantasia for cello and orchestra</i>	1937	Orchestra	
<i>Concerto for string orchestra</i>	1938	Orchestra	
<i>Suite for strings</i>	1940	Orchestra	written for SPGS
<i>Folk Tune set for small orchestra</i>	1940	Orchestra	<i>Triumph Tune, Tune of St. Louis, The Old Mole</i>
<i>First Suite for string orchestra</i>	1942	Orchestra	
<i>Second Suite for string orchestra</i>	1942	Orchestra	
<i>Fanfare for Schools</i>	1943	Orchestra	
<i>Music for a Prince</i>	1948	Orchestra	<i>Corydon's Dance, Scherzo in Arden</i>
<i>Three Figures</i>	1960	Orchestra	triptych for brass band
<i>Fanfare on Michael</i>	1970	Orchestra	for brass, organ and percussion
<i>Fanfare to lead into National Anthem</i>	1977	Orchestra	

Piano concerto in C minor	1913	Orchestral	
Sonata in C minor	1911	Organ	
Phantasy Ground Bass	1915	Organ	
Rhapsody, no. 1	1915	Organ	
Three Psalm Preludes, Set One	1916	Organ	
Two Short Pieces	1916	Organ	
Rhapsody, no. 2	1918	Organ	
Rhapsody, no. 3	1918	Organ	
<i>Miniatures</i>	1924	Organ	
Sonata for Organ	1932	Organ	
Three Psalm Preludes, Set Two	1938	Organ	
Fugue, Choral and Epilogue	1939	Organ	from Six Pieces for organ, no. 4
<i>Master Tallis's Testament</i>	1940	Organ	from Six Pieces for organ, no. 3
<i>Paeon</i>	1940	Organ	from Six Pieces for organ, no. 6
<i>Preludio 'Sine Nomine'</i>	1940	Organ	from Six Pieces for organ, no. 1
<i>Saraband for the Morning of Easter</i>	1940	Organ	from Six Pieces for organ, no. 2
<i>Intrata No. 2</i>	1941	Organ	for Sir Walter Alcock's 80th birthday
<i>Saraband In Modo Elegiaco</i>	1945	Organ	from Six Pieces for organ, no. 5
<i>Siciliano for a High Ceremony</i>	1952	Organ	
<i>Prelude: 'De Profundis'</i>	1958	Organ	
Rhapsody, No. 4	1958	Organ	<i>Bene Psallite in Vociferatione</i>
<i>Dalby's Fancy and Dalby's Toccata</i>	1959	Organ	
<i>A Flourish (Before a Bidding)</i>	1968	Organ	
Partita	1971	Organ	
Epilogue for Organ	1974	Organ	
<i>St. Louis Comes to Clifton</i>	1977	Organ	
Four Romantic Piano Pieces	1908	Piano	<i>Norwegian Tune, The Arab's Song, ?, Peasant's March</i>
<i>Marching Song</i>	1909	Piano	
<i>Summer Idyls</i>	1911	Piano	<i>Meadow Rest, Summer Song, June Here, Down the Hills, Quiet Wood, Year Midnight, In the Morning</i>
Minuet in A minor	1915	Piano	
<i>Phantasie for piano</i>	1917	Piano	
<i>Sarum Sketches</i>	1917	Piano	Suite for Piano
<i>Snapshots</i>	1918	Piano	<i>The Street Dancer, The Polar Bear, Wee Willie Winkee</i>
<i>Procession</i>	1918	Piano	
<i>Jackanapes</i>	1919	Piano	

<i>Rhapsody for piano</i>	1919	Piano	
<i>The 'Chosen' Tune</i>	1920	Piano	
<i>Once Upon a Time</i>	1920	Piano	
<i>Gadabout</i>	1922	Piano	
<i>A Mercy Tune</i>	1924	Piano	
<i>Slow Dance</i>	1926	Piano	
<i>Cobler's Hornpipe</i>	1926	Piano	
<i>Lambert's Clavichord</i>	1927	Piano	12 pieces
<i>Country Pageant</i>	1928	Piano	4 short pieces for piano
<i>A Little Book of Dances</i>	1928	Piano	
<i>A Sailor Tune</i>	1930	Piano	
<i>O Mensch, bewein' dein' Sunde gross</i>	1932	Piano	Chorale prelude by J S Bach, arranged for piano by Howells
<i>Triumph Tune</i>	1934	Piano	
<i>Toccata</i>	1935	Piano	Wedding present for Mrs Shena Fraser
<i>Promenade for Boys</i>	1938	Piano	
<i>Promenade for Girls</i>	1938	Piano	
<i>Polka for Two Pianos</i>	1938	Piano	late 1930s
<i>Minuet</i>	1939	Piano	
<i>Triumph Tune</i>	1941	Piano	Arranged for two pianos
<i>Peter's Suite</i>	1952	Piano	
<i>Finzi: His Rest</i>	1956	Piano	
<i>Siciliana for Saint's Dom</i>	1958	Piano	
<i>Musica Sine Nomine</i>	1959	Piano	
<i>Howells' Clavichord</i>	1961	Piano	20 pieces for clavichord or piano in 2 volumes. 1941/1961?
<i>Pavane and Galliard</i>	1964	Piano	
<i>Et Nunc et Semper</i>	1967	Piano	
<i>H plus H Gavotte</i>	1970	Piano	
<i>Sonatina for piano</i>	1971	Piano	
<i>Petrus Suite</i>	1973	Piano	
<i>Phantasy Minuet for pianola</i>	1919	Pianola	
<i>Mass in Dorian Mode</i>	1912	Sacred Choral	
<i>Te Lucis Ante Terminum</i>	1913	Sacred Choral	
<i>Even Such Is Time</i>	1913	Sacred Choral	
<i>Nunc Dimittis</i>	1914	Sacred Choral	
<i>Four Anthems to the BVM</i>	1915	Sacred Choral	<i>Alma Redemptoris Mater, Ave Regina, Regina Coeli, Salve Regina</i>
<i>Haec Dies</i>	1918	Sacred Choral	
<i>Here is the little door</i>	1918	Sacred Choral	

<i>A Spotless Rose</i>	1919	Sacred Choral	
<i>Blessed are the Dead</i>	1920	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in G	1920	Sacred Choral	
<i>Sing Lullaby</i>	1920	Sacred Choral	
<i>Lord, Who Createst Man</i>	1923	Sacred Choral	
<i>My Master Hath a Garden</i>	1923	Sacred Choral	
Benedictus and Jubilate for Unison Voices	1924	Sacred Choral	
Communion Service for Unison Voices	1924	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis for Unison Voices	1924	Sacred Choral	
Te Deum	1924	Sacred Choral	
<i>My Eyes for Beauty Pine</i>	1925	Sacred Choral	
<i>When First Thine Eyes Unveil</i>	1925	Sacred Choral	
Requiem	1932	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis for Male Voices	1935	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis for Men's Voices	1941	Sacred Choral	
Four Anthems	1941	Sacred Choral	<i>O Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem, We have heard with our ears, Like as the Hart Desireth the Waterbrooks, Let God Arise</i>
<i>Ponder My Words, O Lord</i>	1941	Sacred Choral	
<i>O Mortal Man Remember Well</i>	1942	Sacred Choral	
<i>God is Gone Up</i>	1944	Sacred Choral	
Te Deum and Jubilate (Coll Reg)	1944	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Coll Reg)	1945	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Gloucester)	1946	Sacred Choral	
Te Deum and Benedictus (Canterbury)	1946	Sacred Choral	
<i>Where Wast Thou?</i>	1948	Sacred Choral	
<i>King of Glory</i>	1949	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (New)	1949	Sacred Choral	
<i>Long, Long Ago</i>	1951	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Worcester)	1951	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (St Paul's)	1951	Sacred Choral	
<i>Behold O God Our Defender</i>	1952	Sacred Choral	
Te Deum and Benedictus (St George's)	1952	Sacred Choral	
<i>The House of the Mind</i>	1954	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (B Minor)	1955	Sacred Choral	
Communion Service (Coll Reg)	1956	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (St Peter's)	1957	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (St John's)	1957	Sacred Choral	

<i>Missa Aedis Christi</i>	1958	Sacred Choral	
<i>A Hymn for St Cecilia</i>	1958	Sacred Choral	
<i>Coventry Antiphon</i>	1961	Sacred Choral	
<i>A Sequence for Michael</i>	1961	Sacred Choral	
<i>Take Him, Earth, for Cherishing</i>	1964	Sacred Choral	
<i>God Be in my Head</i>	1965	Sacred Choral	
<i>Te Deum (St Mary Redcliffe)</i>	1965	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Sarum)	1966	Sacred Choral	
<i>Te Deum (Columbia)</i>	1966	Sacred Choral	
<i>Benedicite Domine</i>	1967	Sacred Choral	
<i>Jubilate (Tower of London)</i>	1967	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Winchester)	1967	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Chichester)	1967	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (St Augustine's)	1967	Sacred Choral	
<i>Preces and Responses</i>	1967	Sacred Choral	
<i>One Thing have I Desired</i>	1968	Sacred Choral	
<i>The Coventry Mass</i>	1968	Sacred Choral	For chorus and organ
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Hereford)	1969	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Magdalen)	1970	Sacred Choral	
<i>Thee I Will Love</i>	1970	Sacred Choral	
<i>A Grace for William Walton</i>	1972	Sacred Choral	
<i>Now Abideth Faith, Hope and Charity</i>	1972	Sacred Choral	
<i>Come My Soul</i>	1972	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (York)	1973	Sacred Choral	
<i>Te Deum (Sheffield)</i>	1974	Sacred Choral	
<i>Exultate Deo</i>	1974	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Dallas)	1975	Sacred Choral	
<i>The Fear of the Lord</i>	1976	Sacred Choral	
<i>Hills of the North Rejoice</i>	1977	Sacred Choral	
<i>I Love All Beauteous Things</i>	1977	Sacred Choral	
<i>Sweetest of Sweets</i>	1977	Sacred Choral	
<i>Tryste Noel</i>	1977	Sacred Choral	
<i>Antiphon</i>	1977	Sacred Choral	
<i>I Would be True</i>	1978	Sacred Choral	
<i>To the Owl</i>	1909	Secular Choral	<i>When Cats Run Home, Thy Tu-Whits are Lulled</i>
Five part songs for male voices	1909	Secular Choral	<i>Love's Secret, Is the Moon Tired?, Weep you no more, The Winds Whistle Cold, A dirge</i>

<i>Missa Aedis Christi</i>	1958	Sacred Choral	
<i>A Hymn for St Cecilia</i>	1958	Sacred Choral	
<i>Coventry Antiphon</i>	1961	Sacred Choral	
<i>A Sequence for Michael</i>	1961	Sacred Choral	
<i>Take Him, Earth, for Cherishing</i>	1964	Sacred Choral	
<i>God Be in my Head</i>	1965	Sacred Choral	
Te Deum (St Mary Redcliffe)	1965	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Sarum)	1966	Sacred Choral	
Te Deum (Columbia)	1966	Sacred Choral	
Benedicte Domine	1967	Sacred Choral	
Jubilate (Tower of London)	1967	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Winchester)	1967	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Chichester)	1967	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (St Augustine's)	1967	Sacred Choral	
Preces and Responses	1967	Sacred Choral	
<i>One Thing have I Desired</i>	1968	Sacred Choral	
<i>The Coventry Mass</i>	1968	Sacred Choral	For chorus and organ
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Hereford)	1969	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Magdalen)	1970	Sacred Choral	
<i>Thee I Will Love</i>	1970	Sacred Choral	
<i>A Grace for William Walton</i>	1972	Sacred Choral	
<i>Now Abideth Faith, Hope and Charity</i>	1972	Sacred Choral	
<i>Come My Soul</i>	1972	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (York)	1973	Sacred Choral	
Te Deum (Sheffield)	1974	Sacred Choral	
Exultate Deo	1974	Sacred Choral	
Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Dallas)	1975	Sacred Choral	
<i>The Fear of the Lord</i>	1976	Sacred Choral	
<i>Hills of the North Rejoice</i>	1977	Sacred Choral	
<i>I Love All Beauteous Things</i>	1977	Sacred Choral	
<i>Sweetest of Sweets</i>	1977	Sacred Choral	
<i>Tryste Noel</i>	1977	Sacred Choral	
<i>Antiphon</i>	1977	Sacred Choral	
<i>I Would be True</i>	1978	Sacred Choral	
<i>To the Owl</i>	1909	Secular Choral	<i>When Cats Run Home, Thy Tu-Whits are Lulled</i>
Five part songs for male voices	1909	Secular Choral	<i>Love's Secret, Is the Moon Tired?, Weep you no more, The Winds Whistle Cold, A dirge</i>

<i>Tinker's Song</i>	1914	Secular Choral	
<i>In Youth is Pleasure</i>	1915	Secular Choral	
<i>The Skylark</i>	1916	Secular Choral	
Five part songs for female voices	1917	Secular Choral	<i>The Shepherd, The Pilgrim, A Croon, A Sad Story, Come All Ye Pretty, Fair Maids</i>
<i>An Old Man's Lullaby</i>	1917	Secular Choral	
Three Songs	1917	Secular Choral	<i>Under the Greenwood Tree, A North Country, A True Story</i>
<i>A Golden Lullaby</i>	1920	Secular Choral	
<i>The Duel</i>	1922	Secular Choral	
<i>The Wonderful Derby Ram</i>	1922	Secular Choral	
<i>All in this Pleasant Evening</i>	1923	Secular Choral	
<i>Creep Afore Ye Gang</i>	1923	Secular Choral	
<i>The Shadows</i>	1923	Secular Choral	
<i>Spanish Lullaby</i>	1923	Secular Choral	
<i>Bells</i>	1924	Secular Choral	
<i>First in the Garden</i>	1924	Secular Choral	
<i>Holly Song</i>	1924	Secular Choral	
<i>Irish Wren Song</i>	1924	Secular Choral	
<i>Mother Mother</i>	1924	Secular Choral	
<i>Robin Hood's Song</i>	1924	Secular Choral	
<i>Sing Ivy</i>	1924	Secular Choral	
<i>Singe Lulla By, Lulla</i>	1924	Secular Choral	
<i>Swedish May Song</i>	1924	Secular Choral	
<i>The Days are Clear</i>	1925	Secular Choral	
<i>Eight O'Clock the Postman's Knock</i>	1925	Secular Choral	
<i>Mother Shake the Cherry Tree</i>	1925	Secular Choral	
<i>The Saylor's Song</i>	1927	Secular Choral	
<i>Tune Thy Music</i>	1927	Secular Choral	
<i>Good Counsel</i>	1928	Secular Choral	
<i>Delicates so Dainty</i>	1931	Secular Choral	
<i>Sweet Content</i>	1931	Secular Choral	
<i>Bunches of Grapes</i>	1933	Secular Choral	
<i>To Music Bent</i>	1933	Secular Choral	
<i>Sea Urchins</i>	1935	Secular Choral	
<i>A Song of Welcome</i>	1935	Secular Choral	
<i>Piping Down the Valleys Wild</i>	1938	Secular Choral	
<i>The History of an Afternoon...</i>	1939	Secular Choral	

<i>A New Year Carol</i>	1939	Secular Choral	
<i>Shadow March</i>	1939	Secular Choral	
<i>The Key of the Kingdom</i>	1948	Secular Choral	
<i>Walking in the Snow</i>	1950	Secular Choral	
<i>The Scribe</i>	1952	Secular Choral	
<i>Inheritance</i>	1953	Secular Choral	
<i>Four Horses</i>	1954	Secular Choral	
<i>I Mum be married a Sunday</i>	1957	Secular Choral	
<i>New Brooms</i>	1957	Secular Choral	
<i>Pink Almonds</i>	1958	Secular Choral	
<i>A Christmas Carol</i>	1958	Secular Choral	
<i>The Summer is Coming</i>	1964	Secular Choral	
<i>My Shadow</i>	1909	Solo Songs	
<i>Longing</i>	1911	Solo Songs	
Five Songs for low voice and piano	1911	Solo Songs	<i>The Twilight People, The Devotee, The Waves of Breffny, The Sorrow of Love, The Call</i>
Two Songs for voice and piano	1913	Solo Songs	<i>The Valley of Silence, The Evening Darkens</i>
Four Songs for voice and piano	1915	Solo Songs	<i>Roses about the arbour twined, O Mistress Mine, A rondel of Rest, His Poisoned Shafts</i>
<i>There was a Maiden</i>	1915	Solo Songs	
<i>The Widow Bird</i>	1915	Solo Songs	
<i>Girl's Song</i>	1916	Solo Songs	
<i>A Madrigal</i>	1916	Solo Songs	
Three Rondeaux	1917	Solo Songs	<i>Roses about the arbour twined, A rondel of rest, Her scuttle hatt</i>
Five Songs for high voice and orchestra	1917	Solo Songs	<i>Wanderer's night song, Merry Margaret, Close Mine Eyelids, Under the Greenwood Trees, On the Merry First of May</i>
<i>By the Waters of Babylon</i>	1917	Solo Songs	
<i>Here she lies, a pretty bud</i>	1917	Solo Songs	
Two songs by Ivor Gurney	1917	Solo Songs	Orchestrated by Howells, <i>By a bierside, In Flanders</i>
<i>Upon a Summer's Day</i>	1917	Solo Songs	
Four French Chansons	1918	Solo Songs	<i>Sainte Catherine, Le Marquis de Maine, Angele au Couvent, Le Petit Couturier</i>
<i>Mally O!</i>	1918	Solo Songs	
<i>Old Skinflint</i>	1918	Solo Songs	
<i>Whin - song set</i>	1918	Solo Songs	<i>Old Daddy Skinflint, As I came down by Pity me, Fallowfield Feel, Stow on the Wold, Blawearry, The Mugger's Song</i>
<i>The Restful Branches</i>	1919	Solo Songs	

Five Songs for low voice and piano	1919	Solo Songs	<i>Among the tombs, Long ago to thee, Gavotte, Though I wander, By the hearth-stone</i>
<i>King David</i>	1919	Solo Songs	
<i>The Mugger's Song</i>	1919	Solo Songs	
<i>Peacock Pie - set one</i>	1919	Solo Songs	<i>Tired Tim, Alas Alack, Mrs MacQueen, The Dunce, Full Moon, Miss T</i>
<i>Peacock Pie - set two</i>	1919	Solo Songs	<i>Someone came knocking, The Old Stone House, Old Shellover, Andy Battle, The Old Soldier, The Ride-by-nights, The Lady Caroline, Cake and Sack, Poor Jim Jay, Will Ever</i>
<i>A Garland for De la Mare</i>	1919	Solo Songs	includes number of unpublished <i>Peacock Pie</i> settings
<i>Goddess of Night</i>	1920	Solo Songs	
<i>O Garlands Hanging by the door</i>	1920	Solo Songs	
<i>The Little Boy Lost</i>	1920	Solo Songs	
<i>O My Deir Hert</i>	1920	Solo Songs	
<i>Blawearry</i>	1921	Solo Songs	
<i>Old Meg</i>	1923	Solo Songs	
<i>Come Sing and Dance</i>	1927	Solo Songs	
<i>In Green Ways</i>	1928	Solo Songs	<i>Under the Greenwood Tree, The Goat Paths, Merry Margaret, Wanderer's Night Song, On the Merry first of May</i>
<i>Two Africans Songs</i>	1929	Solo Songs	<i>Vrijheidsgees, Eenszaamheid</i>
<i>Flood</i>	1933	Solo Songs	
<i>Lost Love</i>	1934	Solo Songs	
<i>Lethe</i>	1936	Solo Songs	

Appendix C

Words to Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis

APPENDIX C – Words to the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis

MAGNIFICAT

My soul doth magnify the Lord
And my spirit hath rejoiced 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 forever.

NUNC DIMITTIS

Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace,
According to thy word.
For mine eyes have seen
Thy salvation
Which thou has prepared
Before the face of all people.
To be a light to lighten the Gentiles
And to be the Glory of thy people Israel.

GLORIA

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.

Appendix D

List of all modal possibilities

MODES WITH NO ACCIDENTALS (modes in their traditional key):

Aeolian on A
Locrian on B
Ionian on C
Dorian on D
Phrygian on E
Lydian on F
Mixolydian on G

MODES WITH KEY SIGNATURE OF F#:

Ionian on G (or G major)
Locrian on F sharp
Dorian on A
Phrygian on B
Lydian on C
Mixolydian on D

MODES WITH KEY SIGNATURE OF F# and C#:

Ionian on D (or D major)
Dorian on E
Phrygian on F#
Lydian on G
Mixolydian on A
Aeolian on B
Locrian on C#

MODES WITH KEY SIGNATURE OF F#, C# and G#:

Ionian on A (or A major)
Dorian on B
Phrygian on C#
Lydian on D
Mixolydian on E
Aeolian on F#
Locrian on G#

MODES WITH KEY SIGNATURE OF F#, C#, G# and D#:

Ionian on E (or E major)
Dorian on F#
Phrygian on G#
Lydian on A#
Mixolydian on B
Aeolian on C#
Locrian on D#

MODES WITH KEY SIGNATURE OF F#, C#, G#, D# and A#:

Ionian on B (or B major)
Dorian on C#
Phrygian on D#
Lydian on E
Mixolydian on F#
Aeolian on G#
Locrian on A#

MODES WITH KEY SIGNATURE OF B flat:

Ionian on F (or F major)
Dorian on G
Phrygian on A
Lydian on B flat
Mixolydian on C
Aeolian on D
Locrian on E

MODES WITH KEY SIGNATURE OF B flat and E flat:

Ionian on B flat (or B flat major)
Dorian on C
Phrygian on D
Lydian on E flat
Mixolydian on F
Aeolian on G
Locrian on A

MODES WITH KEY SIGNATURE OF B flat, E flat and A flat:

Ionian E flat (or E flat major)
Dorian on F
Phrygian on G
Lydian on A flat
Mixolydian on B flat
Aeolian on C
Locrian on D

MODES WITH KEY SIGNATURE OF B flat, E flat, A flat and D flat:

Ionian on A flat (or A flat major)
Dorian on B flat
Phrygian on C
Lydian on D flat
Mixolydian on E flat
Aeolian on F
Locrian on G

MODES WITH KEY SIGNATURE OF B flat, E flat, A flat, D flat and G flat:

Ionian on D flat (or D flat major)
Dorian on E flat
Phrygian on F
Lydian on G flat
Mixolydian on A flat
Aeolian on B flat
Locrian on C

MODES WITH KEY SIGNATURE OF B flat, E flat, A flat, D flat, G flat and C flat:

Ionian on G flat (or G flat)
Dorian on A flat
Phrygian on B flat
Lydian on C flat
Mixolydian on D flat
Aeolian on E flat
Locrian on F

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