

# BRIDGE FREDERICK

TWELVE GOOD  
MUSICIANS: FROM JOHN  
BULL TO HENRY  
PURCELL

**Frederick Bridge**  
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**John Bull to Henry Purcell**

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Twelve Good Musicians: From John Bull to Henry Purcell:*

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# Frederick Bridge

## Twelve Good Musicians: From John Bull to Henry Purcell

### INTRODUCTORY

In the Preface of his admirable contribution to the *Oxford History of Music* (Vol. III.) the late Sir Hubert Parry writes: "The seventeenth century is musically almost a blank, even to those who take more than the average interest in the Art; and barely a score of composers' names during the whole time suggest anything more than a mere reputation to modern ears." Of course the distinguished author is speaking of the musical world in general, not of our own country's music only. I am inclined to think it is a little severe on us. I have always found that great interest is taken in the 17th century music and musicians of England.

Surely the century which began with the great Madrigal school at its highest point, which saw the Masque at its best in Milton's *Comus*, which witnessed the supersession of the viol by the violin, and which, at the close, had to its credit the complete works of our greatest composer, Henry Purcell, ought not to be in any sense "almost a blank," to English students at least.

But if our musical students will only read Volume III of the *Oxford History* – so full of the author's admirable criticisms and so amply illustrated by selections from the great composers of the period – they will certainly form a high opinion of what was accomplished then, and, having finished the volume, their minds will assuredly not be a "blank."

To help to a useful view of what was done in our own country in the 17th century I took that period for my University Course in this session 1919-1920, and for my subject Twelve Good Musicians from John Bull to Henry Purcell. The substance of these lectures is given in the following chapters.

For many biographical details and other matter I have availed myself of the valuable articles in Grove's *Dictionary* and in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, which I beg to acknowledge.

To Mr Barclay Squire I am deeply indebted for much information. His work in Musical History is most valuable, and deserves the best thanks of all students.

To my brother, Professor J. C. Bridge, M.A., Mus.D., of Chester, and to Mr Jeffrey Pulver and Dr Borland I am also grateful for many interesting facts contained in these pages.

*J. FREDERICK BRIDGE.*

*The Cloisters, Westminster Abbey, October, 1920.*

# I. DR. JOHN BULL

**1563 (?) – 1628**

There is, I venture to think, a fitness in the choice of the first musician of the Twelve to be considered. John Bull is a name familiar to Englishmen, though I do not know that the musician bearing that name has anything to do with the historical and political personage whose jovial portrait is so well known to us. But Dr. John Bull, was the first to hold anything like a University Professorship in London – or indeed in England. It is true Gresham College has not developed into a University, but its founder, Sir Thomas Gresham, certainly seems to have had such an end in view, and John Bull was the first Gresham Music Lecturer. As his successor at Gresham College, and as I have the honour to be the first Musical Professor in the University of London, I think there is a justification for beginning this course in the University with a consideration of the old Gresham Professor. I must premise that in selecting twelve good men I have by no means exhausted the number of such men available, but I hope to have chosen good representatives of the various Schools and movements in the musical world of England in the 17th century. And, although necessarily concentrating my

attention on the selected twelve, yet, of course, undoubtedly I shall make many references to their fellow-musicians both in this country and abroad. But it is to our own men and our own music in the 17th century that I shall direct my chief attention.

To begin then with the first of my twelve good musicians – the first Gresham Professor of Music, Dr. John Bull. Born about 1563 of a Somersetshire family, he became one of the Children of the Chapel Royal (as will be seen, always a great nursery of young English Musicians), his master being Blytheman who, we are told, "spared neither time nor labour to advance his natural gifts."

Organist of Hereford Cathedral for a time, we find him in 1585 a member of the Chapel Royal Choir – not then organist, a post to which he attained a few years later, succeeding his old master, Blytheman. He was evidently determined to get on in his profession, for, besides all these posts and varied activities, he found time in 1586 to take the degree of Bachelor of Music at Oxford (it being stated he had "practised the faculty of music for 14 years"), following this up with a Doctor's degree – this time at Cambridge.

He appears to have met with a somewhat serious adventure at Tewkesbury, in 1592, "being robbed in those parts." A Mr. W. Chelps, of Tewkesbury showed him "rare kindness" and was rewarded, no doubt by Bull's influence, with the post of a Gentleman Extraordinary in the Chapel Royal.

In 1592 our indefatigable musician took another degree, that

of Doctor of Music at Oxford, the delay in taking it having been caused, according to a contemporary writer, by his having met with "rigid puritans there, that could not endure Church Music."

The next important step in his varied career was his appointment as first Gresham Professor of Music. His lectures should have been given in Latin, but he was allowed to deliver them in English. Unfortunately there is no copy of his lectures to be found, but Mr. Barclay Squire in an article on Bull in the Dictionary of National Biography, gives the following title-page of the first lecture which is all that survives of it:

*"The oration of Master John Bull, Doctor of Music and one of the Gentlemen of his Majestie's Royal Chapel, as he pronounced the same before divers worshipful persons the Aldermen and Commoners of the Citie of London, with a great multitude of other people the 6th day of October 1597, in the new erected Colledge of Sir Thomas Gresham, Knight, deceased: made in the Commemoration of the said worthy Founder, and the excellent Science of Musicke. (Imprinted at London by Thomas Este)."*

Although a great misfortune that the Lecture itself is not to be found; it is interesting to learn the subject of the oration from the title-page.

It would, however, have been more interesting to read the lecture itself, if only to see what Bull said about Sir Thomas Gresham and to know his views upon music in general. Of one thing we may be certain: he must have given his audience a real treat by his Clavier performance; for doubtless he obeyed

the directions given in the Founder's will – directions which are observed to this day. It was wise on the part of Gresham to insist that the lectures should be adequately illustrated: an audience gains much from *hearing the examples* which have been commented upon by the lecturer. The directions are:

"The solemn music lectures twice every week, in manner following, viz: the theoretique part for one half hour or thereabouts, and the practique by concert of voice or instruments for the rest of the hour."

Bull has been credited with the composition of our National Anthem. The matter has been investigated by many, but, so far, there seems no proof of it. We know, however, that he was honoured by King James I, as his name was amongst those to whom were given "gold chains, plates, or medals."

He appears to have been admitted into the freedom of the Merchant Taylors' Company in 1606, and in 1607 he played before the King and Prince Henry when they dined at Merchant Taylors' Hall. According to Stowe, "John Bull, Doctor of Music, one of the Organists of His Majestie's Chapel Royal and free of the Merchant Taylors', being in a citizen's goun, cappe and hood, played most excellent melodie upon a small payre of Organs placed there for that purpose only."

The Musical arrangements for this great City Company's feast were on a very elaborate scale. Besides Bull's performance (which was apparently for the King only, who dined alone in a separate chamber "where Dr. Bull did play all dinner time"), the

Singing Men and Children of the Royal Chapel sang melodious songs, and some of the best singers of the day sang songs by Coperario, from a ship which was suspended in the great Hall. Besides all this the Choir of St Paul's sang songs, the words of which were by Ben Jonson. The King must have had a pretty good programme of music to listen to, unless he spent the evening in his own room where he dined alone – with Dr Bull playing to pass the time.

The numerous singers in the great Hall seem to have been rather a trouble to the givers of the feast. Bull and Gyles, the master of the Children of the Chapel Royal, who performed in the King's chamber, were rewarded the next day by being admitted into the livery of the Company as a recognition of their services at the entertainment, which are stated to have been "gratis, whereas the musicians in the greate Hall exacted unreasonable somes of the Company for the same."

During an absence abroad in 1601 his deputy at Gresham College was Thomas Byrd, son of the composer W. Byrd. Bull's fame had so spread that he had many tempting offers to attach himself to the "French and Spanish Courts," but he obeyed Queen Elizabeth's order to return to England.

In 1607, on account of a desire to marry, he relinquished the Gresham post, celibacy being one of the conditions of the appointment. The lady of his choice was "Elizabeth Walter of the Strand, maiden, aged about 24, daughter of Walter, citizen of London."

Nothing much is chronicled of him for the next four years, but in 1611 his name heads the list of the Prince of Wales' musicians at a salary of £40 a year, and another mention is made of him in connection with Princess Elizabeth's marriage, on which occasion (Feb. 14th, 1613) a benediction, *God the Father, God the Son*, was sung to an anthem "made new for that purpose by Dr. Bull."

We now come to the mysterious portion of Bull's life which culminated in his flight from England. The first hint is suggested by the following letter from Bull to Sir M. Hicks, secretary to the Earl of Salisbury:

"Sir,

I have bin many times to have spoken with you, to desire your favor to my Lord and Mr. Chancellor, to graunte me theire favors to chaunge my name, and put in my childes, leaving out my owne. It is but £40 by yeare for my service heretofore, the matter is not great, yet it will be some reliefe for my poor childe, having nothing ells to leave it."

The letter proceeds to mention some others whose interest had been moved, and is written in a tone of great humiliation. Was it an instance of coming events casting their shadows before? The following entry in the Chapel Royal cheque-book rather supports the supposition:

"John Bull, Doctor of Music, went beyond the seas without licence, and was admitted into the Archduke's Service, and entered into paie there about Michaelmas."

Peter Hopkins filled his place, and his quarter's salary, Michaelmas to Christmas, was divided amongst members of the Royal Chapel.

His departure created some sensation, as it is said he "was so much admired for his dexterous hand on the Organ, that many thought there was more than man in him." Wood puts it down to his "being possessed with crotchets, as many musicians are." A letter, however, from the British Minister at Brussels to King James I, puts a rather different complexion on it. It would appear that the Minister had been charged by James I, to express his displeasure at the Archduke's want of courtesy in engaging Bull, and in the letter announcing the fulfilment of his mission the Minister says:

"And I told him plainly, that it was notorious to all the world, the said Bull did not leave your Majesty's Service for any wrong done unto him or for matter of Religion, under which fained pretext he sought to wrong the reputation of your Majesty's justice, but did in that dishonest manner steal out of England through the guilt of a corrupt conscience to escape punishment which notoriously he had deserved and was designed to have been inflicted on him by the hand of justice for his ... grievous crimes."

It will be noticed the writer scoffs at Bull's religious sensitiveness, but there is no doubt he was, like Byrd, a Papist at heart.

In 1617 he succeeded Waelrant at Antwerp Cathedral, dying

in that city on the 12th or 13th of March, 1628, and being buried in the Cathedral.

Bull was evidently well thought of by his Antwerp friends, and Sweelinck, the great Dutch organist, included a Canon by Bull in his work on Composition. Bull returned the compliment by writing a Fantasia on a Fugue by Sweelinck.

Bull is most favourably known as a composer for the Virginals. Many fine examples are to be found in the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book*, and his powers as performer must have been very great, judging from his compositions. He joined Byrd and Gibbons in contributing to the celebrated collection *Parthenia* ("the first music for the Virginals ever published in England.") There are examples of his Church Music in Boyce's Cathedral Music (1760), but, like many other specimens contained in that valuable and well-known collection, these compositions of Bull do not seem to me to be the best examples of his powers. A really beautiful little motet contained in Sir William Leighton's *Tears and Lamentations of a Sorrowful Soule* (1614) entitled *In the Departure of the Lord* gives me a very high opinion of his Church Music. It is for four voices and full of beautiful harmony and expressive modulation. Indeed, I think it compares favourably with much of the kind written by contemporary musicians.

I hope to be able to edit it, with other specimens of Bull's sacred music, in the early future.

A portrait exists in the University of Oxford, and round it is written

"The Bull by force in field doth rayne  
But Bull by skill good-will doth gaine."

A copy of this portrait is prefixed to this book.

## II. WILLIAM BYRD

1542 or 3 – 1623

A great contemporary of John Bull comes next for consideration. William Byrd is certainly one of the most distinguished of the remarkable company of English composers living in the early years of the 17th century. Curiously enough, he was not included amongst the contributors to *The Triumphs of Oriana*. There may be a reason, of which more anon. Anthony Wood tells us "he was bred up to musick under Thomas Tallis," and the eminent Church musician was god-father to Byrd's son Thomas. Byrd was also Tallis' executor. In early life the subject of my Lecture was Organist of Lincoln, in which city he was married on the 14th of September, 1568. His eldest son was born at Lincoln in 1569, and a daughter in 1571-2. This proves he did not at once come to London on his appointment to the Chapel Royal. This was in 1569, when he succeeded Robert Parsons as Gentleman of the Chapel Royal, the said Robert Parsons having been drowned at Newark in January of that year. It seems probable that Byrd kept up some kind of connection with Lincoln for some time after his appointment to the Chapel Royal, for an entry in the Chapter Records of Lincoln mentions

the appointment of Thomas Butler as Organist and Master of the Choristers on the "nomination and commendation of Mr William Byrd." In London he shared with his old master, Tallis, the post of Organist of the Royal Chapel and he also enjoyed with him a privilege of a more profitable nature, which was no less than a patent, granted by Queen Elizabeth to print and sell music, English or foreign, and to rule, print and sell music paper for twenty-one years, and all other printers were forbidden to infringe this license under penalty of forty shillings. A petition from some printers, having reference to this license, shows it was not altogether a popular privilege. The complainants say: "Byrd and Tallys, her Majesty's Servants, have musicke boke with note, *which the Complainants confess they would not print,* nor be furnished to print, tho' there were no privilege." I think this may be regarded as a little specimen of professional jealousy.

Whether the privilege was a great financial benefit to the two old Masters one cannot say, but, anyhow, it was of great advantage in one way, and that was the opportunity it gave of printing and publishing their own works, and Byrd was not slow in taking advantage of it. In 1575 appeared his first published work, as a set of "Cantiones" in 4, 5, and 6 parts. Some of the compositions were by Tallis and some by Byrd, and they are fine and dignified specimens of both composers. One by Tallis in particular is a beautiful example of his treatment of a Chorale, the parts flowing in charming melody and the whole work abounding in interesting and clever "imitation." I have been

able to publish this fine example of early Church music, and it has been well received "in Quires and places where they sing." With the exception of "If ye love me" I do not know any anthem by Tallis which compares with it in solemn and chaste expression. It shows Byrd's old master – one of the founders of our Cathedral music – at his very best.

On the death of Tallis 1585, the patent was enjoyed by Byrd alone, and he made very good use of it. One of his first publications was entitled *Psalmes, Sonets, and Songs of sadness and pietie, made into musicke of 5 parts; whereof some of them going abroad among divers, in untrue coppies, are heere truely corrected, and the other being Songs very rare and newly composed, are heere published, for the recreation of all such as delight in Musicke* (1588).

At the back of the title-page of this work are the following "Eight Reasons briefly set down by the Author to perswade every one to learn to sing:"

1. First it is a knowledge easily taught and quickly learned where there is a good Master and an apt Scholar.
2. The exercise of singing is delightful to Nature, and good to preserve the health of Man.
3. It doth strengthen all parts of the breast and doth open the pipes.
4. It is a singular good remedy for Stutting<sup>1</sup> and

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<sup>1</sup> *i. e.*, stuttering; originally *stot*, from the German *stottern*. To "stut" is still used in Cheshire dialect, (v. Wilbraham's *Glossary of Cheshire Words*.)

Stammering in the speech.

5. It is the best means to procure a perfect pronunciation, and to make a good Orator.

6. It is the only way to know where Nature hath bestowed the benefit of a good voice, which gift is so rare, as there is not one among a thousand that hath it, and in many that excellent gift is lost, because they want Art to express Nature.

7. There is not any Musicke of Instruments whatsoever comparable to that which is made of the voices of Men, where the voices are good and the same well sorted and ordered.

8. The better the voice is the meeter it is to honour and serve God therewith, and the voice of man is Chiefly to be employed to that End."

To the above is added the following couplet:

Since Singing is so good a thing  
I wish all men would learne to sing.

In the same year appeared a work which was destined to wield tremendous influence upon English Musical Art. This was a collection of Madrigals called *Musica Transalpina. Madrigals translated out of 4, 5, and 6 parts, chosen out of divers excellent Authors, with the first and second parts of La Virginella made by MAISTER BYRD upon two stanzas of Ariosto and brought to speak English with the rest.* The inclusion of his name in this connection gives Byrd the claim to be considered one of the first,

if not the first, of English Madrigal writers. And the fact that he contributed to this work may have possibly been the cause of the absence of his name from the collection made by Morley – which, of course, was an imitation of the publication which had appeared some twelve years before. This is merely a supposition, but there must be some reason for the exclusion of such a distinguished composer, and one already famous as a Madrigal writer. It is the more remarkable from the fact that Morley spoke of Byrd with the greatest respect and even affection.<sup>2</sup>

Two years later he wrote two settings of *This sweet and merry month of May* for Watson's *First sett of Italian Madrigals Englished*. Among his other vocal compositions are *Psalms, Songs and Sonets, some solemne, other joyfull framed to the life of the words. Fit for voyces or viols*. He also was a contributor to Leighton's *Teares and Lamentations of a Sorrowful Soul*, the work in which Bull's beautiful Motet appears. One of his works he dedicated to the Earl of Northampton, and the dedication infers that not only had Byrd reason to be grateful to that nobleman, but so also had the Gentlemen of the Chapel Royal, as he seems to have been the means of securing an increase in their salaries. Of course many of Byrd's works were not published, and this is particularly the case with his compositions for the Virginals. Many are in the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book*<sup>3</sup> and also in

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<sup>2</sup> It may have been because he was a Roman Catholic and his name would not have been welcome to Elizabeth.

<sup>3</sup> Now published. Edited by Mr. Fuller Maitland and Mr. Barclay Squire.

*Lady Nevill's Booke*, which is a collection of Virginal Lessons, copied by a singing Man of Windsor named John Baldwin. Before leaving Byrd's professional life it is interesting to note his connection with another musical worthy contemporary, Alfonso Ferabosco; a joint publication of theirs will show this. It was entitled *Medulla Musicke, sucked out of the sappe of Two of the most famous Musicians that ever lived, Master William Byrd and Master Alfonso Ferabosco, Either of whom having made 40 severall ways (without contention) shewing most rare and intricate skill in 2 parts in one upon the Plaine Song Miserere*. This work was most probably the outcome of a "friendly contention" which they had "each one judging his rival's work, they both set plaine song 40 different ways."

In private life Byrd's religious feelings made his career rather an anxious one; like many others on the Chapel Royal Staff, though outwardly Protestant, he was probably a Roman Catholic. It was known that the Byrd family were "Papisticall recusants"; as early as 1581 he is mentioned as living at one of the places frequented by recusants, and is also set down as "a friend and abettor of those beyond the Sea, and is said to be living with Mr. Lister over against St Dunstans or at the Lord Padgettes house at Draughton." It is a noticeable thing that though his duties called him to the Chapel Royal, he lived nearly the whole of his life out of London. At one place, Stondon, Essex, he had some sequestrated property granted to him for three lives, but had a good deal of dispute with the previous owners, which went

so far as to necessitate the King's intervention. In a law-suit in connection with it "one Petiver submitted the said Byrd did give him vile and bitter words," that when told he had no right to the property replied that "yf he could not hould it by right he would hould it by might." Byrd lived a long life, and died on July 4, 1623.

The exact entry recording this fact in the Chapel Royal Cheque Book runs "1623, William Byrd, a Father of Musick, died the 4th of July, and John Croker, a Counter Tenor of Westminster, was admitted for a year of probation of his good behaviour and civill carriage."

Mr Barclay Squire has discovered much of interest concerning Byrd, notably his Will. In this he expresses a hope that he "may live and dye a true and perfect member of God's holy Catholic Church, (without which I believe there is no salvation for me). My body to be honourably buried in that parish or place where it shall please God to take me oute of this life, which I humbly desyre (if it shall please God) may be in the parish of Stondon where my dwellinge is, and this to be buried neare unto the place where my wife lyeth buried."

Of late years much attention has been devoted to Byrd's sacred music, which includes some remarkably fine Masses, some of which have been reprinted and used in the Roman Catholic Church. But Byrd has never been forgotten in the Cathedrals of England, for his Anthem *Bow Thine ear* has always found a place in the lists of the daily musical services. There is, also, a fine

specimen of his composition in the volume of Cathedral music published by Dr. Hayes. It has English words, and for a long time appeared in the Abbey list as by Hayes, but it was identified as one of Byrd's Latin motets, and now is ascribed to the rightful owner.

An interesting specimen of his Clavier compositions is to be found in the Fitzwilliam volume being an arrangement of the air *O Mistress Mine*. This is one of the few pieces of Shakespearian music which was published in the Poet's life-time. It is charmingly treated by Byrd. The same air appeared in a work by Morley, an arrangement of various airs for a small Band consisting of the Treble Viol, Flute, Cittern, Pandora, Lute, and Bass Viol. It seems probable that this air was a popular tune and that Shakespeare wrote words to it, or possibly (as he did in *Willo! Willo!*) took the old words which were set to the melody and incorporated them in his play.

A contemporary opinion of Byrd can be gathered from Peacham's estimate of him in the *Compleat Gentleman*. Writing in 1622, he says: "In Motets and Musicks of piety and devotion, as well for the honour of our nation as the merit of the man, I preferre above all other our Phoenix, Mr. Wm. Byrd, whom, in that kind, I know not whether any may equall, I am sure none excell, even by the judgment of France and Italy. His *Cantiones Sacrae* and also his *Gradualia* are meere Angelicall and Divine and being himself naturally disposed to gravity and piety, his veine is not so much for light Madrigals and Canzonets, yet his

Virginella and some others in his first set cannot be mended by the best Italian of them all." And Morley speaks of him as "my loving master, never without reuerence to be named of Musicians."

His name has always been associated with the Canon *Non nobis Domine*, but it would be very difficult to establish his claim to the authorship.

Altogether the old musician has a remarkable list of varied compositions to his credit. Besides those already mentioned he wrote some excellent *Fancies* and *In Nomines* for strings, making a real advance upon the somewhat stilted specimens of Instrumental Music then in vogue, and helping to free the Instrumental form of composition from the vocal. *Fancies* and *In Nomines* I shall speak of in detail in a later lecture.

William Byrd had a long and honourable career and contributed in a remarkable degree to the development of the Art of Music in England in the 17th century. There is much truth in Peacham's verdict that his music "cannot be mended by the best Italian of them all."

### III. THOMAS MORLEY

1557 – 1603

The next of our twelve musicians in chronological order of birth is Thomas Morley, born in 1557, when Byrd was a young man, though his course was run long before that veteran had finished with the affairs of this world. He was a pupil of Byrd, and was probably a chorister of St Paul's Cathedral. In 1588 he graduated B.Mus. at Oxford, and some three years later was appointed Organist of St Paul's. This position he did, however, not hold long, as in 1592, he was appointed a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal. In 1598 he was granted the licence, which had previously been held by Tallis and Byrd, for the exclusive right of printing and selling Books of Music and Ruled Paper, and many of the musical works which were published at that time were issued by Este, Peter Short, William Barley, and others, as the assigns of Thomas Morley. In 1602 he resigned his positions at the Chapel Royal, probably from ill-health, as one gathers from the Introduction to his *Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practical Music* that he was rather a confirmed invalid. Some have taken the year of his resignation as that of his death, but there is nothing to support this, and though Hawkins and Burney are at one in

placing his death in 1604, the correct date is 1603.

Details of Morley's life are scanty, by his works we must know him. His compositions are both vocal and instrumental, sacred and secular; and, in addition to his work in the various branches of composition, much of his fame rests upon his authorship of the first really satisfactory treatise on music, *The Plaine and Easie Introduction* already referred to.

This work is full of interest, and has been a book of reference and of valuable information to musicians for the past three centuries. Written in the form of a dialogue between Master and Pupil, it contains many quaint discourses, and it is in the early chapters of this work that the story is told of the unfortunate gentleman who could not read music at sight when asked to do so by his hostess, with the humiliating result that the company wondered "where he had been brought up."

Morley's book was translated into German by I. C. Frost, Organist of St Martin's, Halberstadt. It is interesting to observe that more than one of his works was translated into German (e.g., the *Canzonets or Little Short Songs to Three Voyces*, published here first in 1593, was translated into German and issued at Cassel in 1612 and at Rostock in 1624; and the *Ballets for Five Voyces* of 1595 was issued at Nuremberg in 1609).

This is a striking testimony to his merits, but the most celebrated of his publications was the great edition of Madrigals called *The Triumphs of Oriana*. This is said to have been compiled as a tribute to Queen Elizabeth, whose title of

"Gloriana" is well known. In this portly volume he includes no fewer than twenty-six Madrigals, contributed by many of the most famous living English composers. The work helped to make the practice of Madrigal-singing very popular in England, and to this day its influence is great and few programmes of Madrigal-music are ever issued without some specimen taken from this splendid collection.

And it is to Morley we owe a delightful contemporary setting of words by Shakespeare – the beautiful Lyric "It was a lover and his lass" from *As You Like It*. This is one of the very few things which we possess – with the words by Shakespeare and the music by a contemporary musician. Unfortunately, the charming song has been often sadly mutilated by editors, sometimes by the introduction of unwarranted "accidentals" and also by actual curtailment. I have, however, had the opportunity of referring to one of the few copies in existence of the original publication (formerly in the Halliwell-Phillip's collection), and have so been enabled to issue it in its correct form. Various attempts have been made to arrange it as a duet, on the ground that it was sung in the play by "two pages." The dialogue which precedes the song is very amusing and rather suggests that Shakespeare had some little experience of the peculiar weaknesses of singers, both amateur and professional. The following is the little episode in question:

## Enter Two Pages

1st Page: Well met, honest gentleman. Touchstone: By my troth, well met. Come sit, sit and a song.

2nd Page: We are for you: sit i' the middle.

1st Page: Shall we clap into't roundly, without hawking or spitting or saying we are hoarse; which are the only prologues to a bad voice?

2nd Page: I'faith, i'faith; and both in a tune, like two gipsies on a horse.

*As You Like It*, Act V., scene 3.

The words "two gipsies on a horse" have been taken to suggest that as the two gipsies must have ridden one behind the other, the two pages should sing, not in unison, but one after the other. Hence the effort to arrange the music in Canon, as it is termed. But there is no warrant for this; neither will the song admit of it.<sup>4</sup>

With respect to his Instrumental writing, in addition to many examples for the Virginals, he wrote for combined instruments, as will be seen later. Much of his Virginal-music is contained in the *Fitzwilliam Collection*, and in Will Forster's *Virginal*

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<sup>4</sup> Mr Arkwright gives us an interesting bit of information in connection with Morley and Shakespeare. "Morley lived in St Peter's, Bishopsgate, between 1596 and 1601, and his name appears in two *Rolls of Assessments for Subsidies*. In the earlier of these documents is the name of William Shakespeare, his goods being valued at the same amount as Morley's. He and Shakespeare both appealed against the assessment, and it may be supposed some amount of personal intercourse existed between them."

*Book* in Buckingham Palace. For combined instruments may be mentioned the seven Fantasias, and there is also a collection called *First Book of Consort Lessons for Six Instruments, Lute, Pandora, Cittern, Bass Viol, Flute and Treble Viol*. Writing on this collection Dr Burney does not take a very high estimate of its musical value: "they seem to have been intended for Civic Feasts" (he says), "and Master Morley, supposing perhaps that the harmony which was to be heard through the clattering of knives, forks, spoons, and plates, with the jingling of glasses and clamorous conversation of a City feast, need not be very accurate or refined, was not very nice in setting parts to these tunes, which are so far from correct that almost any one of the City Waits would have vamped as good an accompaniment on the spot."

I question if Dr Burney is justified in this scathing criticism. I do not suppose he ever heard them performed, for the good reason that there is no complete set of parts to be found, and there is no record of any such being in existence in his time. A few years ago I did my best to get these little "Band tunes" performed, but at first only the Viol and Flute parts could be found. Later on I was fortunate enough to discover a Cittern part in the Bodleian Library, and, later still, a part for the Pandora has been found in the Christ Church Library. We still want the parts for Lute and Bass Viol, but with these four we get a very good representation of the original, and at the Exhibition initiated by the Worshipful Company of Musicians we had one of these little tunes played by the six instruments, under the direction of the

Rev. W. Galpin. We had to supply parts for Lute and Bass Viol, but as we had the original Harmony supplied by the Flute (i.e. a small Recorder), which was an inner part, and by the Cittern and Pandora – both of which played Chords – we could not go far wrong. The effect was both interesting and charming, and altogether discounted Burney's unreliable criticism. It would be a great delight to all lovers of this early music if the two missing parts could be found, but I fear we shall hunt in vain.

His Sacred works include two Services and an Anthem, which was published in Barnard's collection, and a setting of the Burial Service, which appears in Boyce's collection. There are also examples, in MS. amongst the Harleian MSS., in the Christ Church Library at Oxford, and the Fitzwilliam and Peterhouse Libraries at Cambridge. A curious thing, rather, in connection with his Sacred works is, that, unlike his secular compositions, none was published during his lifetime.

His style was not so broad as that of Tallis or so noble as that of Byrd, but he had a great influence upon the art. His own compositions include examples of his talent in many directions. As a theoretical writer he is really distinguished above his contemporaries, and contributed to the stores of Sacred, Secular, and Instrumental music, besides writing for the stage.

Morley's early death was a real loss to English music, and he was mourned by all his contemporaries. One of the most touching testimonies is a beautiful *Lament for Six Voices* by Thomas Weelkes, himself a distinguished composer, whom we

shall consider later. The words are as follows:

A remembrance of my friend Mr. Thomas Morley.

Death hath deprived me of my dearest friend,  
My dearest friend is dead and laid in grave,  
In grave he rests until the world shall end,  
The world shall end, as end must all things have.  
All things must have an end that nature wrought  
That nature wrought must unto dust be brought.

Another poetical testimony to Morley was written in his lifetime, and may be given here. It is supposed to be by Michael Drayton:

Such was old Orpheus' cunning,  
That senseless things drew near him;  
And herds of beasts to hear him.  
The stock, the stone, the ox, the ass came running.  
Morley! but this enchanting  
To thee, to be the music god, is wanting;  
And yet thou needst not fear him.  
Draw thou the shepherds still, and bonny lasses,  
And envy him not stocks, stones, oxen, asses.

## IV. THOMAS WEELKES

1575? – 1623

In the previous Lecture I have mentioned Thomas Weelkes, and now turn for a short space to this distinguished composer. As I have said before, I do not profess to include all the great English musicians of the 17th century in this short series of Lectures, and Weelkes is selected, not only as being greatly superior to many others, but because he has given us something original in the shape of combined Instrumental and Vocal work, in addition to his valuable contributions to the Madrigal School. Of this I must speak later. As a Madrigal-writer he is notable as one of the "glorious company" of contributors to *The Triumphs of Oriana*. Although little of his Church music is published, yet as Organist of Chichester Cathedral and, as a member of the Choir of the Chapel Royal, he was an experienced Church musician. He left many Anthems, which are preserved in MS. in various Libraries; and he contributed two pieces to Leighton's *Teares and Lamentations of a Sorrowful Soul*. In his *Fancies for Strings* he displays a very fertile imagination. I have had some of his *Fancies* performed at my various Lectures, and have found them remarkable for melodic interest and very advanced as regards

Harmony. His instrumental writing is surprising; and, when one compares his Fancies with those by Orlando Gibbons, one is astonished at the novelty of his ideas. As will be seen later I shall have much to say in connection with Gibbons, Deering, and Purcell in regard to the Fancy. But I may as well at once explain that this was the form which was supreme in the early days of the 17th century as a vehicle for Instrumental writing. An enormous number of these compositions exist, and it was not until Purcell's time that the Fancy disappeared – being supplanted by the Sonatas for three strings and a Basso Continuo. It was a form which helped on the progress of writing for Instruments in a wonderful way. "Apt for Voices and Viols" was the usual title-page which composers loved. But, when the Fancy developed, the writing was far too elaborate to be "apt for voices," and so we get the independent instrumental Fancy. It was, as a rule, a work of some considerable length, and, while full of variety, it was lacking in any real development. The composer indulged his "Fancy," and wandered from point to point at his own sweet will.

It was with the Fancy that Weelkes made an early experiment of adding a vocal part quite independent of the strings. And he took for his vocal part the popular series of "Cryes" which were then common to the streets of London. He did not, as has so often been wrongly stated, "set the Cryes of London to music," but he took the words and the music of these old and very interesting things and added the vocal part to what was a real Fancy for strings. It is said Morley did the same thing, but I have, so far,

failed to find any example of it. Ravenscroft took many of these same old Cryes and worked them up as Rounds, and Campion introduced *Cherry Ripe* into a charming song "There is a Garden in her face" in 1617; but the *Humorous Fancy* by Weelkes is, so far as I can see at present, the earliest of this kind of work. Later, in connection with Gibbons and Deering, I shall have much to say on this subject, as these composers also wrote *Humorous Fancies*, the vocal parts being the same old Cryes of London but treated in a more elaborate manner.

Weelkes' example is very charming, and although his string parts are somewhat stilted, yet there is always life in them. He makes one point which shows he was not altogether able to forget his Madrigals and Ballets. Like the latter, the *Fancy* at one point leaves its regular course, and for a few bars a delightful Dance tune is introduced, to the words – whatever they mean – "Twinckledowne Tavye." It is as if the vendors of fish, fruit and vegetables met in the street and had a bit of a frolic together. The *Fancy* is resumed with the Cryes of the Chimney Sweep, Bellows-Mender etc., and later on a beautiful song for the seller of "Broome" is introduced. The words of this song date back before Weelkes, being found with slight variation in an old play called *Three Ladies of London*, 1584. They are sung by a character named "Conscience" who enters with brooms, and sings the song.

No doubt the tune given by Weelkes is the original one.

The conclusion of this *Fancy* is very charming and rather like

an Anthem:

Then let us sing  
And so we will make an end  
With Alleluia.

There are two MSS. of this work in the British Museum. I have followed the shorter version, as the longer is not only rather dull and prolonged but includes a little deviation into vulgarity, and so is hardly suitable for modern ears. The "Alleluia" occurs in the longer MS. and I have included it in my version.

It is fortunate that there are two sets of parts, as neither of them is complete. But having been so fortunate as to find these two sets I have been able to restore the missing part.

The discovery of this Fancy is the reason why I select Weelkes instead of Wilbye, one of his great contemporaries, and I think all lovers of Shakespeare will be glad to make acquaintance with the music of the *Cryes of London* which saluted the Poet's ears in his daily walks.

Weelkes paid a loving tribute to "his dearest friend" Morley, on the latter's death. The date of Weelkes' death (1623) and other particulars have been brought to light by the investigations of the Rev. Dr. Fellowes, whose devotion to the madrigal school is so well known and appreciated. His paper on Weelkes (Musical Association, May, 1916) is an eloquent testimony to the worth of this composer, to whose madrigal writing I have not space quite to do justice. The *Humorous Fancy*, however, shows him

in a new and interesting light.

# V. ORLANDO GIBBONS

**1583 – 1625**

Orlando Gibbons is certainly the most outstanding name of the English musicians in the early part of the 17th century. A good deal of this is, no doubt, due to the fact that his contributions to Sacred Music have been one of the great possessions of our Cathedral School, and their presence in service lists has been – and I venture to hope will always be – a constant tribute to their excellence.

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