

379
N81d
No. 1248

EARLY ENGLISH ORGAN MUSIC: SOME CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE
MULLINER BOOK OF W. BLITHEMAN, T. TALLIS AND J. TAVERNER,
TOGETHER WITH THREE RECITALS OF SELECTED WORKS OF
J. S. BACH, D. BUXTEHUDE, M. DURUFLÉ, C. FRANCK,
G. FRESCOBALDI, J. J. FROBERGER,
P. HINDEMITH, O. MESSIAEN,
M. REGER, J. H. TALLIS,
AND C.-M. WIDOR

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
North Texas State University in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

Doctor of Musical Arts

By

David Michael Lowry, B. M., S. M. M.

Denton, Texas

December, 1977

D.W.

Lowry, David Michael, Early English Organ Music: Some Contributions from the Mulliner Book of W. Blitheman, T. Tallis, and J. Taverner, Together with Three Recitals of Selected Works of J. S. Bach, D. Buxtehude, M. Duruflé, C. Franck, G. Frescobaldi, J. J. Froberger, P. Hindemith, O. Messiaen, M. Reger, J. H. Tallis, and C.-M. Widor. Doctor of Musical Arts (Organ Performance), December, 1977, pp. 35, bibliography, 5 figures, 23 titles.

The lecture recital was given April 16, 1971. An Excellent Meane, six settings of Gloria Tibi Trinitas, Eterne rerum conditor, and Te Deum laudamus by William Blitheman, In Nomine by John Taverner, and Ecce tempus idoneum by Thomas Tallis were performed, together with a choir of four men's voices, following a lecture on various aspects of organ music in early Tudor England.

In addition to the lecture recital, three other public recitals, all solo programs, were performed.

The first solo recital, including works of Dietrich Buxtehude, Johann Sebastian Bach, Paul Hindemith, and Max Reger, was performed on March 14, 1971.

On October 23, 1972, the second solo recital was performed. The program included compositions by Olivier Messiaen, Johann Sebastian Bach, César Franck, and Charles-Marie Widor.

On October 17, 1977, the third solo recital, including works by Johann Sebastian Bach, Girolamo Frescobaldi, Johann Jacob Froberger, Dietrich Buxtehude, James Hathaway Tallis, and Maurice Duruflé, was performed.

The four programs were recorded on magnetic tape and are filed with the written version of the lecture as a part of the dissertation.

Tape recordings of all performances submitted
as dissertation are on deposit in the
North Texas State University Library.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PERFORMANCE PROGRAMS	
First Solo Recital	v
Lecture Recital.	vi
Second Solo Recital.	vii
Third Solo Recital	viii
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	ix
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. THE ENGLISH ORGAN IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY	5
III. MUSIC BASED ON LITURGICAL PLAINSONG CANTUS FIRMI.	12
IV. MUSIC FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF HYMNS <u>IN ALTERNATIM</u>	21
APPENDIX.	32
BIBLIOGRAPHY.	33

NORTH TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MUSIC
presents

DAVID LOWRY

in a

Graduate Organ Recital

Sunday, March 14, 1971

6:30 p.m.

Main Auditorium

PROGRAM

Chorale-Fantasia, *Nun freut euch, lieben Christen g'mein* Buxtehude

Sonata IV in e-moll, S. 528 J. S. Bach

Adagio; vivace

Andante

Un poco allegro

Sonata III Hindemith

Ach, Gott, wem soll ich's klagen

Wach auf, mein Hort

So wünsch ich ihr

Chorale-Fantasia, *Wie schön leucht' uns der Morgenstern* Reger

*This program is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
Doctor of Musical Arts*

NORTH TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MUSIC
presents

DAVID LOWRY

ORGANIST

in a

Graduate Lecture-Recital

Friday, April 16, 1971

6:30 p.m.

Recital Hall

Early English Organ Music:
Some Contributions from the *Mulliner Book*

Three compositions on Plainsong *cantus firmi*

Chant: *Felix Namque*

Organ: An Excellent Meane Blitheman

Chant: *Gloria Tibi Trinitas*

Organ: *In Nomine* Taverner

Gloria Tibi Trinitas Blitheman

(six settings)

Three Hymns *In Alternatim*

Eterne rerum conditor Blitheman

Ecce tempus idoneum Tallis

Te Deum laudamus Blitheman

Choir
Robert Austin
George Evelyn
Hoyt Neal
Roger Stephens

*This program is presented in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Doctor of Musical Arts*

NORTH TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MUSIC
presents

DAVID LOWRY

in a

Graduate Organ Recital

Monday, October 23, 1972

8:15 p.m.

Zion Lutheran Church
Dallas

PROGRAM

l'Ascension **Olivier Messiaen**
(1908-)
Majesté du Christ demandant sa gloire à son père
Majesty of Christ praying that his Father should glorify him
Alléluias sereins d'une âme qui désire le ciel
Serene Alleluias from a soul longing for Heaven
Transports de joie d'une âme devant la gloire du Christ quie est la sienne
Outburst of joy from a soul before the Glory of Christ which is its
own glory
Prière du Christ montant vers son père
Prayer from Christ ascending towards his Father

Fantasia, G-dur, BWV 572 **Johann Sebastian Bach**
(1685-1750)

Intermission

Fantaisie en A majeur **César Franck**
(1822-1890)

Symphonie Gothique, Op. 70 **Charles-Marie Widor**
(1844-1937)
Andante Sostenuto

Symphonie, Op. 42, Nr. 6 **Charles-Marie Widor**
Allegro

*This program is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
Doctor of Musical Arts*

NORTH TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MUSIC
presents

DAVID LOWRY

in a

Graduate Organ Recital

Monday, October 17, 1977

8:15 p.m.

Main Auditorium

PROGRAM

Komm, Gott Schöpfer, heiliger Geist, BWV 667 O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig, BWV 656	Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
Toccata nona, from <i>Secondo libro di toccate</i> , 1627	Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583-1643)
Toccata XIX Canzona II	Johann Jacob Froberger (1616-1667)
Prelude and Fugue in G minor	Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707)
Sonatina Allegretto Moderato Allegro e agitate	James Hathaway Tallis (1932-1969)
Adagio et choral varié sur le thème du <i>Veni Creator</i> , Op. 4	Maurice Durufle (1902-)

*This program is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
Doctor of Musical Arts*

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure		Page
1.	Blitheman, <u>An Excellent Meane</u> , bass line, mm. 1-9	15
2.	Taverner, <u>Missa Gloria tibi Trinitas</u> , mm. 13-15 of the Benedictus	18
3.	Blitheman, <u>Gloria tibi Trinitas</u> , no. 92, m. 19	19
4.	Blitheman, <u>Gloria tibi Trinitas</u> , no. 93, mm. 27-28	20
5.	Solution to a portion of Blitheman's use of a faburden cantus firmus	28

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to describe two aspects of organ music from the early Tudor era as they are found in the Mulliner Book. A tape recording of a lecture-recital given in conjunction with this paper is a vital component. It is hoped that this project will encourage more interest in the performance of early Tudor music for the organ.

Musicology in this century has provided substantial material to show that the early Tudor period was musically imaginative and productive. This period was ignored and all but forgotten by succeeding centuries. Even with the annihilation of valuable materials and information, research continues to supply the musician with more than he has ever known about this era. There is yet much to learn.

American audiences benefit little from the publication of research findings and transcriptions of the music since opportunities for the liturgical use of early music are limited. In England, which admirably and faithfully clings to its ancient tradition of male choirs in its cathedrals and collegiate chapels, the practical

aspect of early music is more evident. One only needs to attend cathedral and collegiate chapel services for a brief time to observe that services are not only held daily, but that the repertory performed runs the gamut of English church music.

The Tudor era began in 1485 with the accession to the throne of Henry VII. The music cited in this paper comes from the period between that date and the accession of Elizabeth I in 1558. A historical overview is contained in the appendix for reference. Some general historical comments are made on the tape recording of the lecture, cited above.

The Mulliner Book is a collection of keyboard music compiled from about 1535/40 to 1560/70. It has been known since 1844 and was acquired by the British Museum (Add. 30513) in 1877. A complete transcription in modern notation was first published in 1951 under the editorship of Denis Stevens. This edition was the first volume in an important serial collection of English music known as Musica Britannica. Another important serial collection beginning in the last decade is Early English Church Music under the general editorship of Frank Ll. Harrison. This series includes music from the early Tudor era which, along with its commentaries and appendices, provides supplementary materials useful in preparing for the performance of pieces from the Mulliner Book.

The Mulliner Book is so named in recognition of its original owner and supposed scribe, Thomas Mulliner, an organist about whom little is known. His active professional life is dated between the years 1545 and 1570. That he is the sole scribe of the collection is highly probable. The handwriting follows rather normal progressions of change as the man grows older. One leaf of the manuscript has his name signed on it. Just where the manuscript had been for some 300 years before the nineteenth-century acquisition is unknown. Had it been lost, knowledge of sixteenth-century English keyboard music would be seriously lacking. Three-fourths of the collection of 131 pieces appear nowhere else except in the Mulliner repertory. Of the pieces that do appear elsewhere, concordances with two manuscripts appear frequently. One is Brit. Mus. Add. 15233, a small collection of pieces by John Redford. The other is Brit. Mus. Add. 29996, a large collection containing Catholic liturgical organ music in its first section. Two other manuscripts of early Tudor organ pieces are Brit. Mus. Roy. App. 56 and Christ Church, Oxford, Music MS 371. The former contains some organ music for liturgical use by anonymous composers and the latter includes more music by Redford. These manuscripts are most important as the sources for the transcriptions in the above-mentioned Early English Church Music series.

The music contained in Mulliner's collection consists of organ pieces on liturgical chant melodies, transcriptions of sacred and secular vocal music, and music for viols, virginals, cittern and gittern. Thomas Mulliner never concerned himself with documenting the source of any of the music he copied; hence the presence of a number of obscurities concerning some composers, some titles, and the medium for which certain pieces were intended.

In his annotations to the Mulliner Book, published separately, Stevens provides the customary data concerning manuscripts, the notation, and other salient features of the repertory.¹ He is also responsible for the article on the collection in the Fifth Edition of Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians. In working toward a performance of some Mulliner works, it is first necessary to review what is known about early Tudor organs, and then inspect the compositions themselves.

Music chosen for discussion falls into two categories: music based on liturgical plainsong cantus firmi and music for the performance of verses of hymns alternating between choir and organ. In the latter practice, known as performances in alternatim, the organ actually replaces the text of alternate verses of the hymn.

¹Denis Stevens, The Mulliner Book: A Commentary, (London, 1952).

CHAPTER II

THE ENGLISH ORGAN IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

Knowledge of the construction of the organ in early Tudor times is limited. It was a century after Henry VIII, during the years of the Puritan control of Parliament, that organs and choirs were severed from public worship. In 1644, point in fact, the Puritan Parliament outlawed the use of the organ in worship. The senseless destruction of much ecclesiastical art during this period is well known. So thorough was the rejection and destruction of organs that virtually no pre-Commonwealth organs survive. There are a few organ cases, but without pipes and mechanics. There are, however, bits and pieces of documentation that give some clues to their character.

The usual assumption concerning sixteenth-century English organs is that they had one manual and no pedals. The possibility that these organs may have had some pedal keys has been suggested by a number of scholars.² It is known that in larger churches and cathedrals an organ sat atop a screen, or pulpitum, which divided the choir from the nave. In smaller churches where no pulpitum was

²Benjamin J. Maslen, "Early English Organ Pedals," Musical Times, CI (1960), 578-579.

built, the placement of the organ is not always known. Saint Paul's Cathedral, York Minster, and Durham Cathedral each had notable organs atop their screens.³ Durham had four or five more organs in the building, two of which were in the Choir, one on the north and one on the south side.⁴

In a record of some financial accounts during 1420-1559 for the church Saint Mary-at-Hill, Billingsgate, there are a number of entries which provide us with some useful clues about organs. The church had two organs in 1496, the smaller one being in the choir and the larger one in an unidentified location. Just prior to a celebration with special music for Saint Barnabas' Day in 1520, the choir organ broke down and another was promptly fetched from a nearby church. Seven years later an organ builder bought the "old portatives in the Choir."⁵

These two items parallel other entries from the records of Saint Mary-at-Hill which would lead one to believe that it was rather common to have small, portable organs about the church. Their portability gives some clue as regards pedals and pitch: an organ with large pipes and with a pedal mechanism would not have been

³Frank Ll. Harrison, Music in Medieval Britain, (London, 1958), p. 188.

⁴F. Ll. Harrison, Music in Medieval Britain, pp. 212-213.

⁵Hugh Baille, "A London Church in Early Tudor Times," Music and Letters, XXXVI (1955), 57-58.

readily portable. The larger instruments, being stationary, could have had pedal keys and larger pipes, but so little is documented about them that this is conjecture.

One argument supporting the belief that pedals might have existed is an artistic one. Tudor musicians, most of whom were organists and choirmasters, were also the chief music teachers of the day. It is well known that travel across the Channel during these times was frequent and that these musicians must have known that pedals existed on the Continent.

At least one foreign organist, Dionisio Memo, visited the court of Henry VIII and gained much esteem. Memo was organist of San Marco in Venice from 1507 and traveled to London in 1516, when he was made a vicar choral in the Chapel Royal. Memo would have been very familiar with Italian organs which had pull-down pedal mechanisms, but no independent pedal stops. One might expect Memo to have commented on the difference if the English organs did not have pedals.

Pedals obviously are advantageous to keyboard facility, especially in playing long notes in the bass voice and in occasional awkward passages when the bass range is at a distance from the other voices. Examples of this sort appear often enough to warrant consideration of the pedal controversy.

It has also been suggested that the existence of some

type of pedal mechanism has been overlooked by virtue of the fact that the word "pedal" does not seem to have existed in the English language until early in the seventeenth century. The use of somewhat unexplained terms as "bassys" and "underclaves" has invited speculation.⁶ If any conjecture can be adopted, it must be limited to the possibility of the existence of a pull-down mechanism with no separate pedal stops.

As to the dispositions of these organs, only the specification of an organ for All Hallows, Barking, offers some clues. This is contained in the contract between the church and an organ builder, Antony Duddyngton, in 1519. Its clarity is not its best attribute, and its interpretation by modern scholars is a source of controversy. A portion of the contract reads:

...this endenture...Witnesseth that Antony Duddyngton, Citezen of London, Organ-Maker, hath made a full bargayn...to make an instrument that is to say a payer of organs for the foresed church, of dowble Ce-fa-ut that ys to say, xxvij. playne keyes, and the pryncipale to conteyn the length of v foote, so folowing with Bassys called Diapason to the same, contayning length of x foote or more: And to be dowble pryncipalls thoroweout the said instrument so that the pyppes with inforth shall be as fyne metall and stuff as the utter parts, that is to say, of pur Tyn, with as fewe stops as may be convenient.⁷

A possible conclusion is that the term "Principal" is

⁶B. J. Maslen, "Early English Organ Pedals."

⁷John Caldwell, "Duddyngton's Organ: Another Opinion," Musical Times, CVIII (1967), 254.

defined as a mixture stop of several ranks, not unlike the Dutch blockwerk or the Italian ripieno. In modern terms, the mixture might correspond to this scheme: 4', 4', 2 2/3', 2', 2', 1 1/3', 1', 1', or a combination smaller or larger. The presence of double ranks (e.g., 4', 4') was common in the blockwerk, and the idea may well have been known on both sides of the Channel. The term "Diapason" (from Greek, meaning "octave") might be a rank of pipes sounding an octave below the Principal, or, in modern terms, an 8' stop. This stop would certainly not be readily portable and likely did not appear on the small instruments. The designation of the length of the written pitch C being 10' for the Diapason and 5' for the Principal suggests that the pitch of this organ would have been about a third lower than modern pitch. Hence, a written c¹ would sound a-flat.

This theory of pitch is corroborated by Caldwell⁸ and would seem plausible since the length of the foot from the late thirteenth century remains approximately the same in Britain. As early as c. 1272, a medieval tract explains that three grains of barley corn placed end to end, dry and round, make an inch, and twelve inches make a foot.⁹ The barley corn measurement was maintained consistently in

⁸J. Caldwell, "The Pitch of Early Tudor Organ Music," Music and Letters, LI (1970), 156-163.

⁹R. E. Zupko, A Dictionary of English Weights and Measures, (Madison, Wisconsin, 1968), pp. 64, 85-86.

England, eventually being incorporated into English laws of weights and measures. The standard remains the same today in England and the United States.

Most discussions of these instruments agree that when the Diapason pitch was available, it was actuated by a separate stop mechanism. The Principal ranks, four-foot and above, probably could not have been silenced by a stop action. Hence, the organ would always be playing at least at the four-foot level. As to the use of the nomenclature Diapason and Principal, it is interesting to note that, a century later in a contract with the organ builder Dallam for the organ at Worcester Cathedral in 1615, the term Diapason refers to the eight-foot stop, and Principal to the four-foot stop.¹⁰ This feature of nomenclature has been retained in England into the twentieth century, but no parallel is evident on the Continent. The Worcester instrument, incidentally, is the earliest definitely known to have two manuals in England, and presumably an exception to the rule.

In registering early Tudor organ music on a modern instrument, the observations above would lead one to experiment with combinations of stops with the four-foot stops being the lowest pitch, avoiding modern mixture stops, reed stops, and independent pedal stops. In pieces

¹⁰Thurston Dart, "The Instruments," Musica Britannica V, (London, 1956), p. viii.

where the range does not descend to the lowest octave, e.g., Blitheman's Gloria tibi Trinitas, numbers 91 and 96 in the Mulliner Book, one might imagine the use of the eight-foot pitch level. By coupling the manual in use to the pedal, the pedalboard could be used to its best advantage as an aid to the hands for a clear performance.

CHAPTER III

MUSIC BASED ON

LITURGICAL PLAINSONG CANTUS FIRMI

Felix Namque

The first area of interest for this discussion of Mulliner repertory is the use of plainsong cantus firmi. Of the 120 compositions in the collection, approximately half are based on plainsong melodies. These melodies are chiefly hymn melodies, all of which can be found in the Sarum Hymnal of 1525. A few of the melodies are antiphons which are in the Sarum Antiphonal. One is an Offertory found in a Sarum Gradual, the Felix namque.¹¹

The Felix namque was a popular Offertory for masses in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, commonly referred to as Lady Masses or Our Lady Masses. It is not unique with the Sarum rite. It appears in a somewhat different form in the Roman rite. The Sarum usage of the Offertory is for the Vigil of the Assumption. The cause of its popularity is difficult to identify, but it appears as early as a century before (c. 1400) as an organ composition (Bodleian, Douce MS 381).¹² By the time of the Tudor reign this Offertory was the cantus firmus of a large number of

¹¹D. Stevens, Commentary, pp. 76-77.

¹²T. Dart, "A New Source of Early English Organ Music," Music and Letters, XXXV (1954), 201-205.

organ compositions.

The chant is in the first mode. There is no repetition of any phrase. A long, melismatic alleluia appears in the Sarum Gradual at the end of the chant. Mention is made throughout this period that the organ was used for somewhat elaborate Offertories, replacing the chant itself completely, except for the word felix and perhaps the alleluia appendage during the proper seasons. Attesting to the popularity of this chant melody, in addition to the early fifteenth-century manuscript mentioned above, there are settings by Thomas Preston and John Redford (Brit. Mus. Add. 29996, c. 1545-1650); another Redford setting (Brit. Mus. Add. 15233, c. 1545); an anonymous composer (Brit. Mus. Royal App. 56, c. 1530); Thomas Tallis (Brit. Mus. Add. 30483, 16th and 17th C.); and another Tallis setting in the FitzWilliam Virginal Book, c. 1609, 1612. In each of these settings the notes of the alleluia are not used. There are two examples where the alleluia notes are set: one by Phillip ap Rhys [Phyllype Apryce] (Brit. Mus. Add. 29996) and an anonymous piece (Brit. Mus. Add. 5465, c. 1550).

One example of a Felix namque organ Offertory from the Mulliner collection is by William Blitheman (no. 32). Blitheman was master of the choristers at Christ Church, Oxford, in 1564 and organist of the Chapel Royal from 1585 until his death in 1591. A pupil of his, John Bull, was

to become an important figure in the next century. In the FitzWilliam Virginal Book, Blitheman is represented by a single piece, a Gloria tibi Trinitas, which also appears in the Mulliner collection and is discussed below. Fifteen examples of Blitheman's works appear in the Mulliner repertory, a corpus large enough to give a definite impression of his style.

Blitheman's Felix namque is titled An Excellent Meane, indicating a three-voice organ composition in which the middle (mean[e]) voice is divided between the left and right hands. A performance of the piece would probably have begun with the word felix chanted by a beginner (cantor), followed by the organ piece, the top voice of which begins with the namque melody in half notes. The mean follows in canon at the octave; the bass in canon for only seven notes. The imitative technique testifies to the increased interest in imitative writing at that time. After the bass ceases to be in canon with the upper voices, the entire chant melody is used in the bass but is decorated in such a way that it becomes obscure to the ear as well as to the eye. Figure 1 (p. 15) shows to what extent the cantus firmus is decorated in the bass.

The pitch of the composition is written a fourth above the normal pitch of the mode, a common practice in cantus firmus compositions. This clarifies somewhat the problem of organ pitch mentioned above. If the organ in



Fig. 1--Blitheman, An Excellent Meane, bass line, mm. 1-9.

fact sounded a third or fourth lower than written, the transposition of organ compositions up a fourth would permit choir voices to be heard at the normal range of the human voice.

In Nomine

The second area of interest for this discussion is the use of the antiphon Gloria tibi Trinitas for a cantus firmus. In the Sarum rite, this antiphon was sung at second vespers on Trinity Sunday. There are ten pieces on this cantus firmus in the Mulliner Book by Blitheman, Nicholas Carleton, Robert Johnson, and John Taverner. Some of these pieces are titled In nomine. The origin of these synonymous titles has been studied by Reese,¹³

¹³Gustave Reese, "The Origin of the English 'In Nomine,'" Journal of the American Musicological Society, II (1949), 7-22.

Donington and Dart,¹⁴ whose articles appearing in 1949 have become the standard references for this problem. In summary, the original combination of this melody and the text in nomine occurs in the Benedictus of a Mass by John Taverner. A keyboard arrangement of a portion of this Benedictus appears in the Mulliner collection (no. 35). The keyboard piece begins at the point in the mass where the text reads in nomine Domini. A description of this section is discussed below. After the appearance of this Mass and the ensuing popularity of the use of this cantus firmus, the In nomine eventually replaced the Felix namque as a favorite cantus firmus for keyboard pieces. The important difference between the use of the two genres is that the Felix namque was used as a substitute for an integral and obligatory part of the liturgy of Lady Masses. As the emphasis on the Marian devotions declined during the Tudor period, the actual use of the Felix namque melody apparently waned. In nomine compositions became non-liturgical compositions, perhaps for use as voluntaries. It is unclear whether the In nomine was, in the early Tudor period, more popular as an organ piece for church, or as a secular piece for virginals or ensembles. Whatever the use, the In nomine remained a favorite cantus firmus for instrumental pieces until the time of Purcell in the

¹⁴Robert Donington and T. Dart, "The Origin of the 'In Nomine,'" Music and Letters, XXX (1949), 101-106.

seventeenth century. It cannot be assumed that, by the time of Purcell, it was solely a secular piece. Despite the Puritan rule, one reads that in some instances (where soldiers and vandals had not made a shambles of church appointments) organs actually remained and were used for entertainment before and after services.¹⁵ The Puritan viewpoint did not hold a building to be sacred. A church was a meeting room, not a sanctuary, and there was no reason why an organ could not be a part of it, so long as the organ did not sound during worship services.

Blitheman's fascination with the In nomine is exhibited in Mulliner's collection by six settings (nos. 91-96), each unique, almost as though a cycle of pieces were intended. Although it may be premature to expect to find a cyclic work during this period, the principal of theme and variations is suggested by some keyboard dompes (or dumps) of the same time (c. 1525).¹⁶ That Blitheman's pieces might be considered a set of variations intended to be performed together is an attractive hypothesis; however, only two of the six settings are found in other sources, casting some doubt on whether Blitheman intended their use as a set.

The Gloria tibi Trinitas chant itself is in the first mode, two phrases in length with no repetition of melodic

¹⁵Percy A. Scholes, The Puritans and Music in England and New England, (London, 1934), Chapter XV, pp. 229-252.

¹⁶John Ward, "The Dofull Dumps," Journal of the American Musicological Society, IV (1951), 111-121.

material. The second phrase takes the range up to an octave above the final. In the keyboard transcription of Taverner's *Benedictus*, the notes are the same as in the Mass with three minor exceptions. The Mass is for six voices, but the *Benedictus* is in no more than four voices at one time. A three-voice texture begins with the text Benedictus qui venit, utilizing the first twelve notes of the cantus firmus. At the text in nomine Domini, only four voices are used, entering in imitation. The cantus firmus is in the alto in breves; the three remaining voices take the melodic contour of the cantus firmus (see Figure 2).¹⁷

Handwritten musical score for four voices: SUPERIUS, ALTIUS, QUINTUS, and BASSUS. The score is in G major and 4/4 time. It shows the beginning of the "in nomine Domini" section. The SUPERIUS part has a melodic line with lyrics "in no - mi -". The ALTIUS part has a cantus firmus line with lyrics "in no - mi - ne". The QUINTUS part has a melodic line with lyrics "in no - mi". The BASSUS part has a melodic line with lyrics "in no - mi". A bracketed note below the BASSUS part reads "[SEXTUS, TENOR ARE TACET]". The notation includes various note values, rests, and accidentals.

Fig. 2--Taverner, *Missa Gloria tibi Trinitas*, mm. 13-15 of the *Benedictus*.

¹⁷ John Taverner, "Missa Gloria tibi Trinitas," in *Tudor Church Music*, Volume I (London, 1923), pp. 148-149.

The following six paragraphs exhibit the salient features of the six Blitheman settings (nos. 91-96 in the Mulliner Book).

- No. 91. 3 voices; cantus firmus in half notes in bass; 5 instances of decoration of the cantus; upper two voices in imitation in eighth notes to m. 16; groups of sixteenth-note figures arranged in three m. 17-24; continuous sixteenth-notes against eighth-note motion to the end, m. 29.
- No. 92. 3 voices; cantus firmus in half notes in soprano; no decoration of cantus firmus; third voice enters m. 14; lower voice begins duple sixteenth-notes to m. 9, then triplet eighth-notes to the end, m. 28; Figure 3 shows interesting use of trochaic and iambic rhythms in mm. 17b-20.



Fig. 3--Blitheman, no. 92, m. 19

- No. 93 3 voices; cantus firmus in half notes in middle voice; significant decoration of the cantus firmus mm. 3-5, 12-15; outer voices have imitative figurations to m. 17 where imitation ceases; similar trochaic and iambic rhythms to No. 92 in parallel area, mm. 18-22; additional fourth and fifth voices enter in last two measures, 27-28, see Figure 4.
- No. 94 3 voices; cantus firmus in half notes in middle voice; no decoration of cantus firmus; outer voices duple; motion increases from eighth notes to sixteenth notes gradually; length is 27 measures.



Fig. 4--Blitheman, no. 93, mm. 27-28

No. 95. 3 voices; cantus firmus in half notes in middle voice; cantus firmus decorated in mm. 4, 7-9, 14, and an additional note in m. 27; outer voices in duple sixteenths and imitative, m. 1-16; triplet eighth notes begin m. 17 and continue to end, m. 28; m. 25 has sixteenth notes grouped in fours in triple rhythm.

No. 96. 4 voices; cantus firmus is bass, decorated throughout with quarter-note and eighth-note passing tones and turns; upper three voices in ricercare style in quarter notes and eighth notes; length is 28 measures.

By comparing these six, it is observed each piece is essentially the same length and each treats the cantus firmus in half notes or half-note movements with some decoration. Only no. 96 is in four voices. In nos. 91, 92, 93 and 95 there appears the curious change of rhythmic movement at the mid-point of the compositions. This seems to be a device peculiar to Blitheman. Other than being the mathematical center point, if that is a reason, there is no apparent cause to change the rhythm unless there is some remote relation to the corresponding text (...omnia secula et nunc et in perpetuum).

CHAPTER IV

MUSIC FOR THE

PERFORMANCE OF HYMNS IN ALTERNATIM

Alternation performances of music in England developed exclusively as an ecclesiastical art, following earlier Gregorian practices of responsorial singing, that is, alternation between soloists and choir. Some early polyphonic styles featured sections of text set polyphonically, sung by soloists, alternating with monophonic chant, sung by choirs, establishing an alternation technique in a vocal style long before the Tudor period. From the eleventh century to the sixteenth century, these practices applied chiefly to hymns, graduals, alleluias and canticles.

It is recorded as early as the fourteenth century that organs and choirs were alternating in performances of hymns in England. In the fifteenth century, a full account of Henry VII's visit to York Minster described the singing of the Te Deum in alternation between organ and choir.¹⁸ By the Tudor period, the practice of alternation seems to be an established tradition. John Caldwell submits that the alternation practice applies also to both the

¹⁸F. Ll. Harrison, Music in Medieval Britain, pp. 216.

Ordinary and Proper texts of the Mass. There are no examples of Mass movements in the Mulliner repertory, but Caldwell's 1969 publication of the tenth volume of Early English Church Music contains such movements which will doubtless be of interest to some performers in the future. The Mulliner Book does contain three sets of hymn versets which may be reconstructed for performance in alternation. The organ scores give only the organist's viewpoint. In order to perform these properly, it is necessary to obtain the Sarum version of the chant and text. Thanks to recent contributions in the appendices of the Early English Church Music series, some heretofore unpublished Sarum chants provide solutions to some problems in preparing performances of alternatim compositions in the Mulliner repertory.

The first of these three examples is by Blitheman (nos. 49-52). It is the hymn Eterne rerum conditor. The melody is in the second mode for the first two phrases, and in the first mode for the last two of the four phrases. The text has nine stanzas and an amen. The hymn is for use at Lauds from the second Sunday after Epiphany till Lent. Blitheman's verses number four; hence, alternation works exactly with the choir singing verses one, three, five, seven, nine and the amen.

The first setting is in two parts with the cantus firmus in the bass, but in a decorated presentation.

Blitheman seems to observe an artistic urging to avoid an undecorated cantus firmus in a two-part texture. The second setting retains the cantus firmus in the bass but this time the texture is three-part. The cantus firmus is not decorated until the last seven measures. In the first setting, imitation is achieved within the framework of the cantus firmus decoration. The second setting begins with an ascending diatonic figure which is imitated at the fifth by the middle voice. This figure is repeated several times throughout.

The third setting is expanded to four voices, the cantus firmus now found in the tenor, an octave above its position previously. A subtitle, melos suave, suggests a certain pride, perhaps, of Blitheman in the skillful handling of a four-part texture, the imitations of which having a modern and easy flow in a style remarkably more sophisticated than the previous two pieces. It should be noted here that Edward E. Lowinsky takes an opposing view of the meaning of melos suave.¹⁹ He feels that the indication refers to an organ stop, probably a tremulant. His analysis is gained only through conjecture, albeit based on very convincing reasoning, and it may be as inviting a problem to some as the above mentioned pedal controversy. To date, no one has replied to Lowinsky's

¹⁹Edward E. Lowinsky, "English Organ Music of the Renaissance," Musical Quarterly XXXIX (1953), p. 535.

analysis of the issue. The cantus firmus in the third setting of Blitheman appears chiefly in half notes, but it does have diatonic scale passages to decorate it in mm. 6-9 and 15.

The last setting raises the cantus firmus another octave to the soprano voice. The texture is three parts. The bottom two voices supply a complex rhythmic structure. The bass voice itself is strong enough to foreshadow the characteristics of a Baroque continuo line. Unlike the liturgical pieces discussed above, none of the verses of this hymn is transposed from the original mode. It may be observed that the range of the hymn itself is d-c¹ which, even if actually sounding a third lower in Tudor times, would still lie within the normal voice range.

The second hymn is by Thomas Tallis (nos. 100, 105). Tallis is represented in the Mulliner repertory by eighteen compositions, twelve of which are organ pieces on plainsong cantus firmi. For Tallis to have composed organ verses on Latin hymns would be a logical thing for him to do. He was master of the choir and organist at the Abbey of the Holy Cross in Waltham, Essex, for some time before the Abbey's dissolution in 1540. At the time of its dissolution, there were at least three organs in the Abbey. Tallis's life from 1540 turned from monastic duties. After the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI and Mary Tudor, Tallis and William Byrd shared the duties as

organists in the Chapel Royal and in the management of a music printing business endowed by Elizabeth I.

The two Tallis verses are settings for the hymn Ecce tempus idoneum, a five-verse office hymn for use from Lent III until Passion Sunday. The chant is in the third mode and so are the organ verses. The range of the chant is e-d¹, implying that the range would be quite singable without transposition. Both settings are in four voices in a distinctly vocal style. Voices enter one at a time in imitation. In the first setting, the cantus firmus appears in the tenor, highly decorated and usually part of the imitative fabric. The second setting is also in four parts and vocal in style, but the cantus firmus begins in the alto and is frequently exchanged between the alto and tenor. In contrast to Blitheman's style, both of these settings exhibit an easier flow of melodic line, subtle phrasing of the inner voices, and a harmonic sense which Blitheman does not seem to possess.

With Blitheman's Te Deum (no. 77), other features of early Tudor organ music are shown, and different problems arise. The Sarum version of the Te Deum is in the third mode, although it is difficult to assign it consistently to the third or fourth mode. The hymn is comprised of three different melodies for the thirty-two short verses. They appear in this sequence: I, vv. 1-16; II, vv. 17-23, 27-31; III, 24-26, 32. The text is drawn from third and

sixth century sources. Like the Gloria in excelsis, it is a psalmus idioticus, so called because of its literary style which is imitative of the psalms. The melodies of the Te Deum are elaborated psalm tones, albeit the recitation tone is sometimes diminished to nothing.

Before considering the organ setting, the English practice of faburden must be considered briefly. Fourteenth- and fifteenth-century England fostered a practice of teaching amateur singers to sing in harmony by looking at only one line (a plainsong melody). It is a method by which one voice improvises in fifths and thirds below a plainsong while another voice sings in parallel fourths above the plainsong. The singers were trained to sing from a single line of music, called "sighting," a term which best translates into modern English as "transposition." Because the lower (faburden) voice may be at either a fifth or a third below, similar (not parallel) motion is the rule. This is a kind of improvisation, as has been already stated, but one that led to a certain aura which affected the way music was written down. In writing, English composers of the fifteenth century did not write entire compositions in this style. The technique was employed strategically in approaches to cadences. Because fifths were employed chiefly at the beginning and ending of phrases and thirds used the remainder of the time, much of this style resulted in what one may now

refer to as parallel first-inversion chords. The origins of the practice, the invention of the word and the effect the practice had on music history remain lively subjects for research.²⁰

By the early part of the sixteenth century and the time of the Mulliner repertory, one finds composers with a fondness for using a faburden (lower) voice, derived from these older practices, for the cantus firmus of keyboard works rather than the notes of the plainsong itself. This means that the cantus firmus of such pieces might resemble the contour of the plainsong by the fact that the motion would be similar, but the chant itself could never be accurately determined from the faburden voice. In his Te Deum, Blitheman used such a faburden voice for a cantus firmus. The resulting performance in alternation means that one hears the actual plainsong melodies alternating with new tunes in the organ part. Figure 5 shows one phrase and how Blitheman derived the faburden. It is immediately obvious that to use a faburden cantus firmus, the plainsong must be sung at a parallel pitch with the composition.

Identical structural patterns are shown in three

²⁰See Sylvia W. Kinney, Walter Frye and the "Con-tenance Angloise," (New Haven, 1964), Chapter 5, "The Theory of Discant." See also Ann Besser Scott, "The Beginnings of Fauxbourdon: A New Interpretation," Journal of the American Musicological Society, XXV (1972), 345-363.

o = plainsong o = faburden

faburden transposed

Blitheman's bass line, Te Deum, v. 13.

Fig. 5--Solution to a portion of Blitheman's use of a faburden cantus firmus.

other English settings of the Te Deum from the early sixteenth century. One by Avery Burton and one by Redford are found in Brit. Mus. Add. 29996. Another by Redford is found in Brit. Mus. Add. 15233.²¹ Burton's setting follows the same transposition plan as Blitheman's setting. The Redford settings, for the first two melodies of the chant, do not employ the faburden at a transposed pitch,

²¹J. Caldwell, editor, Early English Church Music, VI, (London, 1966). This volume contains scores in modern notation of all three pieces.

hence, the chant must again move to conform. The third melody of the chant is used as a cantus firmus (rather than a faburden) and is not transposed, thus allowing the choir part to be at normal pitch.

An interesting comparison to these settings is the setting of the Roman version of the Te Deum for alternation performance by Pierre Attaignant (c. 1530) in France. The structural plan begins with the incipit sung by the cantor. Thus the organ is playing the odd-numbered verses until the third Sanctus (verse seven) when the organ continues, embracing verse eight. From there the verses follow the same plan as the English pieces. The style of this French work has some interesting contrasts to the English pieces. The Blitheman verses are comparable to the hymn verses described above; that is, they are essentially contrapuntal. The verses by Burton and Redford are also contrapuntal and with more rhythmic interest than Blitheman's verses. The French verses do not adhere to a contrapuntal style as severely as the English. Free-voice writing appears frequently, usually in block chords. Written-out ornamentation decorates the French pieces to a large extent in contrast to the English pieces, whose lines do not become as supple as those of the Frenchman. The cantus firmus is set monorhythmically in half notes in the English pieces, sometimes decorated by passing quarter notes and eighth notes. The French verses do not adhere strictly to this principle

although many notes of the cantus firmus are set monorhythmically. There are many instances of longer and shorter values, rhythmic distortions and lapses of time to allow for divisions and imitative entrances. The cantus firmus of the Continental piece is the Roman version of the chant, not transposed.

The Blitheman verses display no patterns of treatment in melodic form, or decoration, in which voice the cantus firmus appears, or in the number of voices in a verse. The seventeenth verse offers one parallel to the hymn verses noted earlier in that there is a change to triple rhythm at the midpoint. Five verses are in two-part writing with occasional expansions near cadences. Eleven verses are in three voices. The cantus firmus appears in all voices almost an equal number of times and is decorated significantly in verses one and three only.

For the modern performer, the clarity of notation of the Musica Britannica edition of the Mulliner Book allows for a good view of the pieces both for their overall form and for details. Fingering the pieces on the modern keyboard offers some problem, but once the performer is willing to abandon modern principles of finger technique and adopt patterns which fit the early lines, the technical problems are reduced significantly. The state of ornamentation in England in early Tudor times is a subject hardly even mentioned. Until more is known

about the sizes and actions of the keyboards or until more information is found concerning performance practices, one is best advised to limit ornamentation to a minimum.

Beyond the scope of this paper is the question of style in the performance of Sarum chant. Was the pronunciation Anglicized? Were any rhythms or rhythmic modes used in English chant performance? For want of more information, the tape recording accompanying this paper reflects the current American practice of chanting according to rules set forth by the Solesmes monks in the Liber Usualis.

While a written commentary on these pieces may reveal only subtle contrasts in the somewhat severe, static English style, perhaps the relationship of these pieces with their vocal counterparts and vocal complements will prove to heighten the interest and charm of ecclesiastical music near the end of Roman Catholic England.

APPENDIX

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

- 1485 Henry VII, First Tudor Monarch
John Redford, composer (1486-1547)
John Taverner, composer (1495-1545)
Thomas Tallis, organist, composer (1505-1585)
- 1509 Henry VIII
William Blitheman, organist, composer
(1510-1591)
Thomas Mulliner begins his collection,
c. 1540
William Byrd, organist, composer (1542-1623)
Act of Supremacy, 1534, begins the official
defiance of Papal power
- 1547 Edward VI, Heir to the throne, age 10
Duke of Somerset, Lord Protector
Book of Common Prayer ratified, 1549
- 1552 Mary I
Sudden and violent return to Catholicism
- 1558 Elizabeth I, Last Tudor Monarch
An Act of Uniformity, 1559, returns to
precepts of Henry VIII
Mulliner ceases his collection, c. 1560
Tallis and Blitheman die
- 1603 James I, First Stuart Monarch
- 1625 Charles I
Puritans win control of Parliament, Civil
War, 1642-46
Parliamentary law banishing use of organs
in churches, 1644
Charles I found guilty of treason and
beheaded, 1649
- 1649 Monarchy abolished, Commonwealth established

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

- Adams, R. L., The Development of a Keyboard Idiom in England During the English Renaissance, Washington Univ., 1960.
- Borren, Van Den, The Sources of Keyboard Music in England, London, Novello, 1914.
- Harrison, Frank Llewellyn, Music in Medieval Britain, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958.
- Hopkins, E. J., The Organ, Its History and Construction, London, Cocks, 1877.
- Hughes-Hughes, Augustus, Catalogue of Manuscripts of Music in The British Museum, London, Board of Trustees of The British Museum, 1906-1909.
- Kinney, Sylvia, Walter Frye and the 'Contenance Angloise', New Haven and London, Yale Univ. Press, 1968.
- Liemohn, Edwin, The Organ and Choir in Protestant Worship, Philadelphia, The Fortress Press, 1968.
- Le Huray, Peter, Music and the Reformation in England, 1349-1660, New York, Oxford University Press, 1967.
- Perrot, Jean, tr. Norma Deane, The Organ from its Invention in the Hellenistic Period to the End of the Thirteenth Century, London, Oxford University Press, 1971 (original French, 1965).
- Pfatteicher, C. P., John Redford, Kassel, Barenreiter, 1934.
- Scholes, Percy A., The Puritans and Music in England and New England, London, Oxford University Press, 1934.
- Stevens, Denis, The Mulliner Book: A Commentary, London, Stainer and Bell, 1952.
- _____ Tudor Church Music, rev. ed., New York, Norton, 1966

Walker, E., A History of Music in England, ed. J. A. Westrup, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1952.

Zupko, R. E., A Dictionary of English Weights and Measures, Madison, Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1968.

ARTICLES

Baille, Hugh, "A London Church in Early Tudor Times," Music and Letters XXXVI (1955), 55-64.

Caldwell, John, "Keyboard Plainsong Settings in England, 1500-1660," Musica Disciplina XIX (1962), 129-153.

_____, "Duddyngton's Organ: Another Opinion," Musical Times CVIII (1967), 254-255.

_____, "The Pitch of Early Tudor Organ Music," Music and Letters LI (1970), 156-163.

Collins, H. B., "John Taverner's Masses," Music and Letters V (1924), 322-334, and VI (1925), 314-329.

Dart, Thurston, "A New Source of Early English Organ Music," Music and Letters XXXV (1954), 201-205.

Donington, Robert, and Dart, T., "The Origin of the 'In Nomine,'" Music and Letters XXX (1949), 101-106.

Lowinsky, Edward E., "English Organ Music of the Renaissance," Musical Quarterly XXXIX (1953), 373-395, 528-553.

Maslen, Benjamin J., "The Earliest English Organ Pedals," Musical Times CI (1960), 578-579. See subsequent letters by Denis Stevens, CI, p. 717; Peter R. J. Walker, CI, p. 718; Thurston Dart, CII, p. 107; Susi Jeans, CII, p. 108; S. J. Maslen, CII, 108-109.

Mendel, Arthur, "Pitch in the Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries," Musical Quarterly, XXXIV (1948), 28-45, 199-221.

Parton, Kenneth, "On Two Early Tudor Manuscripts of Keyboard Music," Journal of the American Musicological Society XVII (1964), 81-83.

Reese, Gustave, "The Origin of the English 'In Nomine,'" Journal of the American Musicological Society II (1949), 7-22.

Scott, Ann Besser, "The Beginnings of Fauxbourdon: A New Interpretation," Journal of the American Musicological Society, XXV (1972), 345-363.

Steven, Denis, "A Unique Tudor Organ Mass," Musica Disciplina VI (1952), 167-175.

_____ "Organists and Organ Music of Tudor Times," American Guild of Organists Quarterly V (1960), 43-47.

_____ "Processional Psalms in Faburden," Musica Disciplina IX (1955), 105-111.

Ward, John, "The 'Dolfull Dumps,'" Journal of the American Musicological Society IV (1951), 111-121.

Williams, Peter, "Diapason," Musical Times CVI (1965), 463-464.

MUSIC

Caldwell, John, transcriber and editor, Early Tudor Organ Music: I, in Early English Church Music VI, London, Stainer and Bell, 1966.

English Hymnal, The, London, Oxford University Press, 1933.

Stevens, Denis, transcriber and editor, The Mulliner Book, in Musica Britannica I, London, Stainer and Bell, 1951, 1966.

_____ transcriber and editor, Early Tudor Organ Music: II, in Early English Church Music X, London, Stainer and Bell, 1969.