

THE WELSH MALE VOICE CHOIR

—

Andrew Smith

THE WELSH MALE VOICE CHOIR

A Masters Thesis

Presented to

The College of Graduate Studies

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Music in Choral Conducting

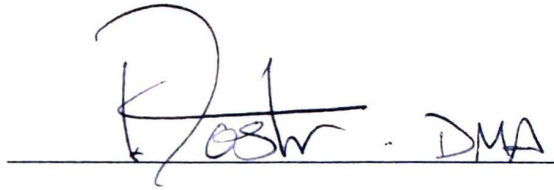
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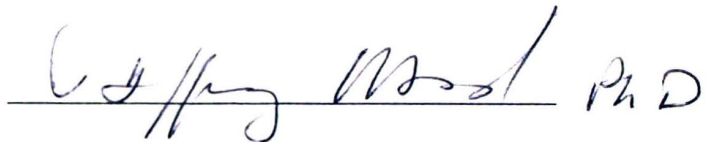
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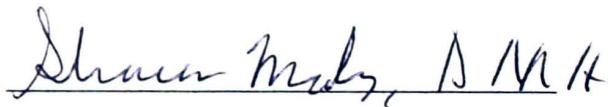
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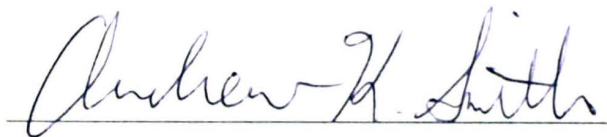
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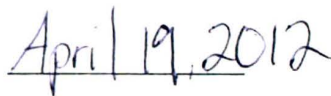
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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my parents Kelvin and Jetta Smith who are responsible for my love of music and love of learning.

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I am abundantly blessed by God to be surrounded by people who enable me to achieve success in academia and in life.

ABSTRACT

ANDREW KELVIN SMITH

The Welsh Male Voice Choir

(Under the direction of DR. KORRE FOSTER)

The purpose of this paper was to outline the evolution of the Welsh male voice choir from its origin in the 1870s to the present, including information and analysis of three exemplary Welsh male voice choirs, and three Welsh male voice choir composers.

Chapter one is an introduction and chapter two is a literature review. Chapter three provides a survey of the history of the Welsh male voice choir from its origin to recent times, concluding with an assessment of the current state of the Welsh male voice choir and its influence in the modern world. Chapter four studies Welsh singing competitions of the Eisteddfod and the Cymanfa Ganu including the violent history thereof. Chapter five is a case study of the Treorchy Male Voice Choir, the Morriston Orpheus Male Voice Choir, and the Duvant Male Choir. Chapter six contains information about the life and work of three prominent Welsh composers who wrote for male voice choirs, William Mathias, Daniel Protheroe and Joseph Parry. Included in this information is detailed analysis of Mathias' work *O Salutaris Hostia*, Protheroe's *Laudamus*, and Joseph Parry's *Myfanwy*. The study concludes in chapter seven with an emphasis on the importance of the Welsh male voice choir, and the music that has been composed for it.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Wales has long been called the “Land of Song,” a name given to the country in the 1860s when the tonic sol-fa movement revolutionized music making by teaching thousands to read music.¹ In Wales, this spurred a nationwide musical movement with chapel choirs, choir concerts, choir competitions, and hymn-singing festivals rising to the top of social interests. Music was an extracurricular activity in which everyone participated and enjoyed. The most authentically Welsh institution that developed in this musical climate was the male voice choir.² The male voice choir tradition, which has spread all over the world, has been a staple of Welsh culture for nearly a century and a half. Since its inception in the Southern mining communities, the men’s choir has been a source of entertainment and communal identity throughout the country of Wales. Welsh male voice choirs are rich in tradition, musical works, and worldwide influence. This captivating genre is worthy of our attention, study, and appreciation, hence the premise of this paper.

¹ John Davies, Menna Baines, and Peredur I. Lynch, eds., *The Welsh Academy Encyclopaedia of Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2008), 445.

² The phrase “male voice choir,” is used throughout this paper because this is the predominant terminology in Wales. Though the Welsh Translation “Cor Meibion” (Choir Men) has been in existence a very long time, the English phrase “male voice choir” was not coined until the *Musical Times* used it in 1882. See Gareth Williams, *Valleys of Song: Music and Society in Wales 1840-1914*, 144.

CHAPTER II

Review of Literature

Surprisingly little information is available on the Welsh male voice choir.

Available information includes primary sources for information about the life and works of William Mathias, the Treorchy Male Choir, the Morriston Orpheus Choir, the Dунvant Male Choir, and musical scores of William Mathias, Daniel Protheroe, and Joseph Parry.³ Secondary sources are available for biographical information about Mathias, Protheroe, and Parry, and there is some information about the Welsh male voice choir.

Information about Welsh music in general, male voice choirs, William Mathias, Daniel Protheroe, and Eisteddfod Festivals was found in the *Welsh Academy Encyclopaedia of Wales*.⁴ This resource covers a myriad of subjects all pertaining to the country and people of Wales. The encyclopedia is in English as was used to glean information about a host of subjects related to the Welsh male voice choir.

The *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* was a valuable source for obtaining biographical information about William Mathias and Daniel Protheroe.⁵ It was also useful for obtaining information about the works written by Mathias, and information about the musical climate of Wales.

Information about the Treorchy Male Chorus was found almost exclusively on the Treorchy Male Chorus' website.⁶ This website has been an interesting and important

³ Note that in this paper, Welsh choral names are often translated into English to avoid confusion. For example, "Cor Meibion Colwyn" is referred to as "Colwyn Male Voice Choir."

⁴ *The Welsh Academy Encyclopaedia of Wales*, (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2008), s.v. "Male Voice Choirs."

⁵ Oxford Music Online, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com> (accessed March 26, 2012).

⁶ Treorchy Male Choir, <http://www.treorchymalechoir.com> (accessed November 22, 2010).

resource. The website included information about the history of the Treorchy Male Chorus and includes photograph collections, program collections, concert posters from the 1950's onwards, concert history, discography, concert reviews, television show appearances, information about the choristers, soloists, accompanists and conductors, touring history, and competition victories.

Information about the Morriston Orpheus Choir can be found on their website.⁷ This website contains a brief history of the choir, picture galleries, choir member information, discography, touring history, and mp3 audio files. This website, though helpful, is not as thorough as the Treorchy Male Choir's website.

Information about the Dunvant Male Voice Choir was gained through two primary sources. First, the choir's website contains information about the current and recent event of the choir.⁸ The only significant historical information found on the website pertains to past conductors. Secondly, "A Hundred Years of Harmony: Dunvant and Its Male Voice Choir 1895-1995" is a book published by the Dunvant Male Voice Choir, chronicling their history and showcasing their accomplishments.⁹ Detailed information is given about each of the choir's many directors as well as events that shaped the choir such as mining disasters and World War II. Pictures show the choir performing through the years. Historians within the choir compiled the information for the book.

⁷ Morriston Orpheus Choir, <http://www.morristonorpheus.com> (accessed March 26, 2012).

⁸ Dunvant Male Voice Choir, www.dunvant.org (accessed March 25, 2012).

⁹ R.G. Mainwaring, D.G. Richards, and J.C. Evans, *A Hundred Years of Harmony: Dunvant and Its Male Voice Choir 1895-1995*, (Dunvant: Dunvant Male Voice Choir, 1995).

Valleys of Song: Music and Society in Wales 1840-1914 is a book by Gareth Williams, professor at Glamorgan University in Wales.¹⁰ This book contains a wealth of information about the musical culture of Wales. Especially detailed is the information about the musical climate of the Rhondda valley. This paper benefited from this book in the areas of the eisteddfod, religious music, tonic sol-fa, and Joseph Parry.

Primary sources for William Mathias are found in two archives in the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth, Wales. William Mathias' widow, Mrs. Yvonne Mathias, and his daughter Miss Rhiannon Mathias deposited the documents at the National Library of Wales in February of 1994. A list found on the National Library of Wales website contains index information about the contents of the archives. The first archive begins with a biography of the late composer. The rest of the archive contains music manuscripts with scores and sketches. Archive number two contains the composer's personal papers, including correspondence 1972-92, scrapbooks 1952-66, concert programs and reviews, miscellaneous material relating to specific compositions, press releases and newsletters 1982-92, material relating to the Honorary Degree Ceremony at the University of Wales, and Lectures and articles by William Mathias.¹¹ These archives proved to be little assistance toward the purpose of this paper as the documents within were often eclectic in nature and largely unhelpful. The biographical information about Mathias was the only section of the archive that was pertinent to this paper.

¹⁰ Gareth Williams, *Valleys of Song: Music and Society in Wales 1840-1914* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1998), 144.

¹¹ The National Library of Wales, www.llgc.org.uk, s.v. "William Mathias," select William Mathias Mathias Manuscripts and Papers (accessed November 9, 2010).

There are two dissertations about the choral works of William Mathias. The first was written by Carl P. Ashley and is titled, "A Survey of the Sacred Choral Works of William James Mathias (1934-1992) With An Analysis of Selected Works." The second dissertation was written by John G. Slawson and is titled, "The Choral Music of William Mathias." These dissertations are extremely helpful in gaining information about Mathias' compositional style as well as biographical information.

Because of his tremendous popularity in Wales, information about Joseph Parry was plentiful. There are three sources primarily consulted for this paper. *Dr. Parry, Musician and Composer*, is a book of only twenty pages.¹² It serves as a brief but concise and informative resource for biographical information about Joseph Parry. *Joseph Parry 1841-1903*¹³ is written by the Welsh historian Owain T. Edwards. This book is similar to the previous book, but much more detailed. It serves as a clear and descriptive biography on Dr. Parry. The most helpful book on Joseph Parry is, *To Philadelphia and Back: the life and music of Joseph Parry*, by Dulais Rhys and Frank Bott. This book is also a very detailed biography on Dr. Parry, but also serves as a useful commentary on his life and work. The book offers opinions of Joseph Parry from both contemporary and current important musical figures, along with analysis of Parry's perception by the public in his time and now. Also valuable from this book is a catalogue of the works of Joseph Parry. Joseph Parry remains to this day to be the most important figure of Welsh music. His popularity and the care with which his life was documented led to the writing of these detailed and informative books about Joseph Parry.

¹² Richard Hayman, *Dr. Joseph Parry, Musician and Composer*, (Merthyr Tydfil: Merthyr Tydfil Heritage Trust, 1986).

¹³ Jack Jones, *Off to Philadelphia In the Morning* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1951), 248.

CHAPTER III

History of The Welsh Male Voice Choir: Its Development and Major Influences

The Earliest Mention of Welsh Choral Singing

Myths and legends such as this that tell of the marvelous effects of music upon men abound in the old writings of Wales. Throughout history, the Celts have placed music among the things most important in life. Their ancient literature, whether fact, fable, or allegory, plainly shows the perceived power of their bardic songs of old over the hearts and minds of men.¹⁴

The birds of Rhiannon sang to the seven warriors of the Island of the Mighty a certain song, and all the songs that they had ever heard were unpleasant compared thereto, and the singing was so sweet that the warriors remained spellbound for eighty years together listening to the birds.¹⁵

When pressed on the early origins of Welsh choral singing, scholarly Welshmen usually refer to the *Description of Wales* of Giraldus Cambrensis, written around the year 1190.

In this work the author states:

In their musical concerts they do not sing in unison like the inhabitants of other countries, but in many different parts; so that in a company of singers, which one very frequently meets with in Wales, you will hear as many different parts and voices as there are performers, who all at length unite, with organic melody, in one consonance.¹⁶

It would appear that “a developed art of music existed in Wales from the Middle Ages, and that it resulted from a system that was essentially different from that of the main stream of musical development outside Wales at the time.”¹⁷ Peter Crossley-Holland’s

¹⁴ Peter Crossley-Holland, ed., *Music in Wales* (London: Robert Stockwell Limited, 1948), 11.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ G. H. Lewis, “The Welsh Choral Tradition: Fact and Myth,” *Welsh Music* 5, no. 4 (Winter 1976-7): 57.

¹⁷ David E. Parry Williams, *Early Welsh Music* (University of Bangor: Centre for Advanced Welsh Music Studies, 1999), 40.

book *Music in Wales* states that “from as early as the sixth century the poets-musicians of Wales were an indispensable part of life in the halls of noblemen. The bard comforted, entertained and incited to valour, enhancing the effect of his poems with harp and voice. He was minstrel, historian and ambassador, and was rewarded generously by his lord.” It also states “music and poetry reached a high degree of development and organization in early Wales as compared with arts in stone and wood, which was not surprising in a race constantly on the move during a period of wars.”¹⁸ Sadly, very little music is left from these ancient times.

A Sparse History

The Welsh male voice choir, though considered a staple of Welsh culture, is scantily documented in its infancy. “The early history of individual Welsh male choirs is not so well documented.”¹⁹ The Ebbw Vale choir, for instance, traces its origins from an address, dated 1919, which celebrates the conductor’s thirty five years of service, suggesting that the choir has at least thirty five years of existence, dating back to 1884, for which there is no record. Cardiff Male Choir lost all of its archival material when the choir’s headquarters at a house in Canton was bombed in World War II. They claim 1898 as the start of the choir, but they have no records.²⁰ Beaufort Male Choir has only a photo remaining that can trace their choir’s existence in 1900, but the story handed down from older members is that the choir is as old as 1887. They are not sure how old the choir is, nor do they know how it began. Several choirs that began around the same time

¹⁸ Crossley-Holland, ed., *Music in Wales*, 11-14.

¹⁹ Christopher Robin Wiltshire, “The British Male Voice Choir: A History and Contemporary Assessment” (PhD diss., Goldsmith’s College University of London, 1993), 106.

²⁰ Christopher Robin Wiltshire, “The British Male Voice Choir: A History and Contemporary Assessment,” 106-107.

disbanded for various reasons, but have since re-formed. For many of these choirs, information about their beginnings and early past has since been lost.²¹ Information, therefore, about the rise of the Welsh male voice choir is usually very general and given in terms of trends. Specifics such as the number of male voice choirs in the early days and the number of choristers in the choirs are mostly unknown.

The Welsh Male Voice Choir: Its Beginnings

Many regard male voice choirs as a quintessentially Welsh institution. Male voice choirs were cultivated in the Welsh mining valleys in the 1870s. Cathedral choirs, monastic choirs, English catch choirs, and glee clubs were the predecessors of male choirs. Male voice choirs often began as mixed choirs featuring selections where only the men sang. The practice of men singing alone quickly developed into full choirs of men only. Singing was an outlet as well as a form of recreation and fellowship for a predominantly male industrial force. These choirs enjoyed thrilling audiences with dramatic narratives, wide dynamic contrasts, and exhilarating climaxes.²² As male choirs spread, the southern coalfield communities became the heartland of male choral singing. The Rhondda Glee Society was among the first of famous Welsh choral groups. The Rhondda Glee Society made numerous trips to North America including a trip in 1893 when they won a legendary victory at the Chicago World's Fair. The Treorchy Male Voice Choir was founded in 1885. This choir sang at Windsor Castle in 1895 and

²¹ Ibid.

²² *The Welsh Academy Encyclopaedia of Wales*, s.v. "Male Voice Choirs."

embarked on a famous world tour in 1908-9. The Choir remains one of the premier male voice choirs in Wales.²³

Welsh Choral Movement

Though Wales has always hailed itself as a land of music, the Welsh male voice choir was late in developing. The Welsh choral movement of the late nineteenth century was produced by contributions from three different sectors of society: church music, found most prominently in the non-conformists and the Methodist denomination; public competitions and singing festivals, most notably the Eisteddfod²⁴ and Cymanfa Ganu;²⁵ and the music literacy innovations produced by John Curwen's Tonic Sol-fa sight-reading method. These three factors impacting Wales simultaneously produced an upsurge in choral music and gave the Welsh male voice choir an environment to flourish.

The foundation for the nineteenth century choral movement was, in part, established by the arrival of Methodism in Wales in the 1730s. Charles Wesley (1707 – 1788), the primary hymn writer of the Methodist denomination, was very aware of the uplifting effect singing had on his congregations. He encouraged the singing of simple, easily remembered tunes at his meetings. This encouragement initiated wide-spread use of hymn singing in chapels. Hymn singing in chapels not only gave people a feeling of personal participation in worship, but also offered a sense of direct communion with

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Eisteddfod is a Welsh music and arts festival and is pronounced [aistɛðfɔd] [eye-steth-fod] ("th" is voiced as in "the"). See page 24 for more information.

²⁵ Cymanfa Ganu is pronounced [kəmanva gani] and translates literally as "singing meeting." Julie Wilcox, *The Choral Heritage in Wales, with special reference to choral compositions written between 1965 and 1988*, (PhD diss., University of Cardiff, 1990), 12.

God.²⁶ Surprisingly, the use of hymns also preserved many folk songs because, despite opposition, many early hymn-writers adapted secular tunes for use as hymns.²⁷ When the peasantry took up hymn-singing, tunes in the folk-song tradition found their way in as well.²⁸ By 1880, eighty percent of the Welsh people were Nonconformists²⁹ largely due to the rise of the Methodist denomination, changing the religious and musical culture of Wales.³⁰

As much as the Welsh have always enjoyed singing for the sake of singing, chapel singing in the eighteenth century also had significant political motivations as well. The social climate in Wales was not favorable for the Welsh people. Wales was a rural country, dominated by English landowners. Work conditions for the Welsh were harsh and relentless. The Anglican church was the only available form of Christian worship. The Anglican church, however, was an English institution as it was controlled from England, endowed by wealthy Englishmen, and often staffed by English clergymen. The Welsh peasantry viewed the Anglican church as the church of the English landowners. The Welsh, therefore, were ready to embrace any new church and worship style that became available to them. Fortunately, the leniency of England regarding the individual chapel's freedom to choose its forms of service, style of worship, and use of the Welsh language provided a satisfying form of service structure for the rural Welshmen. This stood in direct contradiction to the Anglican rite, which placed little emphasis on a

²⁶ Lewis, "The Welsh Choral Tradition: Fact and Myth," 61.

²⁷ Though choral music gained popularity through the Methodist denomination, harp music declined because it had become associated with profane and riotous frivolity.

²⁸ Crossley-Holland, ed., *Music in Wales*, 21.

²⁹ Nonconformism is a movement of people who reject the Anglican church and are religiously affiliated with another church. For more information see, *The Welsh Academy Encyclopaedia of Wales*, s.v. "Nonconformists and Dissenters."

³⁰ Christopher Robin Wiltshire, "The British Male Voice Choir: A History and Contemporary Assessment," 105.

congregation's involvement in the services. So, by asserting their right to deviate from the Anglican traditions, the peasants could be said to have utilized their only available form of open rebellion against their English landlords. Hymn singing provided a means for communicating with God, snub the English establishment, and render the hardships of their lives more tolerable.³¹

Many have speculated as to the psychological and sociological factors that contributed to the Welsh male voice choral movement. Most can agree, however, that much can be attributed to the hardships of rural life during the industrial revolution. Henry Richards once said, "One of the pleasantest features in the rural life of the country is the way in which the peasantry accompany their labour with singing."³² The industrial revolution was a time of great productivity, but also a time of great poverty for the Welsh people. Working conditions were hard and disease was rampant in the coal and steel production towns. Despite the long hours, and the presumed need for rest, men spent little time at home. With a wife and several small children, a small terraced house did not leave much room for the man of the house. This cramped living space would have also served as a guilty reminder of his inability to make enough money to provide better living quarters for his family, rendering the religious escapism of chapels inviting. Many men took to excessive drinking. "Those that looked for other diversions than the cheap beer formed clubs, from which singing groups developed."³³ These and many other factors contributed to a dramatic increase in the number and size of male voice choirs throughout the country of Wales.

³¹ Lewis, "The Welsh Choral Tradition: Fact and Myth," 61.

³² John Graham, *A Century of Welsh Music* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., LTD, 1923), 31.

³³ Lewis, "The Welsh Choral Tradition: Fact and Myth," 60.

The hiatus of Welsh choral singing spanned from about 1870 until the beginning of the World War I. However, “just as empires at their zenith contain the seeds of their own decline, so in the years around 1900 enlightened and critically minded Welsh musicians were concerned for the future and entertaining grave doubts about the current state of music in Wales.”³⁴ As early as the 1890s there was concern about the technical deficiencies and a general lack of substantial progress in Welsh singing. Welsh choral singing had been lulled into a dangerous complacency, a fact that can be gauged by the dramatic drop in quality at the National Eisteddfod.³⁵ This general trend is also related to a similar trend in the Nonconformist movement, which, as previously stated, is directly linked to the history of Welsh male voice choirs. There was a gradual decline in chapel membership since the 1880s, which was only temporarily stifled by the religious revival of 1904-5. As moral economy, temperance, and religion lost their impact on society, so did Nonconformity. It had lost its evangelical drive, instead becoming institutionalized and complacent. The twentieth century saw the establishment of the Welsh National Council of Music (1920), music education in schools, and the placement of professional choral directors in many choirs throughout the country. These and many more elements contributed to the sustaining power of what was, by then, a staple of Welsh culture: the male voice choir.³⁶

³⁴ Gareth Williams, *Valleys of Song*, 144.

³⁵ Ibid, 168.

³⁶ Ibid, 168.

Tonic Sol-fa

The tonic sol-fa method of teaching sight-singing was significant in the development of Welsh choirs in the choral movement of the nineteenth century. The English minister John Curwen (1816-80) understood the moral and religious value of hymn singing for the children in his Sunday school. Having had considerable trouble learning music from staff notation, he sought a better way to teach his children music.³⁷ This inspired him to invent the tonic sol-fa system as an attempt to create a method whereby singers would have the skills to audiate a pitch before attempting to sing it. Curwen's system was an improvement on an earlier system known as the "Norwich Sol-fa" system devised by the English music teacher Sarah Glover (1786-1867).³⁸ Curwen's *Grammar of Vocal Music* was released in 1843 and described the details of the system. In 1864 he relinquished his role as a pastor, devoting himself fully to the cause of promoting his system.³⁹ After John Curwen's retirement, John Spencer Curwen (1847-1916) carried on his father's work. From approximately 1845, when many Welsh men were only recently becoming familiar with the alphabet, Curwen's tonic sol-fa system provided them with a method of musical notation that utilized the alphabet characters they were beginning to master.⁴⁰ Before Curwen, music belonged to the privileged rich that could afford the training, but now music literacy is obtainable by all.

The tonic sol-fa system was so easily understood and embraced that the choral repertoire was ambitiously extended to encompass works such as Handel's *Messiah*, and

³⁷ Stevens, Robin, "John Curwen and Tonic Sol-fa – An Historical Overview," Australian Music Education Information and Resources, <http://www.australian-music-ed.info/Curwen/HistO'view.html> (accessed March 24, 2012).

³⁸ Julie Wilcox, *The Choral Heritage in Wales, with special reference to choral compositions written between 1965 and 1988*, (PhD diss., University of Cardiff, 1990), 12.

³⁹ Meurig Owen, *North Wales Male Voice Choirs*, (Pwllheli, Gwynedd: Llyad Gwalch, 2009), 10.

⁴⁰ Julie Wilcox, *The Choral Heritage in Wales*, 12.

light operas by Gilbert and Sullivan. By 1880, publishers had produced 40,000 copies of tonic sol-fa notation for Handel's *Messiah* alone.⁴¹ "The combined influences of temperance, nonconformity, chapel-building and the tonic sol-fa system of music notation... fuelled a great fondness for the oratorio choruses and anthems that were increasingly available in cheap sol-fa editions from commercial publishing houses like Vincent Novello's, as well as from several small, independent music publishers in Wales."⁴² The key tool used for teaching the method is the Curwin Modulator (see Appendix A on page 78). By pointing at the various scale degrees (illustrated by the syllables Doh, Ray, Me, Fah, Soh, Lah, and Te), an instructor could teach students to associate the terms with the pitch to which they correspond. The Modulator can also be used to instruct singers how to change keys. Without this musical method, which Curwen deem significantly less complex than the traditional notes on a staff system, the revolution probably would have weakened because of a lack of accessible and rewarding literature. This new method of sight-reading enabled choirs to learn music much faster and more efficiently.⁴³

The impact of tonic sol-fa was manifest nowhere greater than the chapel Sunday schools and male voice choirs. Before long, the Modulator was a feature of every vestry and schoolroom in Wales. Simpler music learning meant that chapel congregations could more easily participate in part-singing at song festivals called *cymanfa ganu*. A basically illiterate society of working class men could now join together in fellowship and song.

⁴¹ Meurig Owen, *North Wales Male Voice Choirs*, 13-14.

⁴² Gareth Williams, "Citadel of Song – Merthyr's Choral Culture C. 1870-1970," *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* 11, (2005): 63.

⁴³ Deakin University School of Education – Music Education, "John Curwin and Tonic Sol-Fa," Deakin University, <http://www.deakin.edu.au/arts-ed/education/music-ed/curwen-method/curwen.php.html> (accessed September 19, 2011).

Male choirs sprang up all over Wales, freed now from the restrictions of old notation that few choristers understood.⁴⁴

The new spirit of cultural discovery was captivating people across Britain and Curwen's system was growing in popularity. Music publishers were quick to realize the commercial potential of Curwen's system, as demonstrated by the astounding success of the instruction books Curwen issued. Publishers began producing an immense amount of music using the system. By the end of the century, an extraordinarily vast repertoire was available to choirs who were eager to sing.⁴⁵

This choral revolution also stimulated native composers to compose a vast amount of music to supply the great number of choirs sprouting throughout Wales. Although few composers were full-time academics, many had a very sound education. Composers were well aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the choirs available to perform their music, and they tailored their compositions to these choirs. Many composers could not read or play staff notation and composed entirely in tonic sol-fa notation.

Though the use of tonic sol-fa has drastically diminished in influence, there are still men in nearly every choir that can read tonic sol-fa and many that prefer tonic sol-fa notation over the modern music notation system.⁴⁶ In some choirs, very few members can read modern music notation, for example in the Dunvant Male Voice Choir only 19 of 88 choristers can read traditional music.⁴⁷ So, the Dunvant choir's music director

⁴⁴ Meurig Owen, *North Wales Male Voice Choirs*, (Pwllheli, Gwynedd: Llyad Gwalch, 2009), 13-14.

⁴⁵ Lewis, "The Welsh Choral Tradition: Fact and Myth," 60-61.

⁴⁶ The Choral Tradition of Wales Part 1, BBC Wales Music, http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/music/sites/choirs-brass/pages/about_choirs.shtml (accessed March 24, 2012).

⁴⁷ Dunvant Male Voice Choir, Questionnaire conducted by author via Dewi Morgan (public relations officer, Dunvant Male Choir), Summer 2011.

Jonathan Rogers often provides his choir with tonic sol-fa notation (Appendix B on page 79).⁴⁸ Providing choristers with modern and tonic sol-fa notation caters instruction to differing levels of musical knowledge, making music-learning more efficient.

The Current State of the Welsh Male Voice Choir

The twenty-first century Welsh male voice choir is at a critical stage in its existence. Many choirs are thriving with activity and some are excelling in attendance. However, many, if not most choirs are struggling to maintain attendance because choristers are getting older and new choristers are joining at a slower rate. Though records have not usually been kept regarding the age of choristers, one only has to look at pictures from a choir's past to see that the average age of the choristers has dramatically increased. The following pictures of the Colwyn Male Voice choir reveal the age difference between choristers in 1972 and current choristers.

Figure 3.1. Photograph of Colwyn Male Voice Choir– 1972



⁴⁸ Dewi Morgan, e-mail message to author, September 21, 2011.

Figure 3.2. Recent Picture of Colwyn Male Voice Choir⁴⁹



The problem of aging choirs partly stems from a difference in culture from the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries to now. In the early days of Welsh male choirs it was the social norm for men to sing in choirs. Dewi Morgan, a thirty-six year member of the Dunvant Male Voice Choir says, “Choirs were part of quiet village life when I was a boy.” He explains it best when he says, “you went to school, you left school, got a job, joined a choir.” Times have changed now and life moves at a faster pace. Dewi Morgan’s own sons have no interest in being in the choir, partly because the twice-per-week rehearsals are too much of a time commitment.⁵⁰ Choirs were founded by working class men who made time for rehearsals after work. Today, however, the vast majority of many choristers are retired. Jonathan Rogers, the director of the Dunvant Male Voice Choir, also believes that today’s fast-paced lifestyles have contributed to the decline in

⁴⁹ Images used by permission of Alun Hughes, Conlwyn Male Choir Chairman.

⁵⁰ Jude Rogers, “Welsh Male Voice Choirs: A Vocal Minority,” *The Guardian*, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/music/2011/feb/01/welsh-choir-only-men-aloud> (accessed February 3, 2012).

male voice choir participants. He says that in the early days men didn't have all the options for involvement that they have now. There are a lot of other activities competing for a man's time, and choir often loses.⁵¹ Male voice choirs are faced with a dichotomy between upholding the rich history of part-songs and hymns, and trying to reach the younger generations who are more often interested in singing Broadway tunes and popular songs. Many choirs such as the Morriston Orpheus choir are choosing to land somewhere in the middle. Their repertoire includes male voice classics such as Joseph Parry's *Myfanwy*, as well as newer music such as "Razzle Dazzle" from the musical *Chicago*. In 2010, philanthropic organization the Hywel Williams Foundation launched a study on "general trends within choral singing within the UK (United Kingdom)." They plan to reveal results sometime this year.⁵² This study will look at the reasons for the declining numbers of Welsh male voice choirs.⁵³ Hopefully, this information will prove valuable to the recruiting efforts of choirs throughout Wales.

Bringing new life to the male voice choir and inspiring the younger generations to participate in male voice choirs: this is the goal of Wales' most exciting new male voice choir, Only Men Aloud (see Figure 3.3). In a climate where male voice choirs are often seen as old and out of date, this choir is changing the perceptions. Only Men Aloud, often shortened to OMA, was created with the aim to "inject some new blood into the Welsh male choir tradition."⁵⁴ The group, all of whom are in their twenties and thirties, sings in a variety of styles, including Welsh folksongs and hymns, musicals, opera,

⁵¹ Dewi Morgan, Barry Evans, Jonathan Rogers, Clive Wilson, and Ray Restall, interview by author, August 1, 2011.

⁵² Jeremy Williams, e-mail to the author, February 29, 2010.

⁵³ Jude Rogers, "Welsh Male Voice Choirs: A Vocal Minority," *The Guardian*, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/music/2011/feb/01/welsh-choir-only-men-aloud> (accessed February 3, 2012).

⁵⁴ Only Men Aloud Official Website, "Biography," <http://www.onlymenaloud.com> (accessed February 4, 2012).

barbershop, swing, and popular. The choir is best known for winning the British Broadcasting Corporation's television show "Last Choir Standing" in the summer of 2008. Soon after winning they released their debut album, which went gold in the United Kingdom. Their second album "Band of Brothers" was also very successful.⁵⁵

Figure 3.3. Only Men Aloud Performing on "Last Choir Standing" in 2008



In April of 2010, OMA's founder Tim Rhys-Evans set up ten youth choirs in the valleys of Wales to encourage young boys to follow the traditions of their fathers and grandfathers. Rehearsals were held in sports clubs rather than schools or chapels so that they would feel, as Evans puts it, "less uncool."⁵⁶ After a few months of rehearsing, all of the 220 young boys, operating under the name "Only Boys Aloud," performed at the National Eisteddfod. Their program, which followed traditional songs and hymns by

⁵⁵ Only Men Aloud Official Website, "Biography," <http://www.onlymenaloud.com> (accessed February 4, 2012).

⁵⁶ Jude Rogers, "Welsh Male Voice Choirs: A Vocal Minority," *The Guardian*, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/music/2011/feb/01/welsh-choir-only-men-aloud> (accessed February 3, 2012).

concluding with an a cappella version of Journey's *Don't Stop Believin'*, brought the audience to thunderous applause. OMA is training the youth of today to be the Welsh male voice choir of tomorrow.

International Influence of Welsh Male Voice Choirs

The Welsh male voice choir is known throughout the world because of three primary contributing factors: the eisteddfod, Welsh male voice choir international tours, and discography.

The eisteddfod is a Welsh tradition practiced in various countries around the world, sharing with the world the traditions of the "land of song." Among the most notable non-Welsh countries to host eisteddfod competitions are the United States, England, Australia, and New Zealand. Australia hosts dozens of local eisteddfodau⁵⁷ as well as an annual Australian National Eisteddfod.⁵⁸ Perhaps the most notable eisteddfod to take place in the United States was the World's Fair Eisteddfod of 1893. This massive eisteddfod took place in Chicago on September 5–8, 1893. This event drew the interest of participants from Utah, Iowa, Colorado, Pennsylvania, England, and Wales. This eisteddfod included an exciting competition for male voice choirs.⁵⁹ Though it originated in Wales, today eisteddfod competitions take place all over the world, and just as the

⁵⁷ Eisteddfodau is pronounced [aistɛðfɔdɔl] and is the plural form of eisteddfod.

⁵⁸ Australian National Eisteddfod, under "Other Eisteddfodau." <http://www.nationaleisteddfod.org.au> (accessed February 3, 2012).

⁵⁹ Linda Louise Pohly, "Welsh choral music in America in the nineteenth century" (PhD diss., Ohio State University, 1989), 68.

male voice choir is a large part of the Welsh eisteddfod, so is it a big part of many world-wide eisteddfod competitions.⁶⁰

The Llangollen International Eisteddfod, held annually in Llangollen, Wales, is and eisteddfod competition open to all participants of any nationality. The event takes place each June when around 1,000 competitors and as many as 50,000 visitors come to Wales to experience this grand event. Plácido Domingo says that his first professional experience in the United Kingdom was at the Llangollen International Eisteddfod in 1968. Luciano Pavarotti also competed in the male voice choir competition in 1955 along with his father. Pavarotti was in the choir that won that year. This event allows for thousands of international visitors to experience the Welsh tradition of the eisteddfod.⁶¹

Many Welsh male voice choirs conduct frequent or annual international tours (see Figure 3.4).

Figure 3.4. Welsh Male Voice Choir Tours

Choir	Places Toured
The City of Bangor Male Voice Choir	Canada, Austria (two times), Malta, Cyprus, Northern Ireland, and Germany
Betws-yn-Rhos Male Voice Choir	Germany, France, Holland, and Scotland
Brymbo Male Choir	England, Germany (two times), The United States (four times), Canada, and France. ⁶²
Treorchy Male Voice Choir	Switzerland, Canada (three times), Strasbourg, Australia (four times), the United States (four times), and Scotland. ⁶³
Morryston Orpheus Choir	Mannheim, Germany, United States (five times), Canada (five times), Berlin (four times), Italy, France, Australia (four times), Poland, New Zealand (four times), Taiwan, United Arab Emirates (twice), and Geneva. ⁶⁴

⁶⁰ Australian National Eisteddfod, under “Other Eisteddfodau.” <http://www.nationaleisteddfod.org.au> (accessed February 3, 2012).

⁶¹ Llangollen International Eisteddfod, <http://www.international-eisteddfod.co.uk> (accessed February 4, 2012).

⁶² Meurig Owen, *North Wales Male Voice Choirs*, 26-40.

⁶³ Treorchy Male Choir, <http://www.treorchymalechoir.com/history/origins.htm> (accessed February 4, 2012).

⁶⁴ Morryston Orpheus Choir, www.morrystonorpheus.com (accessed February 4, 2012).

This has resulted in hundreds of people all over the world have heard a Welsh male voice choir in concert on tour. This, therefore, is the main venue by which people are exposed to the sounds of the Welsh male voice choir.

Lastly, in a world of technology, anyone with internet may listen to the sound of a Welsh male voice choir. Choirs such as the Morriston Orpheus Choir, the Pontarddulais Male Voice Choir, and the Treorchy Male Voice Choir have CDs and many of them are available for purchase on the internet.⁶⁵ These CDs, which are usually available for purchase at the choir's concerts as well as their websites, generally cover an array of musical genres and styles. This is yet another way that the Welsh male voice choirs impact the world with their music.

The Welsh Male Voice Choir Sound

To many, a Welsh male choir is a special sound found nowhere else on earth. Jonathan Rogers, director of the Dunvant Male Choir, believes that the tenor voice defines the Welsh male choir. He thinks it is the "organic sound produced by the tenors that gives the Welsh choir its unique sound."⁶⁶ The typical sound of the Welsh male choir is also a mature sound as Welsh male choir choristers are predominately mature adults and many elderly. Dr. Roland Rogers, organist and choirmaster at Bangor

⁶⁵ The Morriston Orpheus Choir has nine CDs available for purchase on their website: Morriston Orpheus Choir, www.morristonorpheus.com (accessed February 4, 2012). The Pontarddulais Male Voice Choir has six CDs available for purchase on their website: Pontarddulais Male Voice Choir, <http://www.pontarddulaismalechoir.com/store.php> (accessed February 4, 2012). The Treorchy Male Voice Choir has twelve CDs available for purchase on their website: Treorchy Male Choir, <http://www.treorchymalechoir.com/history/origins.htm> (accessed February 4, 2012).

⁶⁶ Dewi Morgan, Barry Evans, Jonathan Rogers, Clive Wilson, and Ray Restall, interview by author, August 1, 2011.

Cathedral from 1871 to 1892, said that “the slate and coal districts alike produced men with strong, thick and generally short necks who were capable of standing a much greater throat strain than the ordinary English tenor. These Welsh baritone-tenors could produce high notes from E4 to A4 but did so from neither head nor chest but simply by an enormous contraction of the throat.”⁶⁷ This type of untrained singing in the upper voices creates a treble heavy aesthetic that is unique to the Welsh male voice choir genre. This amateur sound produced by untrained singers is a much less refined choral sound compared to professional choirs. The Welsh male choirs sound, however, is attractive to the many who attend their concerts and buy their recordings.

⁶⁷ Gareth Williams, *Valleys of Song: Music and Society in Wales 1840-1914*, 154.

CHAPTER IV

Welsh Singing Competitions and Violence

Eisteddfod

There is likely no institution more deeply imbedded in the history and culture of Welsh life than the eisteddfod. The eisteddfod's "aim is literary and poetic, though it lends importance to music, and gives Welsh composers a platform, and performers, in many cases, their start in life," as observed by John Graham in 1923.⁶⁸ There is no institution that has had a greater hand in promoting Welsh male voice choirs throughout the years than the eisteddfod.

The noun "eisteddfod" comes from the Welsh word "eistedd" (to sit), and literally translates "sitting together."⁶⁹ It is not known exactly where or when the first eisteddfod took place, though it is known that verse-making in Wales goes back to pre-Christian times to the time of the Druids. Druids were philosophers and priests who used poetry as a teaching device.⁷⁰ The Druids, who were responsible for educating the young as well as the intellectual and spiritual life of all, taught strictly by means of orally transmitted poetry. In his writings about the Gallic Wars in 58 to 50 BC, Julius Ceasar states that "the young Britons sat at the feet of Druids to learn verses," and that it was through the medium of verse, which made memory easier, that the Druids transferred their ideas about life and spirituality.⁷¹ The Celts believed that the power of speech was far greater than physical strength. This belief caused them to place great emphasis on expression by word of mouth rather than by writing. The Romans feared the druids and in AD 61 sent

⁶⁸ John Graham, *A Century of Welsh Music*, 19.

⁶⁹ Hywel Teifi Edwards, *The Eisteddfod*, Writers of Wales (Cardiff: University of Wales Press on behalf of the Welsh Arts Council, 1990), 3.

⁷⁰ Dillwyn Miles, *The Royal National Eisteddfod of Wales* (Swansea: Christopher Davies Ltd., 1977), 10.

⁷¹ *Ibid*, 9.

general Suetonius Paulinus to attack Anglesey, the center of Druidic power. The Romans were successful in annihilating what Nora Chadwick, author of *The Druids*, called “the most enlightened and civilizing spiritual influence in prehistoric Europe.”⁷² It is from the Druids that the Welsh learned to value the skill of speech and poetry, an attitude that later embraced the art of music and led to our current conception of Wales as a land of song.⁷³

The poet has always enjoyed an exalted position in Wales. The highest position attainable for a poet was that of a *pencerdd*, or chief poet, at the court of a king or prince. These positions were greatly coveted and extreme rivalries were created over obtaining these esteemed positions. Dillwyn Miles believes that in competitions created to decide the position of *pencerdd* we likely find the embryo of the *eisteddfod*. The official position of *pencerdd* ended with the loss of Welsh independence to England in 1282. The *pencerdd* lost his authority and standing of precedence among poets, but the poets themselves made efforts to continue the traditions of old by holding irregular meetings, laying the foundation for the *eisteddfod* as we know it today.⁷⁴

The word *eisteddfod* has had many meanings over the years. In the fourteenth century, the word was used to signify a residence, assembly, session, council, and several other things. In the fifteenth century, the word referred to an assembly of poets, where the rules of Welsh poetry were established. In the sixteenth century, it signified a meeting where bards were examined. In the eighteenth century, it described the small groups of poets that gathered in pubs throughout Wales to weave verses, and would be

⁷² Ibid, 10.

⁷³ Ibid, 10.

⁷⁴ Dillwyn Miles, *The Royal National Eisteddfod of Wales* (Swansea: Christopher Davies Ltd., 1977), 12.

hailed as the champion, or the “chaired bard.”⁷⁵ The first competition documented to use the name eisteddfod was the Carmarthen Eisteddfod in 1451. Unlike future Eisteddfod events, the Carmarthen Eisteddfod was not so much a competition as an occasion for “tightening control over the bardic orders.”⁷⁶ The establishment of rules and regulations governing the art of poetry was as much a part of the eisteddfod as competition in the early days of its existence. In fact, the proclamation of an eisteddfod in 1523 emphasized that its primary purpose was to regulate bardic practices.⁷⁷

The sixteenth century saw the end of professional poets and the bardic orders, leading to a drastic decline of the eisteddfod. The eisteddfod remained nearly inexistent until amateur poets began assembling in taverns across middle and northern Wales. These meetings were advertised in almanacs and called eisteddfodau.⁷⁸ These eisteddfod meetings were small and informal. It was Thomas Jones in 1789 who, after attending eisteddfod at Llangollen and finding only four attending poets, was inspired to change the nature of the eisteddfod, thus marking a new era in the history of the eisteddfod. With the partnership of the Gwyneddigion Society in London, Jones propagated the idea that the eisteddfod could be “used as the medium for the promotion of the arts, and as a means of providing patronage for the bards.”⁷⁹ The eisteddfod has ever since functioned, in part, as a promoter of the arts in Wales and provides artists and musicians a platform from which to launch a career. The nineteenth century eisteddfod grew by fortune of

⁷⁵ Dillwyn Miles, *The Royal National Eisteddfod of Wales*, 12.

⁷⁶ Dillwyn Miles, *The Royal National Eisteddfod of Wales*, 21.

⁷⁷ Hywel Teifi Edwards, *The Eisteddfod*, 7.

⁷⁸ Eisteddfodau is the plural form of Eisteddfod. The Welsh Academy Encyclopaedia of Wales, s.v. “Eisteddfod.”

⁷⁹ Dillwyn Miles, *The Royal National Eisteddfod of Wales*, 35.

cultural societies known as Cambrian Societies,⁸⁰ most notably the Dyfed, Gwynedd, Powys, and Gwent, and Glamorgan societies. Under the supervision of the Cymmrodorion Society in London, these societies held ten eisteddfodau between 1819 and 1834. Until the mid-nineteenth century, eisteddfodau were held independently of each other under no governing body, thus allowing cities, organizations, or societies to hold an eisteddfod anywhere and any time. Another impact of Thomas Jones and the Gwyneddigion Society was the eventual establishment of the National Eisteddfod in 1861. The Gwyneddigion Society provided the groundwork for the modern format of the competitive eisteddfod, instituting traditions and policies such as the establishment of poetic subjects in advance, the attainment of capable adjudicators who are instructed to prepare written comments, the required use of pseudonyms of competitors, the creation of substantial prizes, and public observation of the meetings allowed. Instead of closed sessions reserved only for poets and minstrels, the eisteddfod began to resemble a popular festival where spectators were welcomed.⁸¹ The eisteddfod at Aberdare in 1861 was the first event held under the authority of the national body called “Yr Eisteddfod” (The Eisteddfod) whose activities are directed by an elected council.⁸² Since this time, the National Eisteddfod has been the largest and most important eisteddfod each year, though other smaller eisteddfodau have continued. The National Eisteddfod alternates locations between north and south Wales, and since 1918 has taken place the first week in August.⁸³

⁸⁰ Ibid, 48.

⁸¹ The Welsh Academy Encyclopaedia of Wales, s.v. “Eisteddfod.”

⁸² Hywel Teifi Edwards, *The Eisteddfod*, 20.

⁸³ The Welsh Academy Encyclopaedia of Wales, s.v. “Eisteddfod.”

For many choirs and choral enthusiasts the Eisteddfod has, for many years now, been the most important event on the calendar. People come from all over Wales to attend and participate in the competitions. John Spencer Curwen, son of John Curwen, attended the National Eisteddfod at Merthyr in 1881 and was amazed to find such a charged atmosphere. The final day's choral competition involved six choirs, totaling 1,456 voices and 10,000 spectators. During the competition the audience remained standing with the room packed to capacity, willingly suffering great discomfort, but orderly, eager, and electrical.⁸⁴ At Ammanford in 1922 there were thirteen male choirs, each ranging between sixty and one hundred voices.⁸⁵ At times as early as the 1860s final choral rehearsals were public events for which an admittance charge must be paid to observe. Eavesdroppers from rival choirs were prohibited and ejected if discovered. Though this is no longer the normal practice, there is still an unwritten rule that competitors do not observe other choir's final rehearsals.⁸⁶ Host cities often drastically alter their normal routines. In 1889, for example, all freight traffic in north Glamorgan was suspended to allow the choirs from Dowlais and Rhondda, each with around two hundred choristers, to compete at the Brecon National Eisteddfod.⁸⁷ The influence of the eisteddfod has spread throughout the world. In 1929, the Welsh organization Urdd Gobaith Cymru⁸⁸ established its own eisteddfod for youth. Also, since 1947 the city of Llangollen, Wales has hosted the International Music Eisteddfod, a multi-national version

⁸⁴ Gareth Williams, "Citadel of Song – Merthyr's Choral Culture C. 1870-1970," 64.

⁸⁵ Ibid, 70.

⁸⁶ Interview by the author of several male voice choir competitors at the 2011 National Eisteddfod in Wrexham.

⁸⁷ Gareth Williams, "Citadel of Song – Merthyr's Choral Culture C. 1870-1970," 64.

⁸⁸ Urdd Gobaith Cymru official website, <http://www.urdd.org> (accessed March 24, 2012).

of the eisteddfod.⁸⁹ Nations such as Australia⁹⁰ and the United States of America have held regular eisteddfod competitions.

There is no institution more intrinsically Welsh than the eisteddfod. It has shaped the culture and standards of music in Wales for well over a century. It has been the launching platform for numerous singers including the famous Bryn Terfel. Achieving victory at the eisteddfod is the chief objective for many choirs throughout Wales. It is a time-honored tradition that celebrates all things Welsh, and stands as an excellent venue to promote the best of Welsh art.

Cymanfa Ganu

A younger relative of the eisteddfod is the hymn-singing festival Cymanfa Ganu. This tradition of hymn-singing festivals became a feature of Welsh-language nonconformist chapels in the 1830s and onwards. Like most choral movements in Wales, the Cymanfa Ganu grew rapidly with the rise of industrialized urban communities. Since the middle of the nineteenth century, the Cymanfa Ganu has been closely associated with the tonic sol-fa movement. The basis of the Cymanfa Ganu is four-part hymn singing, but what distinguishes the festival from a Welsh church service, or the American traditions of shape-note singing festivals, is the “formal music-making framework in which the festival takes place.”⁹¹ The hymns are carefully rehearsed and usually directed, often by a guest conductor. It has always been the goal of the Cymanfa Ganu to promote the “sober, morally uplifting, reformed, devotional music consisting of a sonorous,

⁸⁹ Llangollen International Eisteddfod official website, <http://www.international-eisteddfod.co.uk/> (accessed March 24, 2012).

⁹⁰ Association of Eisteddfod Societies of Australia official website, <http://www.eisteddfod.org.au/> (accessed March 24, 2012).

⁹¹ The Welsh Academy Encyclopaedia of Wales, s.v. “Cymanfa Ganu.”

classically harmonized psalmody that was regularly rehearsed and worked on.”⁹² The Cymanfa Ganu is a favored festival among North American Welsh.⁹³ For years these hymn-singing festivals have served as a breeding ground for male voice choir participants. It is a valuable instruction tool for music literacy and advocacy. The Cymanfa Ganu is yet another musical institution that has been instrumental in the development of male singers.

The Violent Side of the Coin

There is, perhaps, nowhere else on earth that takes as much pride in male voice choirs as the Welsh. This passion, however has, at times, manifested itself in less than cordial ways. Choristers and audiences would often turn to behavior reminiscent of an unruly crowd at a sporting event, taunting and profaning the adversary choirs and adjudicators and even storming the stage in protest of a disliked choir. As one might expect, the eisteddfod has also been the premier setting for strife and contention for the choirs and music enthusiasts. As a correspondent at the 1879 national eisteddfod in Newport once put it, “next after a football match Welshmen enjoy a choral fight.”⁹⁴

In 1897, a choir from Bristol was invited to sing at a competition in Brynmawr, Wales. Recalling the experience, a member of the Bristol choir said, “Several of our members were grossly insulted and pushed about by the Welsh... And the language used was anything but decent. Such was our first experience at a Welsh eisteddfod and it will

⁹² Gareth Williams, *Valleys of Song: Music and Society in Wales 1840-1914*, 24.

⁹³ The Welsh Academy Encyclopaedia of Wales, s.v. “Cymanfa Ganu.”

⁹⁴ Gareth Williams, *Valleys of Song: Music and Society in Wales 1840-1914*, 174.

certainly be our last.”⁹⁵ There have been times that the “mob law,” as it has been called, prevailed and determined or changed the outcome of the competition. The mob law triumphed in 1881 at the Cwmaman Eisteddfod when M. O. Jones’s established Treherbert choir was shouted down and prevented from singing. Similarly, in 1892, at the national eisteddfod in Neath, choristers and soloists had to fight just to get on the stage, and once they were there they faced a constant barrage of whistling and hooting.⁹⁶ In 1885, as the judges were deliberating at the Aberdare National Eisteddfod, the large and impatient crowd began hurling clods of earth at each other. Also unruly was the Dowlais choir that was expelled from the Treharris Eisteddfod in 1891 due to their use of coarse language. The Dowlais choir was again disorderly at the Porth eisteddfod in 1896 when the rivalry between the Merthyr and Dowlais choirs escalated to a riot requiring police intervention.⁹⁷

The participating choirs were not the only ones subject to harsh and even violent scrutiny. The adjudicators, and not only those from England, irrespective of their status, were frequently the recipients of protestations by disgruntled supporters. Adjudicators and respected musicians J.T. Rees⁹⁸ and William Thomas⁹⁹ discovered this at the National Eisteddfod in Llandybïe in 1897 when they withheld the prize in the male voice choir competition. For this, they were harassed and threatened all the way to the train

⁹⁵ Ibid, 174.

⁹⁶ Ibid, 174.

⁹⁷ Gareth Williams, “Citadel of Song – Merthyr’s Choral Culture C. 1870-1970,” 64.

⁹⁸ John Thomas Rees (1859-1949) was most known as a composer, conductor, and eisteddfod adjudicator. He studied under Joseph Parry and worked as a part-time lecturer and the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth. For more information see the Rees, J.T., papers, National Library of Wales, <http://anws.llgc.org.uk> (accessed March 24, 2012) s.vv. “J. T. Rees Papers,” accessed March 24, 2012.

⁹⁹ William Thomas Rees (1838-1904) was a composer and eisteddfod adjudicator. Among his crown achievements are the founding of a Philharmonic Society and Llanelly, and his composition of the hymn-tune “Glanrhondda.” For more information, see Welsh Biography Online, <http://wbo.llgc.org.uk/en/index.html> (accessed 3/24/12) s.vv. William Thomas Rees.

station by disappointed choristers and their frustrated supporters. Similarly, at an eisteddfod in 1904 in Swansea, aggravated choristers charged the platform and barred the adjudicator, Signor Randegger, from leaving. The demonstration was so serious that the police were called in to protect him from physical assault. And this was not the end of Randegger's troubles. Eyewitnesses say he was later mobbed in the street and must have thought himself fortunate to leave the town with his entire body intact. Samuel Coleridge-Taylor describes this treatment in a letter sent to an American travel agent who had arranged the composer's trip to the United States:

Please don't make any arrangements to wrap me in cotton wool... I do a great deal of adjudicating in Wales among a very rough class of people, [where] most adjudicators have had eggs and boots thrown at them... I mention this so that you may know my life is not spent entirely in drawing rooms and concert halls, but among some of the roughest people in the world who tell you what they think very plainly. Yet I have four more engagements there for next January.¹⁰⁰

Though cases of lawlessness are difficult to ignore, occasions can be identified where objections were rooted in claims popularly thought to be legitimate. Such occasions occur, for example, when competitors are accused of defying the stipulations regarding age or number to secure an unfair advantage. In 1899 at the eisteddfod held in Pontypridd, a "stormy scene"¹⁰¹ led to a local choir being disqualified for exceeding the number of choristers allowed. Another common grievance was the hiring of professional singers for solo sections of choral works. Such an occasion arose when Ffrangcon Davies, a well-known professional singer, appeared on stage with the Treorchy male choir to sing the solo section of Joseph Parry's *Pilgrims* at the annual Porth Eisteddfod in

¹⁰⁰ Gareth Williams, *Valleys of Song: Music and Society in Wales 1840-1914*, 174.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, 176.

1894. The audience demonstrated its disapproval by drowning out the choir's performance with an obscene amount of noise.¹⁰²

Despite the numerous disruptive outbursts, mass enthusiasm could, on occasion, be channeled more appropriately. William "Mabon" Abraham, a famous politician and eisteddfod stage manager, was known for, on numerous occasions, heading off what would have been a disorderly uprising by breaking into *Hen Wlad fy Nhadau*,¹⁰³ or leading impromptu community singing at confrontational gatherings. "The Welsh capacity for involuntarily responding to appeals of this kind lends some support to the notion of music as a social tranquillizer."¹⁰⁴ A thrilling example of this occurred when the British Prime Minister visited the Treorchy national eisteddfod in 1928. The otherwise peaceful competitions were nearly thwarted by dissident observers protesting the Prime Minister with signs. As tensions rose nearing a violent level, an appeal was made from the stage to "let Mr. Baldwin (the Prime Minister) hear '*Cwn Rhondda*.'"¹⁰⁵ Immediately the massive crowd arose to their feet and started to sing. A reporter for *Western Mail* described it this way: "No man, not even the coldest and most indifferent Saxon could fail to be moved by the sound of that strangely thrilling hymn almost barbaric in the splendour of its harmonies... [Wales was] a great family, happy in the unity of song and in complete oblivion of political dissensions."¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² Ibid, 176.

¹⁰³ *Hen Wlad fy Nhadau* is Wales' unofficial national anthem. The tune is by James James, a Welsh harpist, and the text is by his father Evan James. The title translates "Land of My Fathers." For information see Welsh Anthem - The background to Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/music/sites/anthem/pages/anthem-background.shtml> (accessed March 24, 2012).

¹⁰⁴ Gareth Williams, *Valleys of Song: Music and Society in Wales 1840-1914*, 176.

¹⁰⁵ *Cwn Rhondda* is a song often sung at Welsh rugby matches. The title is the Welsh name for the Rhondda Valley in South Wales.

¹⁰⁶ Gareth Williams, *Valleys of Song: Music and Society in Wales 1840-1914*, 176.

Likewise, Dr. McNaught¹⁰⁷ was impressed by this phenomenon when pandemonium broke out at Llanelli in 1903 after a competition result was given. Then someone would begin singing a well-known hymn or national air and, within a few moments, “the angry muttering cloud disappeared and the sun of glorious four-part harmony poured forth from all corners of the building, the audience forgot its angry strife and became a magnificent resonant choir. Some of us were thrilled to tears and at the end we were all better men in a new and exalted mood. Where else than in Wales could such an incident happen?”¹⁰⁸ It is fascinating that in the country known as the “Land of Song,”¹⁰⁹ it is music that causes strife, and heals it as well.

¹⁰⁷ Dr. William McNaught was an eisteddfod adjudicator.

¹⁰⁸ Gareth Williams, *Valleys of Song: Music and Society in Wales 1840-1914*, 176-77.

¹⁰⁹ *The Welsh Academy Encyclopaedia of Wales*, s.v. “Land of Song.”

CHAPTER V

Case Study of Three Welsh Male Voice Choirs

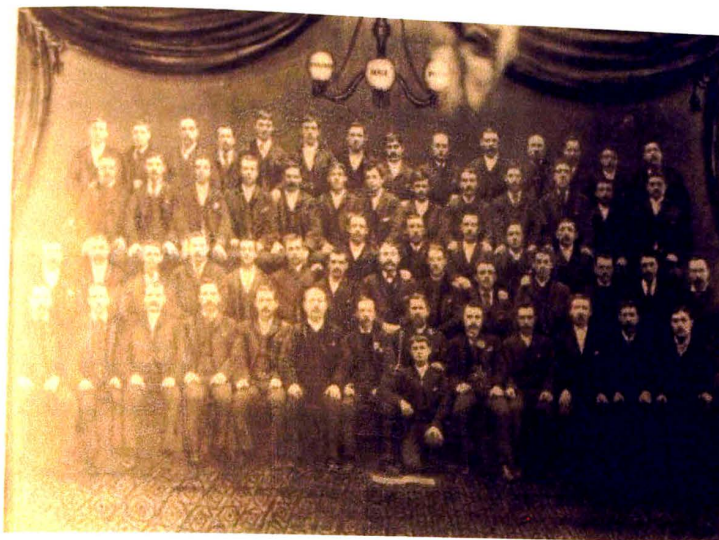
The Treorchy Male Voice Choir

The Treorchy¹¹⁰ Male Choir can be traced as far back as the summer of 1883 when a group of young men from the mining town of Treorchy won a local eisteddfod. This impromptu eisteddfod competition took place at the Red Cow Hotel where the men from the Treorchy United Choir sang Joseph Parry's famous work *Myfanwy*, winning one pound for their performance. Recognizing their potential as a group, this new entity decided to continue as a male voice choir, rehearsing where they could and eventually finding a permanent home in a spare room of the Treorchy Hotel. Rehearsing in a public venue gave them considerable exposure and helped the ensemble mature. In the latter months of 1883, the choir again participated in an eisteddfod at the Corner House Hotel in Treherbert, Wales, again winning first place, this time winning thirty shillings. As time progressed, the choir gained a reputation for their high performance standards. In 1885 William "Bach" Thomas took up the baton as conductor of the choir, but only after the choir agreed to meet Thomas' demands to move rehearsals from the pub to a more suitable and sober venue. Rehearsals moved to a local school on Glyncoli Road, resulting in a slight loss of membership as this new venue lacked the exciting atmosphere of the previous location. Under the direction of Thomas, the sixty-voice choir expanded its repertoire and its recognition. In 1885 Thomas led the choir to another eisteddfod at

¹¹⁰ The spelling was originally Treorky, but was later changed to the current form of Treorchy. The current spelling is used throughout to avoid confusion.

St. Fagans where the Treorchy Male Choir again emerged the winner of the first place prize of five pounds.¹¹¹

Figure 5.1. Treorchy Male Voice Choir 1885¹¹²



The following months proved to be very successful for the choir as they added another twenty choristers to the group. William Thomas tirelessly worked to transform the group into professional, polished singers and performers. The choir at this time consisted almost entirely of miners with every chorister living within a mile of the town. The choir continued to capture prizes in numerous eisteddfodau in the coming years. The rising fame of the Treorchy Male Choir came in tandem with an explosion of male voice choirs throughout South Wales. As the popularity of male voice singing rose, the organizers of competitions increasingly saw the wisdom in offering higher prize rewards for competition winners, drawing record numbers of choirs to compete. The prize at an

¹¹¹ Treorchy Male Choir. <http://www.treorchymalechoir.com/history/origins.htm> (accessed November 22, 2010).

¹¹² Image used by permission of Dean Powell Treorchy Male Choir Publicity Officer and Honorary Archivist via email to the author February 27, 2012. Image taken from Treorchy Male Choir website, under "The origins of a world-famous Choir" under "History," <http://www.treorchymalechoir.com/history/origins.htm> (accessed March 25, 2012).

eisteddfod in Neath was fifty pounds, the highest prize ever offered in Wales at the time, which was awarded to the first place winner, none other than the Treorchy Male Choir.¹¹³

By the summer of 1889, William Thomas had decided that it was time to introduce the Treorchy Male Voice Choir to the rest of Wales. Though they were renowned in Treorchy and South Wales, they were mostly unknown in the rest of the country. The Royal National Eisteddfod in 1889 was held in Brecon, where two pieces were announced as the competition test pieces, *The Young Musician* by Friedrich Kücken and *Y Seren Hwylol* by T. Maldwyn Price. The chief adjudicator for the competition was Ivor Atkins, the choirmaster at Worcester Cathedral in England who worked closely with Edward Elgar. After the Treorchy Male Voice Choir's thrilling performance, Atkins announced, "This was the best performance I have ever heard by a male voice choir," awarding them first place with a prize of twenty-five pounds. Upon returning to Treorchy, Thomas and his proud choristers were greeted with a hero's welcome in the streets of the town. This talented group of men had been victorious in their first attempt at a national eisteddfod, a remarkable achievement.¹¹⁴

It has been said that no one has many friends without having a few enemies, a statement that was true for the Treorchy Male Choir. Achievement of such magnitude spurred vicious rivalries with other male choirs as illustrated by a famous Welsh saying "Cythraul y Canu" (the devil in music), a phrase used to describe the fierce warfare between opposing choirs. This spirit of rivalry was heightened by the fact that the Rhondda Glee Society existed only a mile or two away in the neighboring town of Ton Pentre. Members of the opposing choirs often worked together, or even lived on the

¹¹³ Treorchy Male Choir. <http://www.treorchymalechoir.com/history/origins.htm> (accessed November 22, 2010).

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

same streets. It was not uncommon for large-scale fights to break out at cisteddfod competitions as both pride and tensions were high. With large amounts of money at stake, there was a vindictive attitude between the choirs with lawsuits and sabotage taking place. Long before communities rallied around sports teams, it was the local choir that brought a Welsh community together to cheer and take pride in their group. Spectators gathered in masses to watch the Treorchy Male Voice Choir take on the Rhondda Glee Society: it was the clash of musical giants.¹¹⁵

Figure 5.2. Treorchy Male Voice Choir at Carreg Cennen Castle - 2011¹¹⁶



¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Image used by permission of Dean Powell Treorchy Male Choir Publicity Officer and Honorary Archivist via email to the author February 27, 2012. Image taken from Treorchy Male Choir website, under "Archives," <http://www.treorchymalechoir.com/archives/photo%202000.htm> (accessed March 25, 2012).

The Morriston Orpheus Choir

The Morriston Orpheus Choir is another Welsh male choir that has had tremendous success and world-wide influence. In April of 1935 the choir was formed by Ivor E. Sims, who continued to direct the choir for a number of years. At first, the choir's primary functions were to participate in competitions and give local concerts. Only two years after its founding, in 1937, the choir had its first success at the Royal National Eisteddfod in Machynlleth. This would be the first of six National Eisteddfod victories for the choir. Through many years, under the guidance of seven directors, the choir has achieved a large following and international acclaim. The choir no longer participates in competitions, but maintains a busy schedule of concerts and tours. Within the United Kingdom alone, the Morriston Orpheus Choir performs in approximately twenty-five engagements per year, including concerts, television, and dinner performances.¹¹⁷

In addition to a busy local schedule, the choir regularly takes overseas choir tours. The choir has undertaken twenty-eight concert tours since 1965. During their tours the choir has visited a number of major cities in North America, and has toured Australia, New Zealand, Taiwan, United Arab Emirates, Ireland, and many other countries. Highlights of the choir's tours include an enthusiastic standing ovation at their appearance in the Sydney Opera House, representing Wales at Expo 1992 in Seville, Spain, becoming the first British choir to perform at the International Choral Festival in Bydgoszcz, Poland in 1996, and earning five standing ovations at Carnegie Hall in New York City in 2001. These choir tours have allowed the Morriston Orpheus Choir to remain one of the

¹¹⁷ Morriston Orpheus Choir. www.morristonorpheus.com (accessed November 29, 2010).

supreme ambassadors of Welsh male voice choirs to the United Kingdom, to Europe, and to the world.¹¹⁸

The choir consists of 107 choristers. In a questionnaire conducted by the author, the average age of participating choristers was sixty-seven. The median age was sixty-eight. Regarding music literacy, forty-six percent of the choir is unable to read music. Only twenty-one percent of choristers said that their father was in a male voice choir, indicating that children who grow up with a father in a male choir are less likely to join a male choir later in life. Interestingly, only four percent of choristers say that they prefer tonic sol-fa notation to traditional musical notation, indicating that the tonic sol-fa movement, which once had a great effect on male choirs, is now diminished in importance.¹¹⁹

The Dunvant Male Voice Choir

In the deep south of Wales five miles west of Swansea there is a small rural village called Dunvant.¹²⁰ The name Dunvant is a distortion of the Welsh word for a deep brook, “dwfn nant.” The original Welsh word subtly changed to “Dyfnant” and finally the Anglicized version “Dunvant.”¹²¹ Chapels and places of worship dotted the landscape of Dunvant in the nineteenth century and served as rallying points for social gatherings and activities. One such place was Ebenezer Chapel, formally dedicated in 1872.

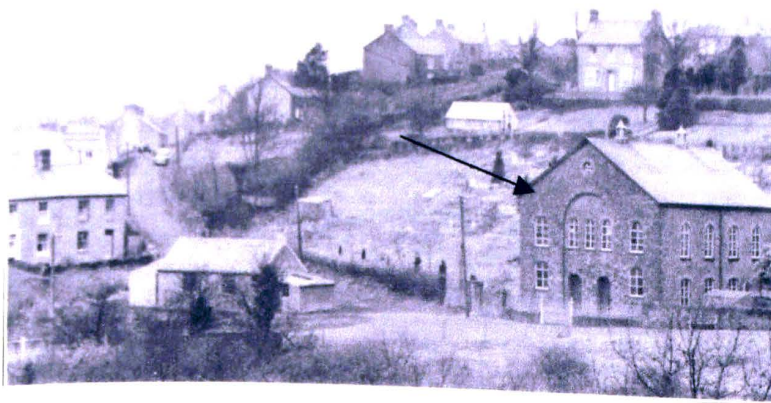
¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Moriston Orpheus Choir, Questionnaire conducted by the author, January 2012.

¹²⁰ Dunvant is pronounced [dʌnvənt].

¹²¹ Mainwaring, *A Hundred Years of Harmony*, 17.

Figure 5.3. Ebenezer Chapel – rebuilt 1893¹²²



It was there that in 1895 a twenty-five year-old tinsplate worker named Thomas Coslett Richards founded the Ebenezer Male Voice Choir. Richards, who also founded and directed the Ebenezer Dramatic Society, helped secure the Ebenezer Chapel's place as the center of village music and drama, hosting productions such as *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *The Glen is Mine*, oratorios, and male choir concerts.¹²³ The Ebenezer Male Voice Choir consisted of brickworkers, quarrymen, colliers, railwaymen, steelworkers, and foundry workers most of whom were also in the male section of the mixed chapel choir. The choir was filled with hard-working men who did little more than work and sing. Richards would often conduct evening rehearsals dressed for the night shift at the tinsplate mill. Richards taught these men to read music, however to him that meant teaching them to read tonic sol-fa notation. He was a tenacious advocate of Curwen's Modulator and its corresponding hand signals. He was even known to have paid out of his own pocket to have certain choristers trained in the skills of tonic sol-fa.¹²⁴

¹²² Image printed in *A Hundred Years of Harmony* and used by permission of the Dunvant Male Choir.

¹²³ Mainwaring, *A Hundred Years of Harmony*, 19 - 20.

¹²⁴ Ibid, 19-20.

In 1901 the Dunvant Ebenezer Male Choir won first prize in the Neath Eisteddfod under Richard's direction. This was an astounding achievement for a local choir that had only been in existence for six years. This was to become the first of many great achievements in the choir's long and prosperous history. At the age of fifty, Thomas Richards decided to relinquish his position as conductor to his protégé T.J. Roderick. Richards continued to follow the fortunes of his choir, the name of which had by then been shorted to The Dunvant Male Choir¹²⁵ or sometimes the Dunvant Excelsior Male Voice Choir.¹²⁶ Thomas John Roderick's tenure as conductor lasted from 1920 to 1925. Though his residency was brief and despite his fanatical behavior and lack of musical training,¹²⁷ the choir continued to grow. By 1925 the choir had grown to the size of fifty to sixty choristers. Rehearsals were still conducted in the chapel vestry at Ebenezer and the core of the group was still the male section of the mixed chapel choir.

Figure 5.4. Dunvant Excelsior Male Voice Choir – Ebenezer Vestry rehearsal



Dunvant Excelsior Male Voice Choir – Ebenezer Vestry rehearsal
This photograph was reproduced on the front page of the Christmas edition of 'The Times', with the caption: 'An Anthem Loud and Clear'

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¹²⁵ In Welsh, Dunvant Male Choir is "Côr Mebion Dyfnant"; Literally "Choir Men Dunvant."

¹²⁶ Mainwaring, *A Hundred Years of Harmony*, 22.

¹²⁷ An example of Roderick's fanatical behavior is when he would go deep into the mines where some of his singers worked and rehearse music by candlelight during their lunch break. For more information, see Mainwaring, *A Hundred Years of Harmony*, 28.

¹²⁸ Image printed in *A Hundred Years of Harmony* and used by permission of the Dunvant Male Choir.

It was during this time that the choir began shifting toward literature of purely male four-part harmonies – the signature sound of Welsh male voice choirs. In 1925, after the Killan mine disaster (the flooding of the Killan Fawr mine where Roderick was employed),¹²⁹ Roderick resigned his position as conductor of the male choir, handing control of the choir to Emlyn Bevan.¹³⁰

Emlyn Bevan conducted the Dunvant Male Choir from 1925 to 1932. “It can be said that with the appointment of Emlyn Bevan the Dunvant Male Choir adjusted itself up and academic notch or two.”¹³¹ Under his direction, the choir strove to attain a much higher level of artistry, a focus that remains with the choir to this day. This attention to detail and mastery of the choral art helped the choir win the Llandoverly Semi National Competition, which was at the time considered to be the greatest achievement for a Welsh competitive choir.¹³²

Next to conduct the choir was Emlyn’s younger brother Emrys Bevan, an enthusiastic and a talented musician, who directed the choir from 1932 to 1945 through the war-torn years of World War II. This was an extremely difficult time for Wales as it was for the Dunvant Male Choir. It was the sheer tenacity of the Bevan family and those few men who made up the choir that caused the choir to endure those fateful years. After the war ended in 1945, Emrys relinquished his post due to professional commitments in the steel and tinplate industry.¹³³

¹²⁹ Mainwaring, *A Hundred Years of Harmony*, 29.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 28.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 33.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 33.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 38.

In the years following the World War II the choir quickly rebounded. Ambrose Miles was the conductor from 1945 to 1970, and the choir of about thirty members grew to seventy members.¹³⁴ During these years the choir won twenty-two competitions and placed second in several more. After twenty-five successful years with Ambrose Miles as conductor, the position was passed to twenty-six year old Christopher Lewis for one year, then to Arwyn Walters in 1970.¹³⁵ After only one year conducting the choir in 1971, Walters led the Dunvant Male Choir to the Cardigan Eisteddfod where the choir placed second, losing to Ebbw Vale Male Choir. With bolstered confidence and higher expectations, the choir competed the next year at the 1972 Haverfordwest Nation Eisteddfod where they were again defeated, placing second to Pembrokeshire. Finally, on August 12, 1978 at the National Eisteddfod in Cardiff, the Dunvant Male Choir won first place. The first National Eisteddfod victory at Cardiff marked the beginning of what is arguably the most remarkable sequence of choral supremacy in the history of Welsh competitive singing. This victory led to a series of competitive victories for the choir (see Figure 5.5).¹³⁶

Figure 5.5. Major Dunvant Male Voice Choir Victories 1978 - 1985

September 16, 1978	Welsh Male Choir of the Year (Ystrad Rhondda)
June 23, 1979	Semi National Eisteddfod (Cardigan)
July 14, 1979	Rhymney Eisteddfod
October 6, 1979	South Wales Miners Eisteddfod (Porthcawl)
October 27, 1979	Welsh Male Choir of the Year (Barry)
May 25, 1980	Pontrhydfendigaid Eisteddfod
August 9, 1980	Royal National Eisteddfod (Dyffryn Lliw)
October 2, 1982	South Wales Miners Eisteddfod (Porthcawl)
June 25, 1983	Semi National Eisteddfod (Cardigan)
October 6, 1983	South Wales Miners Eisteddfod (Porthcawl)
July, 1985	Cornish Open Championship

¹³⁴ Mainwaring, *A Hundred Years of Harmony*, 52.

¹³⁵ Dunvant Male Choir Website, www.dunvantchoir.org. Click "Photo Gallery," Click Music Directors." (accessed January 5, 2012).

¹³⁶ Mainwaring, *A Hundred Years of Harmony*, 54.

The choir's newfound fame generated invitations to sing at prestigious venues such as the Royal Albert Hall, The Usher Hall in Edinburgh, The Roy Thomson Hall in Toronto, King's College Chapel at Cambridge, and cathedrals at Exeter, Chichester, Salisbury, and Gloucester.

In the twenty-first century the choir has continued to compete and perform at a very high level of success under the direction of Timothy Rhys-Evans (2000–2005), Huw Morgan (2005–2006), and the current director Jonathan Rogers (began in 2007). The Dunvant Male Choir has remained an important establishment of the Dunvant community while also acquiring international acclaim through exposure gained by numerous international choir tours and several published albums. The choir currently rehearses at Olchfa Comprehensive School in the nearby town of Olchfa.¹³⁷ The choir has eighty-eight choristers with an average age of seventy. The median age of the choristers is seventy-three as the choir has only four members younger than fifty. Only twelve members (equaling fourteen percent) of the choir can speak and read Welsh.¹³⁸ This is a relatively low number of fluent Welsh speakers compared to a choir such as Llangwm Male Choir in which roughly ninety-five percent of choristers speak and read Welsh.¹³⁹ This is mostly due to a difference in geographic location. The towns and cities near Cardiff, such as Dunvant, tend to patronize only the English language and neglect the conversational use of Welsh (see Figure 5.7 for location of Dunvant).

¹³⁷ Olchfa is pronounced [ɔlxfa]. Dunvant Male Choir Website, www.dunvantchoir.org. (accessed January 4, 2012).

¹³⁸ Dunvant Male Voice Choir, Questionnaire conducted by author via Dewi Morgan (public relations officer, Dunvant Male Choir), Summer 2011.

¹³⁹ Author's conversation with Bethan Smallwood (director of Llangwm male choir) August 6, 2011.

The Dunvant Male Choir's repertoire covers a vast array of genres. Their choral library contains works by composers such as Mozart, Grieg, Bruckner, Vaughan Williams, Parry, Protheroe, Mathias, Verdi, Weber, Victoria, Handel, Holst, Schubert, and Wagner. Most pieces are scored for TTBB and many have Welsh and English texts.¹⁴² The current director is Jonathan Rogers, a young and talented musician who holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in music from Bristol England University. He also has a Diploma in Singing from the Associated Board Royal School of Music (B.R.S.M.). He is currently a candidate for a master's degree in Education from Swansea Metropolitan University. Rogers brings to the choir a focus on detail and expression.¹⁴³ Though the choir has often competed in various choral competitions with great success, the choir is now mostly a concert choir rather than a competitive choir. In the words of Jonathan Rogers, "it is the difference between precision and entertainment."¹⁴⁴ The choir's current goal is to present meaningful entertainment to its community and beyond by singing diverse and exciting music. In February of 2012 Rogers took the Choir on Tour to Southeast Asia, continuing the long-standing tradition of sharing the music of the Dunvant Male Choir with the world.

¹⁴² Dunvant Male Choir Choral Library Database provided by Dewi Morgan August 1, 2011.

¹⁴³ In conversation with Dewi Morgan, Barry Evans, Jonathan Rogers, Clive Wilson, and Ray Restall August 1, 2011.

¹⁴⁴ In conversation with Dewi Morgan, Barry Evans, Jonathan Rogers, Clive Wilson, and Ray Restall August 1, 2011.

CHAPTER VI

Three Exemplary Male Voice Choir Composers with Analysis of Selected Works

Joseph Parry

Joseph Parry is often considered by the Welsh to be their most beloved composer. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century there is likely no name that was better known in Wales and in the Welsh colonies than his. Owain T. Edwards says, "No other Welsh musician has received during his lifetime such acclaim as Joseph Parry."¹⁴⁵ His music was sung in chapels and eisteddfod competitions throughout the country of Wales. The nation was proud to see one of their countrymen earn a doctorate in music from Cambridge University and achieve such success. *Y Doctor Mawr* (The Great Doctor), as he was later called, was in great demand as a conductor and as an eisteddfod adjudicator. His influence as a teacher, composer, conductor, and adjudicator has left a permanent mark on the Welsh male voice choir and Welsh music in general.¹⁴⁶

Joseph Parry was born in Merthyr Tydfil on May 24, 1841, the youngest of eight children belonging to Daniel and Elizabeth Parry. Joseph nearly died in infancy, as did three of his siblings. It was only after he turned three in May of 1844 that his family felt sure Joseph was going to live past adolescence, because at three he was "strong on his legs and had plenty to say for himself."¹⁴⁷ It is also said that Joseph could sing beautifully at the age of three. The town of Merthyr Tydfil was, at the time, the largest town in Wales. It was also at the forefront of musical centers in South Wales. The

¹⁴⁵ Owain T. Edwards, *Joseph Parry: 1841-1903*, (Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1970), 9.

¹⁴⁶ Dulais Rhys and Frank Bott, *To Philadelphia and Back: The Life and Music of Joseph Parry* (Llanrwst, Wales: Gwasg Carreg Gwalch, 2010), 9.

¹⁴⁷ Jack Jones, *Off to Philadelphia In the Morning* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1951), 10.

musical climate was very healthy. More eisteddfodau were said to have taken place in Merthyr Tydfil than anywhere else in the country. At a young age Joseph sang in a local chapel choir. Though he was useful as a young alto, he was not viewed as particularly gifted in music, and certainly not destined to have a career in music. So, at the age of nine, he began work at the coal pit, earning a minimal but typical wage for a boy his age.¹⁴⁸

Joseph's father, Daniel Parry, along with thousands of Welshmen, were drawn by the potential of wealth in America. Daniel left for the Welsh industrial community at Danville, Pennsylvania in 1853. The next year, Elizabeth and her four children, including Joseph, embarked on the same journey to Pennsylvania, a voyage that lasted six weeks and two days. After arriving in Danville, Joseph took a job in an iron foundry where he worked for eleven years. In his leisure time he worked to train his baritone voice, which would serve him well for many years. With a hunger to learn the theoretical side of music, Joseph joined a music class taught by another Welshman John Abel Jones. His progress was so successful he was referred to another teacher by the name of John M. Pride who gave him lessons in harmony and composition. In 1860, after several years of compositional study, Joseph submitted a composition for the competition at the Christmas Eisteddfod at Danville. He won the competition, despite the criticism that the adjudicator should not award the prize to such a young and unknown competitor. The next year he won the Eisteddfod Composition Competition again, this time in Wales at Utica, beating even the adjudicator who had awarded him first prize the year before. This

¹⁴⁸ Edwards, *Joseph Parry*. 11.

created some controversy and led to a newspaper correspondence about the competition. This was the beginning of Joseph's rise to popular acclaim in Wales.¹⁴⁹

Now at the age of twenty, Joseph showed such promise that funds were raised so he could attend the summer music course at Genesee in New York state. After twice being elicited to serve the Union forces in the developing civil war, he returned to Danville where he married his wife Jane on his twenty-first birthday. Together, Joseph and Jane had five children: Haydn, Mendelssohn, William Sterndale, Annie, and Dilys. Meanwhile, Joseph continued to succeed in American eisteddfod competitions, and was advised to compete at the National Eisteddfod in Wales. So, in 1863 Joseph sent four compositions to the eisteddfod in Swansea in 1863, signing them "Bachgen Bach o Ferthyr, erioed, erioed" (A Merthyr boy forever and ever). He placed first in three contests and tied for first in the other. He replicated his success in the Llandudno Eisteddfod in 1864 where he was again awarded three first-place prizes. In 1865 Parry traveled to Aberystwyth for the National Eisteddfod only to find that his compositions, sent previously, were never received by the adjudicators and were forever lost. What seemed to be a major disappointment became the turning point of Parry's career. Though he was not able to compete in the competition, he was able to meet and impress some of the leading composers of the day.¹⁵⁰ He was even asked to sit with the adjudicators during the main choral competition because the test piece was Parry's *Motet*, which had won first prize the previous year at Swansea.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, 11-13.

¹⁵⁰ Richard Hayman, *Dr. Joseph Parry: Musician and Composer* (Merthyr Tydfil Heritage Trust, 1986), 9-10.

¹⁵¹ Edwards, *Joseph Parry*, 19.

Because of his newly found notoriety at the eisteddfod and through the influence of his friend John Griffiths, a writer for Welsh national newspapers, the Eisteddfod Council agreed to help pay for a formal music education for Parry at the Royal Academy of Music in London, where he studied for three years, beginning in 1868.¹⁵² Upon completion of his Bachelor of Music degree, he returned to Danville where he began his own music school, the Danville Musical Institute. In 1874, only two years after opening the institute, Parry received an offer to become the first chair of Professor of Music at the newly founded University College of Wales at Aberystwyth. Though he made only two hundred and fifty pounds per year, he accepted the position out of a sense of duty to his country.¹⁵³

Joseph Parry's energetic and enthusiastic methods of teaching and leadership instigated much criticism and controversy among his colleagues. Though his methods were sometimes questionable, there was no doubt that he had an innate ability to excite the students, and spot talent. One act of questionable integrity occurred when Parry was adjudicating at the Baptist Eisteddfod in Rhosllanerchrugog. After hearing a young coal miner, William Davies, sing an aria from Handel's *Sampson*, Parry told the congregation that William should have the chance to study music with himself, and initiated the start of a fund which would allow William to study under Parry at Aberystwyth for two years. Parry was known to often attend and give recitals apart from his duties at Aberystwyth. Some accused him of paying too much attention to his own musical career and ambitions and not enough to that of the music department at Aberystwyth. Jack Jones says, "When he [Joseph Parry] was at Aberystwyth, it was little time he devoted to actual teaching. He

¹⁵² Hayman, *Dr. Joseph Parry: Musician and Composer*, 10.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 10-11.

composed and composed and only between compositions did he devote a little time to the teaching of his students."¹⁵⁴ This was partly due to the fact that he was composing his opera *Blodwen*, as well as doing work for his Cambridge doctorate.¹⁵⁵ He also composed his work *Aberystwyth* during this time. Music students at Aberystwyth were unruly because Parry, being the only teacher in the music department, was often absent and a poor disciplinarian.

After four years the College Council instituted resolutions to rein in the activities of Parry and the music department. First, they decided to withhold the professor's right to take female students, a right that he had acquired because sopranos and altos were previously absent in his all-male department. This effectively put an end to his choir. Secondly, they forbade him to give or go to any more concerts in or around Aberystwyth. This, however, did little to ease the problems perceived by the council as Parry began leaving for distant places, so he would not violate the council's stipulations to conduct for extra income, often neglecting his own students. At the end of the school year, showing respect for Parry's professional abilities while displaying disapproval of his antics, the council moved to retain Parry while decreasing his responsibilities and compensation. As a result of his refusal to comply with these terms, in 1880, at the end of his sixth school year, Parry resigned. The council accepted the resignation with an expression of regret for the circumstances that had led to his severance. By this time, thirty-nine year old Joseph Parry was a national figure as a composer, conductor, and eisteddfod adjudicator. After a failed attempt to establish a private music school in Aberystwyth, Parry accepted a position as head of the newly established Musical College of Wales in Swansea, Wales.

¹⁵⁴ Jones, *Off to Philadelphia In the Morning*, 248.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, 248.

He also obtained the post of organist of Ebenezer Chapel in Swansea where he resided for seven years.¹⁵⁶

Though progress was slow, the student population eventually rose to over one hundred. It was also during his time in Swansea he completed several important compositions including the operas *Virginia* (1882) and *Arianwen* (1884), and the cantata *Nebuchadnezzar* (1884). In 1888 Parry left Swansea to become head of the department of music at the University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire in Cardiff, a position he held for the remainder of his life. In the spring of 1892 his youngest son, William Sterndale, tragically died, followed by the death of Haydn two years later. Grief stricken, Parry continued to be as active as ever. His compositional output remained consistent, devoting much time to writing hymn tunes. In 1893, Parry worked with David Rowlands to produce the *Cambrian Minstrelsie*, a six volume collection of Welsh songs. He received commissions to write pieces for the National Eisteddfod in 1892 (Rhyl), 1896 (Llandudno), and 1900 (Liverpool). In 1902, after having made one last journey to Welsh communities in the United States, Parry, at the age of sixty, began to write his autobiography. His last work was *Jesus of Nazareth*, an extended choral work he never finished. Early the next year Parry began experiencing complications from a minor operation he had previously undergone and died on February 23, 1903.¹⁵⁷

Joseph Parry was most prolific in the area of sacred music both for performance and for the church (for a list of all Parry's works for male choir see Appendix C on page 80). Throughout his life, Parry was a faithful Congregationalist, as were his parents. As a youth, the temperance movement was also very influential in his life, as evidenced by

¹⁵⁶ Ebenezer Chapel is the birthplace of the Dunvant Male Choir. See the section on The Dunvant Male Voice choir in chapter three.

¹⁵⁷ Hayman, *Dr. Joseph Parry: Musician and Composer*, 14-16.

the fact that his winning entry in the Danville Eisteddfod of 1860 was titled, *A Temperance Vocal March*. This was followed by other temperance pieces.¹⁵⁸ A substantial portion of Parry's output is music on religious subjects, including hundreds of hymn tunes, anthems, and an assortment of other sacred pieces, some of which have remained popular through the years. According to contemporary composers such as David Jenkins and Daniel Protheroe, "Parry's music was at its best when his head was on his knees, that is, in prayer."¹⁵⁹

In an age when the Welsh nation lacked a substantial musician, Joseph Parry filled the breach, offering new and exciting music that was accessible to people of all skill levels.¹⁶⁰ In 1978, a review of Parry's *Hiraethgan*, a *Yr Ysgol Gerddorol* journalist wrote that Parry's purpose was "to give the people something practical, and in this he is usually successful."¹⁶¹ The fact that hundreds of eisteddfod competitions have used compositions by Parry as a test piece demonstrates his influence on Welsh music. Sadly, as the chapel culture that inspired and sustained his music declined, so did the popularity of his music. He was, however, a figure others strove to imitate. He trained and inspired many young musicians who endeavored to rise from meager beginnings like he had. Having contributed to Welsh music as no one before him, and having inspired so many, he justifiably became "without a doubt the most well known Welshman in the world at

¹⁵⁸ Temperance was a mid-nineteenth century movement to eliminate alcohol consumption.

¹⁵⁹ Dulais Rhys and Frank Bott, *To Philadelphia and Back: The Life and Music of Joseph Parry* (Llanrwst, Wales: Gwasg Carreg Gwalch, 2010), 197.

¹⁶⁰ It must be mentioned that just as there is exuberant praise for Joseph Parry's music, especially among the Welsh, there is also legitimate criticism. For a negative evaluation of Parry's music see Alan H. F. Luff, "Joseph Parry--b. 21 May 1841; d. 17 February 1903," *Bulletin of the Hymn Society of Great Britain & Ireland*, April 2003., 41-43, Music Index, EBSCOhost (accessed March 29, 2012).

¹⁶¹ Rhys and Bott, *To Philadelphia and Back: The Life and Music of Joseph Parry*, 217.

the beginning to the twentieth century.”¹⁶² Even when life was not easy due to the loss of two sons, and through many financial difficulties, Parry never wavered from his faith. Through faith he overcame these troubles, having a successful life and musical career, proving the “steadfastness of his faith and the inner strength of his personality.”¹⁶³

Analysis of Parry's *Myfanwy*

Figure 6.1. *Myfanwy* Vocal Range

Range:	
TI	A ₂ 3 – A ₂ 4
TII	F3 – D ₂ 4
BI	D ₂ 3 – A ₂ 3
BII	F2 – A3

This piece is constructed with traditional harmonic progressions, a central rhythmic motive, and suspensions (see Appendix D on page 81 for full score of this piece). The piece is built primarily on the tonic and dominant sonorities (for a diagram of the piece see Appendix E on page 83). In fact, these are the only two chords, tonic and dominant, in the first eight measures, and there are only three measures in the entire piece that contain chords other than tonic or dominant. This gives the piece a certain sense of firmness and stability, an aesthetic that compliments the strong sound of male choirs. The rhythmic motive of the first nine notes appears throughout the piece as a recurring theme (Figure 6.2).

¹⁶² Hayman, *Dr. Joseph Parry: Musician and Composer*, 19.

¹⁶³ Rhys and Bott, *To Philadelphia and Back: The Life and Music of Joseph Parry*, 199.

Figure 6.2. First Occurrence of Rhythmic Motive in *Myfanwy* (mm. 1-2)

1st Tenor

2nd Tenor

1st Bass

2nd Bass

1. Pa - ham mae dig - ter, O! My - fan - wy,
 Why shoots wrath's lightning, A - ra - bel - la,

2. Pa beth a wnaethum, O! My - fan - wy,
 What have I done, oh, cru - el fair one,

3. My - fan - wy, boed yr oll o' th fyw - yd,
 Full be thy heart with joy for ev - er,

This, again, gives the piece a sentiment of stability and uniformity. Perhaps the most beautiful aspect of this piece is Parry's use of 6-5 and 4-3 linear motion. This is where a voice part approaches the fifth or the third of a triad from above, usually moving from 6 on beat one to 5 on beat two or 4 on beat one to 3 on beat two (Figure 6.3).

Figure 6.3. Suspensions – *Myfanwy* (m. 10)

TI Treble Clef

TII Treble Clef

BI Bass Clef

BII Bass Clef

9 10 6 - 5 4 - 3

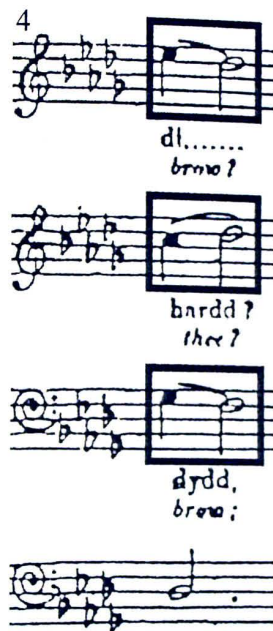
Pa le mae'r wên oedd ar dy wêl - us I
 Why life those lips that bore my kiss - es? f

Wyt eidd - o i'm lwy gy - wir aro - mod,
 Thou art my own by word and hon - our,

Ang - hof - ia'r oll o' th add - e - wid - ion,
 For - get thy bro - ken vows, and re - ver

The TI voice¹⁶⁴ is typically the voice that moves in this manner, occurring in mm. 3, 4, 6, 10, 13, and 14. More than once, there is another voice part that moves simultaneously with the TI voice. In Figure 6.3, the TI has a 6-5 movement while the TII has a 4-3 movement. Similarly, in Figure 6.4 we see the TI with a 9-8 movement, the BI with a 4-3 movement, and the TII with a 7-8 movement. In this case the linear movement takes on the form of re-struck suspensions and retardation.

Figure 6.4. Suspensions and Retardation - *Myfanwy* (m. 4)



Especially stunning are the TI suspensions on mm. 13 and 14 which, coupled with the *piano* in m. 14, the *rallentando* and *crescendo* in m. 15, and the fermata in m. 15, make for a lovely end to the piece. This piece is no doubt popular because it is simple, straightforward harmonically, and has a beautiful tune. This is also why this piece continues to be among the most performed works of Welsh male voice choir.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁴ For music analysis the abbreviations BI, BII, TII, and TI will be used for bass one, bass two, tenor two, and tenor one.

¹⁶⁵ Joseph Parry and Chapel Row, <http://www.alangeorge.co.uk/JosephParry.htm> (accessed March 30, 2012).

Daniel Protheroe

Daniel Protheroe (b. Cwmgiedd, near Ystradgynlais, November 24, 1866; d. Chicago, February 25, 1934) was a Welsh conductor and composer of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Protheroe won the National Eisteddfod festival in 1880 and 1881 as a boy soloist before his voice changed. He studied music at Swansea Normal College¹⁶⁶ and was briefly the conductor of the Ystradgynlais Choir before he and his family immigrated to Scranton, Pennsylvania in 1886. After studying music with J.T. Rees in Wales, Protheroe continued studying music in Scranton with Parson Price and Dudley Buck. Protheroe earned a B.Mus from Trinity College, Toronto, Canada in 1890 and a D.Mus from the Grand Conservatory, New York, New York in 1905. He was the conductor of the Cymmrodorion Choral Society in Scranton for eight years, after which he moved to Milwaukee, Wisconsin where he directed the Milwaukee Lyric Male Chorus from 1895 to 1901.¹⁶⁷ In 1909 he moved to Chicago, where he conducted on the staff of Sherwood Music School and worked as director of music at Central Church.¹⁶⁸ Protheroe was the most influential composer of the Welsh community in the United States.¹⁶⁹ Though he lived in the United States, Protheroe made frequent trips to Wales, where he was admired as a conductor, adjudicator, and composer. His compositions include cantatas, a mass, anthems, glees and songs, two string quartets, and numerous hymn tunes. Among his most famous hymn tunes are *Milwaukee*, *Wilkesbarre*, *Hiraeth*, and *Cwmgiedd*. In 1918 he served as an editor of the *Can a Mawl* (Song and Praise) hymnal, published by the General Assembly Calvinistic Methodist Churches of the

¹⁶⁶ State Historical Society of Wisconsin. 1960. "Protheroe, Daniel". Dictionary of Wisconsin Biography.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Owain Edwards, *Grove Music Online*, s.v. "Daniel Protheroe," <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com> (accessed November 4, 2010).

¹⁶⁹ Hymnary, <http://www.hymnary.org/hymnal/CMSP1918> (accessed November 9, 2010).

United States.¹⁷⁰ He was also the author of the books *Arwain corau* (Leading Choirs) in 1914 and *Nodau damweiniol a d'rawyd* (Notes Were Accidentally Struck)¹⁷¹ in 1924. Though Protheroe produced works in numerous musical genres, his pieces for Male Voice Choirs have had the most lasting success. His male voice choir works *Invictus*, *Laudamus*, *Nidaros*, and *Jesu, Lover of My Soul* have remained especially popular through the years.¹⁷² (For a list of Protheroe's works for male voice choir see Appendix G on page 85).

Analysis of Protheroe's *Laudamus*

The piece is set for TTBB voices with piano accompaniment, though many perform this piece with organ (see Appendix H on pg. 86 for full score). The piece is securely in the minor mode, except for the picardy third ending, modulating from the original key of B minor to F# minor in m. 24, then back to B minor in m. 43. The piano begins a five and a half measure interlude with the same motive (F³ F³ B³ C⁴) that the voices sing when they begin in m. 6. The piece has a three-part verse form whereby a verse and chorus is repeated three times, the second time in the dominant. In the first and third verses (mm. 6-14 and 42-50) the TI has the melody, while the B1 has the melody in verse two (mm. 23-31). The piece is mostly homophonic with changes in texture occurring in the three choruses. In the first chorus (mm. 15-21) the lower three voices echo the TI voice. Similarly, the third chorus (mm. 51-59) has the basses echoing the tenors. The second chorus (mm. 32-38) puts the melody in the B1 voice as the other

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Translated by Wyn Thomas (communicated to the author via email November 11, 2010).

¹⁷² Owain Edwards, *Grove Music Online*, s.v. "Daniel Protheroe," <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com> (accessed November 4, 2010).

three parts hold the word “songs” for three and a half beats before joining the B1 on the text “of praises.” The other voices then echo the B1 much like the first and third choruses. Protheroe’s use of varying the voicing creates a drastic difference between the middle section and the other two sections. This difference is strengthened by the fact that the middle section is much softer than the first and third sections (for a diagram of the piece see Appendix I on page 94). Though *Laudamus* is basically a strophic piece, Protheroe, through his creative use of contrast, has turned the song into somewhat of an ABA’ form.

Protheroe interchanges use of the A \sharp and A \flat pitches in the key of B minor, and the E \sharp and E \flat pitches in F \sharp minor (Figure 6.5).

Figure 6.5: Tension between A \sharp and A \flat pitches – *Laudamus* (m. 8)

Figure 6.5 displays a musical score for the song "Laudamus" (m. 8). The score is written for four staves, likely representing different vocal parts. The key signature is B minor (two sharps: F# and C#). The lyrics are: "Un-to Thee all praise be giv-en, King of I" and "Gwac Dy Groes sy'n co-di' fyn-y 'Reidd-il". The eighth measure of the first three staves is circled, highlighting the tension between A \sharp and A \flat pitches. The fourth staff has a circled A \sharp pitch in the eighth measure.

The harmonic language is generally very diatonic with the exception of a few chromatic moments, most notably the E \sharp ^{o7} chord which functions as a vii^{o7} of V on the last note of m. 18 (Figure 6.6). The tension caused by the use A \sharp and A \flat pitches and the E \sharp and

E \sharp pitches and the subtle use of chromaticism create interest in an otherwise very traditional choral setting.

Figure 6.6. E \sharp ⁰⁷ - Borrowed leading tone of the dominant – *Laudamus* (m. 18).

Songs of prais - es We will give Thee ev - er - more.
Gad im' deim - lo A - wel o Gal - far - id - fryn.

Songs of prais - es We will give Thee ev - er - more.
Gad im' deim - lo A - wel o Gal - far - id - fryn.

Songs of prais - es We will give Thee ev - er - more.
Gad im' deim - lo A - wel o Gal - far - id - fryn.

Songs of prais - es We will give Thee ev - er - more.
Gad im' deim - lo A - wel o Gal - far - id - fryn.

The phrases are very predictable based on the text and the use of cadences. The choir will likely have to be told not to take a breath half way through the phrases. For instance, during the phrase, “Unto Thee all praise be given, King of Kings and Lord of Lords,” the choir might be tempted to take a breath after “given.” The organ part is generally easy and very complementary to the voices as it is nearly always playing *colla parte*. The dynamic range is very large and the partwriting requires each voice to sing at least an octave (Figure 6.7).

Figure 6.7. Vocal Range in *Laudamus*

Range:	
TI	F3 – A4
TII	F3 – F4
BI	C#3 – E4
BII	F#2 – D4

The tune of Laudamus is called Bryn Calfaria, and was written by the Welsh composer William Owen of Pyrsgol (1813-1893). Protheroe's setting is commissioned "To the Associated Glee Clubs of America." The Welsh translation of Laudamus is by Pantycelyn. The text is below:

Unto Thee all praise be given,
King of Kings and Lord of Lords:
Heav'n and earth proclaim Thy glory,
And the wonders of Thy works.
Songs of praises we will give Thee evermore.

In Thy mercy Thou dost save us,
And from harm Thou'lt keep us free:
When temptations dire assail us,
We shall always look to Thee.
Songs of praises we will give Thee evermore.

In Thy pow'r we ever glory,
In Thy strength we shall endure:
Leaning on Thy gracious mercy,
And Thy precious love so pure.
Songs of praises we will give Thee evermore.

William Mathias

William James Mathias was born into a family of musicians on November 1, 1934 in Whitland, South Wales. His parents, James and Marian Mathias, as well as his maternal grandfather were all amateur musicians. William Mathias began composing at the age of five having had nothing more than introductory instruction in music theory. He would play the piano at local events, often showcasing his own compositions and improvisations. Mathias was a prolific composer by the age of twenty.¹⁷³

¹⁷³ Carl P. Ashley, "A Survey of the Sacred Choral Works of William James Mathias (1934-1992) With An Analysis of Selected Works" (Doctoral Essay, University of Miami, 2002), 12. In ProQuest Dissertations & Theses (URL provided in Bibliography).

Known for his skills as a composer and pianist, Mathias received his Bachelor's Degree in Music from the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth in 1956 under the direction of Ian Parrott. After receiving his Bachelor's degree he studied at the Royal Academy of Music where he was awarded a scholarship to study composition. He studied composition with Lennox Berkeley and piano with Peter Katin.¹⁷⁴ It was during his time at the Royal Academy of Music that Mathias was exposed to the music of composers such as Boulez, Messiaen, Schoenberg, Webern, and Berg. "This was an important time of compositional experimentation for the young Mathias... Mathias's exposure to so many different styles encouraged him to formulate his own compositional voice."¹⁷⁵ Mathias had a unique and ever-changing compositional style that might best be described as "eclectic."¹⁷⁶ It was also during his time at the Academy that Mathias composed his *Divertimento for Strings*, op.7, which secured his reputation as a serious composer. Some critics, including David Wright, consider this composition to be his first work of maturity.

In September of 1959 William married Margaret Yvonne Collis, a voice student at the Academy,¹⁷⁷ who currently resides in Wales. In 1959 Mathias was appointed Lecturer in the music department of the University College of North Wales in Bangor. He remained in this position for nine years until he left to take the post of Senior Lecturer in Music at Edinburgh University. It was in 1966, during his time at Edinburgh, that

¹⁷⁴ Geraint Lewis, Grove Music Online, s.v. "William Mathias," <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com> (accessed November 14, 2010).

¹⁷⁵ Ashley, "A Survey of the Sacred Choral Works of William James Mathias (1934-1992) With An Analysis of Selected Works," 15.

¹⁷⁶ John G. Slawson, "The Choral Music of William Mathias" (Doctoral Thesis, University of Cincinnati, 1985), 170-174. In ProQuest Dissertations & Theses (URL provided in Bibliography).

¹⁷⁷ Ashley, "A Survey of the Sacred Choral Works of William James Mathias (1934-1992) With An Analysis of Selected Works," 15-18.

Mathias was elected a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music. In 1966 he received a Doctorate of Music from the University of Wales, where he would also become a Fellow in 1990. In 1970 he returned to the University College of North Wales, Bangor, this time to take the position of Head of the Department of Music. Mathias remained in this position until 1988, when he retired to concentrate on composition. A year before his retirement he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Music by Westminster Choir College, Princeton, New Jersey. Among his lifetime achievements are the Arnold Bax Society Prize, which he won in 1968, and the Guild for the Promotion of Welsh Music's John Edwards Memorial Award, which he won in 1982. He is also the founder of the North Wales Music Festival, based at St. Asaph Cathedral, a festival he directed from 1972 until his death. William Mathias died at Y Graigwen, Menai Bridge, Anglesey on July 29, 1992.¹⁷⁸ A memorial service was held in his honor on August 15 of that same year at St. Asaph's Cathedral.¹⁷⁹

Geraint Lewis called Mathias "one of the most versatile musical minds of his generation."¹⁸⁰ During his life, Mathias was a prolific composer. From 1961 he was a house composer with Oxford University Press. He was involved with the Welsh Arts Council, the BBC Central Music Advisory Committee, the Welsh Advisory Committee of the British Council, the Council of the Composer's Guild of Great Britain, the Royal College of Organists, and the International Incorporated Society of Musicians.¹⁸¹

Mathias's most famous work is his choral anthem *Let the People Praise Thee, O God*,

¹⁷⁸ The National Library of Wales. www.llgc.org.uk (accessed November 9, 2010). Complete website information provided in bibliography.

¹⁷⁹ Carl P. Ashley, "A Survey of the Sacred Choral Works of William James Mathias (1934-1992) With An Analysis of Selected Works" (Doctoral Essay, University of Miami, 2002), 23. In ProQuest Dissertations & Theses (URL provided in Bibliography).

¹⁸⁰ Ibid, 24.

¹⁸¹ The National Library of Wales. www.llgc.org.uk (accessed November 9, 2010). Complete website information provided in bibliography.

commissioned for the marriage of Prince Charles and Lady Diana in 1981. The marriage, which took place at St. Paul's Cathedral in London, had an estimated seven hundred and fifty million television viewers, giving Mathias's anthem the largest audience of any new choral work in history. The anthem was instantly popular and Oxford University Press immediately began accepting orders for the anthem from choirs all over the world. This anthem solidified Mathias's status as an acclaimed composer with an international reputation.¹⁸² Mathias is best known today in the United States for his choral music and church works, however, his instrumental works are better known in the United Kingdom. Mathias regarded all of his music as praise that is to be lifted up to God. His faith is what defined him as a composer. He once said about himself, "if mine own music can have a small part in helping people to grow and to know about their own spiritual development in particular, I think that would make me content, but I also wanted to give enjoyment to people."¹⁸³ A list of Mathias's works for male voice choir is in Appendix J on page 95.

Analysis of Mathias's *O Salutaris Hostia*, op. 48.

The Rhos Orpheus Male Voice Choir commissioned William Mathias to write *O Salutaris Hostia* Opus 48 in 1969 (the score is given in Appendix K on page 96).¹⁸⁴ It is scored for TTBB male chorus and the text is in Latin. Mathias's setting of this piece uses the form, key centers, and compositional motives to effectively paint the text and create dramatic contrast, thus creating a meaningful and interesting piece of music.

¹⁸² Ashley, "A Survey of the Sacred Choral Works of William James Mathias (1934-1992) With An Analysis of Selected Works," 20.

¹⁸³ Ibid, 24.

¹⁸⁴ William Mathias Mathias Manuscripts and Papers. The National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Wales (accessed August 3, 2011).

The text of *O Salutaris Hostia* was written by Saint Thomas Aquinas, a thirteenth century Christian theologian. The text is divided into two sections with the first section as a plea for Jesus (the saving victim) to open the gates of heaven and give help in a time of war. The second section offers praise to the divine Trinity who offers eternal life in his kingdom (see Appendix L on pg. 104 for the text and translation). In this piece the first half of the text is sung in formal sections A through B, and the second half of the text is sung in formal sections C through A'. The formal divisions, key centers, and the use of a returning motive successfully characterize the change that occurs from the first to the second half of the text as the plea for help in the first section of text is answered at the end of the piece. The Trinitarian aspect of the text is also displayed in the planing sections of the song.

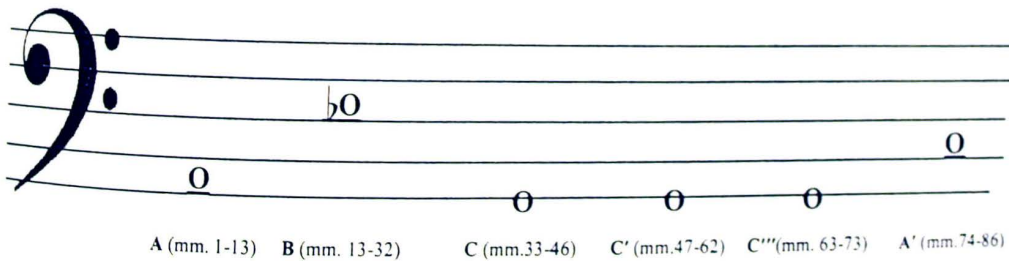
Formally the piece is divided into six sections distinguished primarily by tempo and key center. The A and A' sections both begin with the tempo marking *Lento* while the B and C sections are marked *Allegro* (see diagram in Appendix M on page 105). The piece is in C major as evidenced by the fact that there are no accidentals in the key signature, the majority of the piece is centered on a C major triad, and the piece ends on a C major triad. The tonal center is largely defined by the use of a pedal tone, which is utilized in 63 of the work's 86 measures. There are only twelve measures where the BII is singing something other than a pedal tone on an A³ or a G³. From m. 63 until the end of the piece the BII sings no less than 58 repetitions of the G³ pitch. Mathias's use of the pedal point in the low voice indicates the influence of Igor Stravinsky. Malcolm Boyd States, "Many instances of similar use of bass pedals can be found in Stravinsky's choral

writing, for Figure in the *Symphony of Psalms*.¹⁸⁵ In the A section (mm. 1-13) the BII sings a A3 pedal tone, which functions as tonic for the entire section. Similarly, in the B section (mm. 13-32) the BII sings a pedal tone E \flat 3 which functions as tonic for the entire section. The C, C', C'', C''', and A' sections are predominantly centered in the key of C major, often stabilized by a G2 pedal tone in the BII that functions as the fifth scale degree of a C \flat 4 major triad (see Figure 6.8).

Figure 6.8. C \flat 4 major triad – *O Salutaris Hostia* (m. 33)¹⁸⁶



Figure 6.9: Pedal Tones by Formal Section in *O Salutaris Hostia*



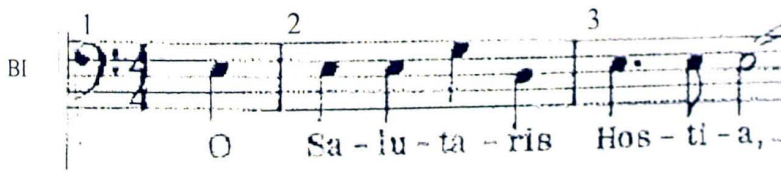
¹⁸⁵ Boyd also states, "the syncopations and syllabic treatment of the text in Mathias's *O Salutaris Hostia* also point to Stravinsky's influence." John G. Slawson, "The Choral Music of William Mathias" (Doctoral Thesis, University of Cincinnati, 1985), 63-64. In ProQuest Dissertations & Theses (URL provided in Bibliography).

¹⁸⁶ *O Salutaris Hostia* by William Mathias © Oxford University Press 1972. Extracts reproduced by permission. All rights reserved.

The only tonal center not diatonic to C major is the E \flat key found in the B section (Figure 6.9). Mathias uses this non-related key and a new *Allegro agitato* tempo to illustrate the lost and oppressed nature of the opening text of the B section, “bella premunt hostilia, da robus, fer auxilium” (hostile wars press on us, give strength, bring aid). The E \flat key sounds like a leap of a tritone from the A minor key of section A. This illustrates the hostile nature of the wars that afflict the narrator. The B section ends with a dissonant tone cluster over the E \flat pedal tone emphasizing the intense nature of the narrator’s plea for help. This plea, however, is temporarily suspended as the narrator changes frame of mind and finds peace in praising the Lord and meditating upon His promise of everlasting life. This change is demonstrated in the music as the shift to the C section begins with a C major triad. The narrator’s peace, signified by the C major key remains for the duration of the piece.

The piece’s primary motive, motive X, is the first and last motive of the song (see Figure 6.10).

Figure 6.10. Motive X – *O Salutaris Hostia* (mm. 1-3)¹⁸⁷



Motive X is used to represent the text “salutaris hostia,” or the “saving victim” and is always paired with the text “O salutaris hostia.” In the first five measures motive X is introduced in an imitative style first in the BI, then the TII, then the TI (see Figure 6.11).

¹⁸⁷ *O Salutaris Hostia* by William Mathias © Oxford University Press 1972. Extracts reproduced by permission. All rights reserved.

Figure 6.11. Imitative entry of motive X – *O Salutaris Hostia* (mm. 1-4)¹⁸⁸

Lento assai 1 2 3 4

Tenor I
Tenor II
Bass I
Bass II

mp espressivo
mp espressivo
mp espressivo
mp espressivo

O Sa-lu-ta-ris Hos-ti-a,
O Sa-lu-ta-ris Hos-ti-a,
O Sa-lu-ta-ris Hos-ti-a,
O Sa-lu-ta-ris Hos-ti-a,

Motive X is also found at the end of the B section where it is used to reiterate that Jesus is the recipient of the narrator's plea for strength and aid. Motive X is also used in the A' section in the last four measures of the piece (see Figure 6.12).

Figure 6.12. Motive X at End of Piece – *O Salutaris Hostia* (mm. 84-86)¹⁸⁹

mp 84 85 86

O Sa-lu-ta-ris Hos-ti-a.

This final cadential use of the X motive ends on the only root-position C major triad of the piece. This draws a connection to the plea offered to Jesus in the B section, and signifies Jesus's positive answer to the narrator's request.

The C section is characterized by an *Allegro* tempo that begins with one measure of a second inversion C major chord. This is followed by a section of harmonic planing, which is explained below and shown in Figure 6.13.

¹⁸⁸ *O Salutaris Hostia* by William Mathias © Oxford University Press 1972. Extracts reproduced by permission. All rights reserved.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.


likely have difficulties tuning the pitches. This is especially difficult because the tempo is *Allegro* in many of the chromatic passages.


Figure 6.14. Vocal Ranges is *O Salutaris Hostia*


Range:	
TI Solo	C4 – G4
TI	B \flat 4 – A \flat 4
TII	G3 – G4
BI	C#3 – E4
BII	F#2 – D4


The planing sections are difficult to tune because of the lack of functional harmonic direction and tendency tones. Measure 70 is an example of another planing passage that may be difficult to tune (Figure 6.15).

Figure 6.15. Chromatic Planing – *O Salutaris Hostia* (m. 70)¹⁹²

TI Treble Clef 

TII Treble Clef 

BI Bass Clef 

BII Bass Clef 

Another possible tuning problem is found when the BII voice mirrors the upper three voices, creating a harsh dissonance (Figure 6.16).

¹⁹² *O Salutaris Hostia* by William Mathias © Oxford University Press 1972. Extracts reproduced by permission. All rights reserved.

The image displays a musical score for the piece 'O Salutaris Hostia' by William Mathias, specifically measures 17 through 19. The score is written for four staves, likely representing four vocal parts. The lyrics are 'bel-la pre-munt hos-ti-li-a, bel-la pre-munt hos-ti-li-a, hos-'. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings (e.g., > for accents). The staves are numbered 17, 18, and 19 at the beginning of each line.

The chromaticism, use of planing, and mirroring creates a very different sound compared to that of a piece characterized by traditional harmonies. The contrast of tempo and dynamic add tension and interest to the piece. This is among the works of Mathias that have been sadly neglected from modern performance. This piece is a masterful and intricate piece that showcases Mathias's compositional genius and merits modern performance.

¹⁹³ *O Salutaris Hostia* by William Mathias © Oxford University Press 1972. Extracts reproduced by permission. All rights reserved.

Conclusion

The male voice choir is as important to Wales as rugby. The Welsh male voice choir has a rich history that was begun in hard times in the mining valleys of Wales. In those days choristers worked together, suffered together, and sang together creating an atmosphere of brotherhood. For those involved in the choirs it is a source of expression, and more importantly, of social interaction. Though times are very different now, the close bonds felt by men within a choir are the same. This paper has explored the history of the Welsh male voice choir and how it has been affected by religion, tonic sol-fa notation, the eisteddfod, the Cymanfa Ganu, and even violence. These factors have shaped the Welsh male voice choir throughout the years and contributed to the uniqueness of the genre.

Music literature is also indebted to the Welsh male voice choir. The composers William Mathias, Daniel Protheroe, and Joseph Parry each significantly contributed to the genre. Their compositions have for years provided substantial literature for male choirs in and outside of Wales. Their compositions are worthy of use and offer a substantial yet accessible option for any male voice choir.

There are traceable trends in the genre as a whole, but to truly understand the Welsh male voice choir, one has to observe a choir. The Morryston Orpheus Choir, Treorchy Male Voice Choir, and the Dunvant Male Choir were selected for case studies because they represent quintessential characteristics of a successful and enduring male voice choir. Though it is clear that the Welsh male voice choir faces challenges ahead with ever aging singers, it seems clear that choirs such as Only Men Aloud may ensure

the survival of this unique genre. It is yet to be seen how the genre will evolve to stay current with the time without forgetting its heritage.

Most Welsh male voice choirs allow most anyone to sing in their choir, regardless of age or ability. The Welsh are a fabulous example of how to succeed as a community choir. Their ability to create unity within an ensemble, raise funds, frequently undertake concert tours, and publish CDs is impressive. This genre, rich in history, deep in passion, and beautiful in sound is worthy of the attention of the worldwide musical community, as the small country of Wales truly is the "land of song."

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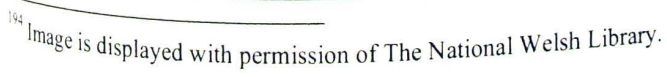
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Curwen's Modulator



Tonic Sol-fa Notation¹⁹⁵MYFANWY
ARABELLAGeiriau Cymraeg: Mynyddog
English Words: CuhelynJoseph Parry (1841 - 1903)
trefn./arr. Dyfed Wyn Edwards

Moderato

Doh: C { :s | d' :- .d' | d' . d' :x' ., d' | d' :t | - :d' | x' :- .x' | x' . x' :m' ., x' | }
 { :s | s :- .s | s . s :s ., s | s :s | - :s | t :- .t | t . t :d' ., t }

S
A
Pa - ham mae dic - ter, O! My - fa - nwy, Yn llen - wi'th ly - gaid du - on
Why shoots wrath's light-ning, A - ra - bel - la, From those jet eyes what clouds thy

T
B
{ :s | m' :- .m' | m' . m' :f' ., m' | m' :x' | - :m' | f' :- .f' | f' . f' :s' ., f' | }
 { :s | d :- .d | d . d :d ., d | s :s | - :s | s :- .s | s . s :s ., s }

Moderato

Piano
(yn arfer yn unig/
rehearsal yn unig)

{ :x' :- d' - | :s | m' :- .m' m' . m' :f' ., m' | m' :x' | - :t . d' | }
 { t :- d' - | :s | d' :- .d' d' . d' :x' ., d' | d' :t | - :s . l }

di, A'th ru - ddiau ti - rion, O! My - fan - wy, Heb -
brow Those cheeks that once with love blush'd on me, Why -

© Hawlfraint 1993 Cyhoeddiadau Curiad

¹⁹⁵ Image used by permission of www.curiad.co.uk. Copyright of the arrangement belongs to Cyhoeddiadau Curiad.

Joseph Parry's Compositions for Male Voice Choir¹⁹⁶

Catalogue Number ¹⁹⁷	Title	Lyricist	Date Composed
6.006	Cupid's Darts	?	
6.016	Man as a Flower	?	[1862]
6.017	Rhowch I mi fy Nghleddyf (<i>Give me my Sword</i>)	?	c. 1863
6.129	Cytgan y Morwyr (Sailor's Chorus)	Mynyddog	c. 1863
6.149	Myfanwy	Mynyddog	c. 1874
6.150	Rhyfelgan y Myncod (War Song of the Monks)	Llew Llwyfo	c. 1875
6.189	Nosgan (Serenade)	Gutyn Arfon	c. 1875
6.206	The Village Blacksmith	Longfellow	c. 1879
6.207	Yr un Hen Stori (The same Old Story)	I. Glan Dwyryd	c. 1881
6.214	Cwch-Gân (Boat Song)	?	1881
6.232	Cytgan y Pererinion (Pilgrim's Chorus)	D. Adams	c. 1883
6.233	Dwynwen	Gwynionydd	c. 1886
6.238	Arianwen	R. Williams	1886
6.243	Y Derwyddon (The Druids)	Alavon	1887
6.262	I Arise from Dreams of thee	Shelly	1890
6.264	The Village Sexton	?	1891
6.267	My Love, Good Morrow	Heywood	1891
6.274	Cymru Fydd (Wales of the Future)	Dewi Môn	c. 1893
6.288	Suo-gân (Lullaby)	?	[1890s]
6.289	Gwen	?	[1890s]
6.320	Iesu o Nazareth (Jesus of Nazareth)	Elfed	1898
6.321	Belshazzar	?	1898
6.355	Annabel Lee	Edgar A. Poe	c. 1898
6.346	A Fantasia of Welsh Airs	Watcyn Wyn	c. 1900
6.347	Fel Gwannaid Blentyn (Like a Sickly Child)	?	1900

¹⁹⁶ Dulais Rhys and Frank Bott, *To Philadelphia and Back: The Life and Music of Joseph Parry* (Llanrwst, Wales: Gwasg Carreg Gwalch, 2010), 262.

¹⁹⁷ Numbers are from Dulais Rhys' Catalogue.

Myfanwy Score

MYFANWY (ARABELLA)

FOUR-PART SONG

For Male Voices

English Words by the late "OURELIX"
Welsh Words by MYRTYDUGmf *Noderato*

Music by JOSEPH PARRY (Mus. Doc. Cantab)

1st TENOR

1. Pa - bam noddig - ler, O: My - fan - wy, Yn llen - wth lly - aid du - on
Why should wrath's lightning, A - ra - bel - la, From those jet eyes what clouds thy
mf

2nd TENOR

2. Pa beth a wneidhum, O: My - fan - wy, I haodd - u gwg dyddwy - rud
What have I done, oh, ere - el sair ear, To met - il eia e ffrwyf
mf

1st BASS

3. My - fan - wy, boed yr all o'rh fyw - yd, Dan' beul - wneid yghar can - ol
Full be thy heart with joy for er - er, May time ailer cy - pher on thy
mf

2nd BASS

Moderato.

PIANO

mf

4

di..... A'b radd - lan tir - lon, O: My - fan - wy, Heb yri - do wrth fy agwedd
brow! These cheeks that once with love burn'd on me, Why do they pale and bloodless

berdd? Ai chwara - ou'r oedd - it, O: My - fan - wy, A thên - en wneidd wrth dy
there? Am I too fond, or art thou fir - klet Or play'd thou but so humble

dydd. A boed i ron - yn gwrid - og ioch - yd I ddawn - rho ganmlwydd ar dy
brow; Through life may beauty's rest and li - ly Dance on thy healthy cheeks as

8

if Pa lo mae'r wân oedd ar dy wof - us Pu'n cyn - on our iad ffyddlon ffol? Pa
now? Why hide those lips that bare my kiss - es? Where lurks the smile that won my heart? Why

fardd? Wyt eidd - o I'm trwy gy - wir am - mod, A'i gor - mod endw'th air I mi? Ni
me? Thou art my own by word and hon - our, And will thou not thy word ful - fil? Thou

rudd; Ang - hol - la'r oll o'th add - e - wid - ion, A wneist i ryw - un en - eth ddel. A
now: For - get thy bro - ken vows, and re - ver Al - low thy wakeful conscience tell That

13

leu mae'n dy eir - iau mel - us Pu'n de - nu ngba - lon ar dy ol?
will be mute, oh, A - ra - bel - la; Speak, love, once more be - fore we part.

syn - af byth ro'th law, My - fan - wy, Hek gael dy ga - lon gyd - a bi.
need'st not frown, oh, A - ra - bel - la, I would not have thee 'gainst thy will.

dy - roth law, My - fan - wy, dir - lon, I ddim ond dweud y gair - Ffa - rwell!
thou did'st e'er mis - lead or wrong me; Oh, A - ra - bel - la, fare thee well.

rall.

p rall.

p rall.

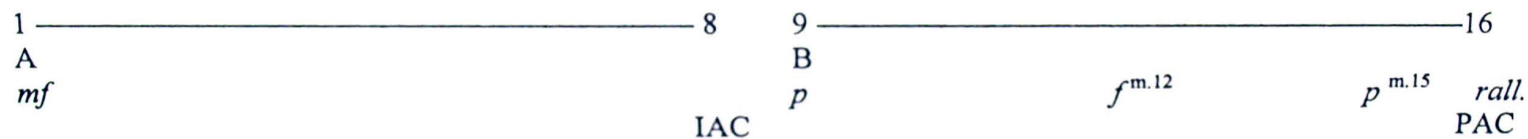
p rall.

p rall.

83

Myfanwy

Range: T1 = Ab3 – Ab4

$$T2 = F3 - Db4$$
$$B1 = Db3 - Ab3$$
$$B2 = F2 - A3$$


* PAC = Perfect Authentic Cadence IAC = Imperfect Authentic Cadence HC = Half Cadence

APPENDIX F

Myfanwy Text and Translation

Why is it anger, O Myfanwy,
 That fills your eyes so dark and clear?
 Your gentle cheeks, O sweet Myfanwy,
 Why blush they not when I draw near?
 Where is the smile that once most tender
 Kindled my love so fond, so true?
 Where is the sound of your sweet words,
 That drew my heart to follow you?

What have I done, O my Myfanwy,
 To earn your frown? What is my blame?
 Was it just play, my sweet Myfanwy,
 To set your poet's love aflame?
 You truly once to me were promised,
 Is it too much to keep your part?
 I wish no more your hand, Myfanwy,
 If I no longer have your heart.

Myfanwy, may you spend your lifetime
 Beneath the midday sunshine's glow,
 And on your cheeks O may the roses
 Dance for a hundred years or so.
 Forget now all the words of promise
 You made to one who loved you well,
 Give me your hand, my sweet Myfanwy,
 But one last time, to say "farewell".

Original Welsh Text by "Mynyddog" Richard
 Davies

Paham mae dicter, O Myfanwy,
 Yn llenwi'th lygaid duon ddi?
 A'th ruddiau tirion, O Myfanwy,
 Heb wrido wrth fy ngweled i?
 Pa le mae'r wen oedd ar dy wefus
 Fu'n cynnau 'nghariad ffyddlon ffol?
 Pa le mae sain dy eiriau melys,
 Fu'n denu'n nghalon ar dy Ûl?

Pa beth a wneuthym, O Myfanwy,
 I haeddu gwg dy ddwyrdd hardd?
 Ai chwarae oeddit, O Myfanwy
 A thanau euraidd serch dy fardd?
 Wyt eiddo im drwy gywir amod
 Ai gormod cadw'th air i mi?
 Ni cheisiaf fyth mo'th law, Myfanwy,
 Heb gael dy galon gyda hi.

Myfanwy boed yr holl o'th fywyd
 Dan heulwen disglair canol dydd.
 A boed i rosyn gwridog ienctid
 I ddawnsio ganmlwydd ar dy rudd.
 Aug hofiar oll o'th add ewidion
 A wnest i rywun, 'ngeneth ddel,
 A rho dy law, Myfanwy dirion
 I ddim ond dweud y gair "Ffarwel".

English Translation by Lynne Davies

APPENDIX G

Daniel Protheroe's Works for Male Voice Choir

(This list is not exhaustive)

A Moorish Serenade 1915
 A Song of Araby 1909
 A Vagabond Song 1917
 A Welsh Lullaby 1916
 Castilla 1911
 From the Desert 1903
 If I But Knew You
 Invictus
 Nidaros
 Shadow March 1916
 Spanish Gold
 The Bells of Aberdovey 1925
 The Crusaders 1896
 The High Road and the Low Road
 The Land o' the Leal 1909
 The Minstrels (The Singers)
 The Old Minstrel
 The Pilot 1917
 The Victory 1915
 To Me Thou Art a Flower 1907

Hallelujah (from Messiah) By George F. Handel, arranged for
 TTBB by Daniel Protheroe.

Thanks Be to God (Elijah) By Mendelssohn, arranged for
 TTBB by Daniel Protheroe.

The Charge of the Light Brigade By Alfred Hiles Bergen, arranged for TTBB by Daniel
 Protheroe; words by Tennyson. Published by Gamble Hinged, 1914.

Laudamus Score

To the Associated Glee Clubs of America

Laudamus

(BRYN CALFARIA)
(WELSH CHORALE)

Welsh Words by
Pantycelyn

Chorus of Men's Voices

Melody by
William Owen
(Prysgol)

Arranged by Daniel Protheroe

Moderato espressivo

Tenor I

Tenor II

Bass I

Bass II

Moderato espressivo

Piano

Un - to Thee all praise be giv - en, King of Kings and Lord of
Gwaed Dy Groes sy'n co - di' fyn - y 'Reidd - il yn gon - cwer - wr

Un - to Thee all praise be giv - en, King of Kings and Lord of
Gwaed Dy Groes sy'n co - di' fyn - y 'Reidd - il yn gon - cwer - wr

Un - to Thee all praise be giv - en, King of Kings and Lord of
Gwaed Dy Groes sy'n co - di' fyn - y 'Reidd - il yn gon - cwer - wr

Un - to Thee all praise be giv - en, King of Kings and Lord of
Gwaed Dy Groes sy'n co - di' fyn - y 'Reidd - il yn gon - cwer - wr

10

Lords: Heav'n and earth pro-claim Thy glo-ry, And the won-ders of Thy
 mawr: Gwaed y Groes sydd yn dar - o - stwng Cew-ri ced - yrn fyrdd i

Lords: Heav'n and earth pro-claim Thy glo-ry, And the won-ders of Thy
 mawr: Gwaed y Groes sydd yn dar - o - stwng Cew-ri ced - yrn fyrdd i

Lords: Heav'n and earth pro-claim Thy glo-ry, And the won-ders of Thy
 mawr: Gwaed y Groes sydd yn dar - o - stwng Cew-ri ced - yrn fyrdd i

Lords: Heav'n and earth pro-claim Thy glo-ry, And the won-ders of Thy
 mawr: Gwaed y Groes sydd yn dar - o - stwng Cew-ri ced - yrn fyrdd i



14

f

works. Songs of prais - es, Songs of prais - es,
 lawr. Gād im' deim - lo, Gād im' deim - lo,

p

works. Songs of prais - es, Songs of prais - es,
 lawr. Gād im' deim - lo, Gād im' deim - lo,

p

works. Songs of prais - es, Songs of prais - es,
 lawr. Gād im' deim - lo, Gād im' deim - lo,

p

works. Songs of prais - es, Songs of prais - es,
 lawr. Gād im' deim - lo, Gād im' deim - lo,

f



5

Songs of prais - es
Gad im' deim - lo

We will give Thee ev - er - more.
A - wel o Gal - far - ia fryn. We will
A - wel

Songs of prais - es
Gad im' deim - lo

We will give Thee ev - er - more.
A - wel o Gal - far - ia fryn. We will
A - wel

Songs of prais - es
Gad im' deim - lo

We will give Thee ev - er - more.
A - wel o Gal - far - ia fryn. We will
A - wel

Songs of prais - es
Gad im' deim - lo

We will give Thee ev - er - more.
A - wel o Gal - far - ia fryn. We will
A - wel

20

give Thee ev - er - more.
O Gal - far - ia fryn.

In Thy
Cym - er,
p a tempo

give Thee ev - er - more.
O Gal - far - ia fryn.

In Thy
Cym - er,
p a tempo

give Thee ev - er - more.
O Gal - far - ia fryn.

In Thy
Cym - en
mf a tempo

give Thee ev - er - more.
O Gal - far - ia fryn.

In Thy
Cym - er,
a tempo

rall. *a tempo*

24 *espress*

mer-cy Thou dost save us, And from harm Thou'lt keep us free: When temp-
 Je - su, fi fel'r yd-wyf, Fyth ni all - af fod yn well; D'all - u

mer-cy Thou dost save us, And from harm Thou'lt keep us free: When temp-
 Je - su, fi fel'r yd-wyf, Fyth ni all - af fod yn well; D'all - u

mer-cy Thou dost save us, And from harm Thou'lt keep us free: When temp-
 Je - su, fi fel'r yd-wyf, Fyth ni all - af fod yn well; D'all - u

mer-cy Thou dost save us, And from harm Thou'lt keep us free: When temp-
 Je - su, fi fel'r yd-wyf, Fyth ni all - af fod yn well; D'all - u

espress

28

ta-tions dire as - sail us, We shall al - ways look to Thee.
 Di a'm gwna yn a - gos, F'ewylllys i yw myn'd yn mhell.

ta-tions dire as - sail us, We shall al - ways look to Thee.
 Di a'm gwna yn a - gos, F'ewylllys i yw myn'd yn mhell.

ta-tions dire as - sail us, We shall al - ways look to Thee.
 Di a'm gwna yn a - gos, F'ewylllys i yw myn'd yn mhell.

ta-tions dire as - sail us, We shall al - ways look to Thee.
 Di a'm gwna yn a - gos, F'ewylllys i yw myn'd yn mhell.

Handwritten musical score for a hymn titled "Songs of Praise". The score is written in G major (one sharp, F#) and 4/4 time. It consists of five vocal staves and a piano accompaniment at the bottom.

The lyrics are:

Songs of praise - es,
Yn Dy glwy - fau,

Songs of praise - es,
Yn Dy glwy - fau,

Songs of praise - es,
Yn Dy glwy - fau,

Songs of praise - es,
Yn Dy glwy - fau,

Songs of praise - es,
Yn Dy glwy - fau,

The piano accompaniment at the bottom features a simple melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand, with some chords and single notes.

We will give Thee ev - er - more. We will give Thee ev - er -
 Bydd - ai'n un - ig fyth yn iach. Bydd - ai'n un - ig fyth yn

We will give Thee ev - er - more. We will give Thee ev - er -
 Bydd - ai'n un - ig fyth yn iach. Bydd - ai'n un - ig fyth yn

We will give Thee ev - er - more. We will give Thee ev - er -
 Bydd - ai'n un - ig fyth yn iach. Bydd - ai'n un - ig fyth yn

We will give Thee ev - er - more. We will give Thee ev - er -
 Bydd - ai'n un - ig fyth yn iach. Bydd - ai'n un - ig fyth yn

rit

38

more.
iach.

more.
iach.

more.
iach.

more.
iach.

a tempo

42

f

In Thy pow'r we ev - er glo - ry, In Thy strength we shall en -
Ym-ddir-ied - af yn Dy all - u, Mawr yw'r gwaith a wnest er -

f

In Thy pow'r we ev - er glo - ry, In Thy strength we shall en -
Ym-ddir-ied - af yn Dy all - u, Mawr yw'r gwaith a wnest er -

f

In Thy pow'r we ev - er glo - ry, In Thy strength we shall en -
Ym-ddir-ied - af yn Dy all - u, Mawr yw'r gwaith a wnest er -

f

In Thy pow'r we ev - er glo - ry, In Thy strength we shall en -
Ym-ddir-ied - af yn Dy all - u, Mawr yw'r gwaith a wnest er -

f

46 *cresc*

dure: Lean-ing on Thy gra-cious mer - cy, And Thy pre - cious love so
ioed; *Ti g'est ang - eu, Ti g'est u - ffern, Ti g'est Sa - tan dân Dy*

dure: Lean-ing on Thy gra-cious mer - cy, And Thy pre - cious love so
ioed; *Ti g'est ang - eu, Ti g'est u - ffern, Ti g'est Sa - tan dân Dy*

dure: Lean-ing on Thy gra-cious mer - cy, And Thy pre - cious love so
ioed; *Ti g'est ang - eu, Ti g'est u - ffern, Ti g'est Sa - tan dân Dy*

dure: Lean-ing on Thy gra-cious mer - cy, And Thy pre - cious love so
ioed; *Ti g'est ang - eu, Ti g'est u - ffern, Ti g'est Sa - tan dân Dy*

cresc

50 *cresc*

pure. Songs of prais - es, Songs of prais - es,
droed. *Pen Cal-far - ia, Pen Cal-far - ia,*

pure. Songs of prais - es, Songs of prais - es,
droed. *Pen Cal-far - ia, Pen Cal-far - ia,*

pure. Songs of prais - es, Songs of prais - es,
droed. *Pen Cal-far - ia, Pen Cal-far - ia,*

pure. Songs of prais - es, Songs of prais - es,
droed. *Pen Cal-far - ia, Pen Cal-far - ia,*

cresc

10 53

ff rit

Songs of prais - es We will give Thee ev - er - more. *Largamente*
 Pen Cal-far - ia, *Nac aed* *hw - nro byth om* *cof.* *Nac aed*

Songs of prais - es We will give Thee ev - er - more. *We will*
 Pen Cal-far - ia, *rit Nac aed* *hw - nro byth om* *cof.* *Nac aed*

Songs of prais - es We will give Thee ev - er - more. *We will*
 Pen Cal-far - ia, *ff rit Nac aed* *hw - nro byth om* *cof.* *Nac aed*

Songs of prais - es We will give Thee ev - er - more. *We will*
 Pen Cal-far - ia, *Nac aed* *hw - nro byth om* *cof.* *Nac aed*

ff rit *Largamente*

56

give Thee ev - er - more. We will give Thee ev - er - more.—
hw - nro byth om cof. *Nac aed* *hw - nro byth om cof.*

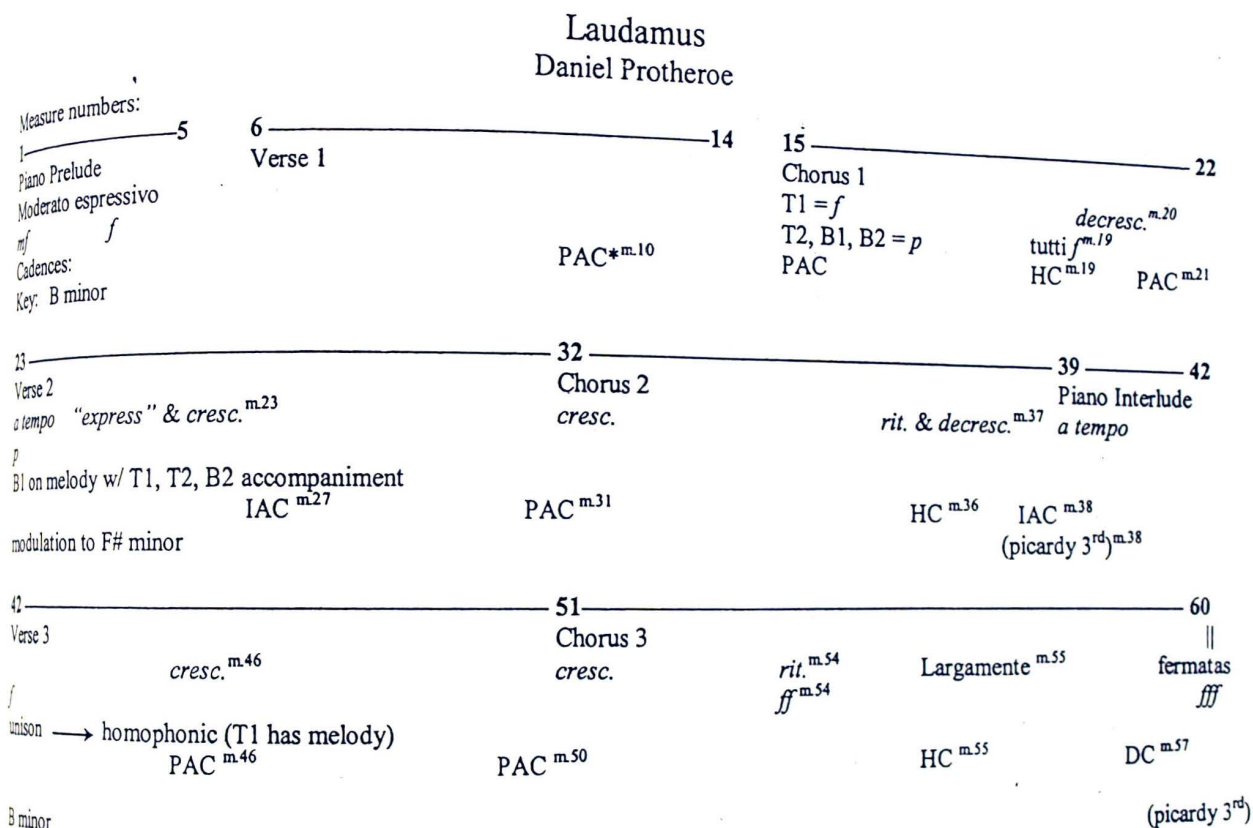
give Thee ev - er - more. We will give Thee ev - er - more.—
hw - nro byth om cof. *Nac aed* *hw - nro byth om cof.*

give Thee ev - er - more. We will give Thee ev - er - more.—
hw - nro byth om cof. *Nac aed* *hw - nro byth om cof.*

give Thee ev - er - more. We will give Thee ev - er - more.—
hw - nro byth om cof. *Nac aed* *hw - nro byth om cof.*

APPENDIX I

Laudamus Diagram



* PAC = Perfect Authentic Cadence IAC = Imperfect Authentic Cadence HC = Half Cadence DC = Deceptive Cadence

* PAC = Perfect Authentic Cadence IAC = Imperfect Authentic Cadence HC = Half Cadence
DC = Deceptive Cadence

APPENDIX J

Male Voice Choral Works of William Mathias
(This list is not exhaustive)

Gloria 1970
Gweddi'r Arglwydd [The Lord's Prayer] 1992
Nos a Bore 1959
O salutaris hostia 1969
Salve Regina,
The Lord's Prayer (Gweddi'r Arglwydd) 1994
Y Pren ar y Bryn
Y Sipsiwn 1960.
Yr Arglwydd yw fy mugail [The Lord is My Shepherd] 1989

O Salutaris Hostia Score¹⁹⁸

The Oxford Choral Songs

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS • MUSIC DEPARTMENT • 44 CONDUIT STREET • LONDON, W1R 0DE

M18
T. T. B. B.
(unacc.)

Commissioned by the Rhos Orpheus Male Voice Choir
with funds provided by the Welsh Arts Council

O Salutaris Hostia

William Mathias
(Op. 48)

Lento assai

pp espressivo

Tenor I *pp espressivo* O Sa-lu-ta-ris

Tenor II *pp espressivo* O Sa-lu-ta-ris Hos-ti-a,

Bass I *pp espressivo* O Sa-lu-ta-ris Hos-ti-a,

Bass II *pp espressivo* O Sa-lu-ta-ris Hos-ti-a,

5 *p* Hos-ti-a, Hos-ti-a, Quae coe-li pan-dis os-ti-um: quae

p Quae coe-li pan-dis os-ti-um: quae

p Quae coe-li pan-dis os-ti-um: quae

p Ah

9

coe - li pan - dis os - ti - um, O Sa - lu - ta - ris Hos - ti - a.

coe - li pan - dis os - ti - um, O Sa - lu - ta - ris Hos - ti - a.

coe - li pan - dis os - ti - um, O Sa - lu - ta - ris Hos - ti - a.

Ah O Sa - lu - ta - ris Hos - ti - a.

13 **Allegro agitato**

Bel - la, bel - la pre - munt hos - ti - li - a, -

Bel - la, bel - la pre - munt hos - ti - li - a, -

Bel - la, bel - la pre - munt hos - ti - li - a, -

Bel - la, bel - la pre - munt hos - ti - li - a, -

17

bel - la pre - munt hos - ti - li - a, bel - la pre - munt hos - ti - li - a, hos -

bel - la pre - munt hos - ti - li - a, bel - la pre - munt hos - ti - li - a, hos -

bel - la pre - munt hos - ti - li - a, bel - la pre - munt hos - ti - li - a, hos -

bel - la pre - munt hos - ti - li - a, bel - la pre - munt hos - ti - li - a, hos -

O Salutaris Hostia (M18)

20

ff

-ti-li-a, hos-ti-li-a, Da ro-bur. fer aux-il-i-um.

-ti-li-a, hos-ti-li-a, Da ro-bur, fer aux-il-i-um.

-ti-li-a, hos-ti-li-a, Da ro-bur, fer aux-

-ti-li-a, hos-ti-li-a, Da ro-bur,

24 poco a poco rit. -

dim. *mf* *mp* *p*

fer aux-il-i-um, fer aux-il-i-um. O

dim. *mf* *mp*

fer aux-il-i-um, fer aux-il-i-um.

dim. *mf* *mp*

-il-i-um, fer aux-il-i-um, fer aux-il-i-um.

dim. *mf* *mp*

fer aux-il-i-um, fer aux-il-i-um, fer aux-il-i-um.

28 (rit.)

p *pp*

Sa-lu-ta-ris Hos-ti-a, O Sa-lu-ta-ris Hos-ti-a.

p *pp*

p *pp*

Allegro ritmico

33 *p* *cresc.*
 U - no tri - no - que Do - mi - no, — U - no tri - no - que
p *cresc.*
 U - no tri - no - que Do - mi - no, — U - no tri - no - que
p *cresc.*
 U - no tri - no - que Do - mi - no, — U - no tri - no - que
p *cresc.*
 U - no tri - no - que Do - mi - no, — U - no tri - no - que

36 *mf*
 Do - mi - no, — Sit sem - pi - ter - na glo - ri - a, Sit sem - pi -
mf
 Do - mi - no, —
mf
 Do - mi - no, — Sit sem - pi - ter - na glo - ri - a, Sit
mf
 Do - mi - no, —

40
 - ter - na glo - ri - a, sit sem - pi - ter - na glo
 sem - pi - ter - na glo - ri - a, sit sem - pi - ter - na glo -

rit. -

100

44

a tempo (Allegro)

U - no tri - no - que

U - no tri - no - que

U - no tri - no - que

U - no tri - no - que

48

cresc.

Do - mi - no, — U - no tri - no - que Do - mi - no, —

Do - mi - no, — U - no tri - no - que Do - mi - no, —

Do - mi - no, — U - no tri - no - que Do - mi - no, —

Do - mi - no, — U - no tri - no - que Do - mi - no, —

51

U - no tri - no - que Do - mi - no, — Quae vi - tam

U - no tri - no - que Do - mi - no, — Quae vi - tam

U - no tri - no - que Do - mi - no, — Quae

U - no tri - no - que Do - mi - no, — Quae

54

si - ne ter - mi - no, No - bis do - net in - pa.

si - ne ter - mi - no, No - bis do - net in - pa.

vi - tam si - ne ter - mi - no, No - bis do - net in pa -

vi - tam si - ne ter - mi - no, No - bis do - net in pa -

57

tri - a, Quae vi - tam si - ne ter - mi - no

tri - a, Quae vi - tam si - ne ter - mi - no

tri - a, Quae vi - tam si - ne ter -

tri - a, Quae vi - tam si - ne ter -

60

rit. - - - a tempo (Allegro)

No - bis do - net in pa - tri - a. U - no tri - no - que

No - bis do - net in pa - tri - a. U - no tri - no - que

mi - no No - bis do - net in pa - tri - a. U - no tri - no - que

mi - no No - bis do - net in pa - tri - a. U - no tri - no - que

64 *cresc.* *mf*

Do - mi - no, — U - no tri - no - que Do - mi - no, —

cresc. *mf*

Do - mi - no, — U - no tri - no - que Do - mi - no, —

cresc. *mf*

Do - mi - no, — U - no tri - no - que Do - mi - no, —

cresc. *mf*

Do - mi - no, — U - no tri - no - que Do - mi - no, —

67 *f*

U - no tri - no - que Do - mi - no, — Do - mi - no, — Do -

f

U - no tri - no - que Do - mi - no, — Do - mi - no, — Do -

f

U - no tri - no - que Do - mi - no, — Do - mi - no, — Do -

f

U - no tri - no - que Do - mi - no, — Do - mi - no, —

71 *ff* *Lento* *pp*

mi - no, — U - no tri - no - que

ff *pp*

mi - no, — U - no tri - no - que

ff *pp*

mi - no, — U - no tri - no - que

ff *pp*

Do - mi - no, — U - no tri - no - que

76 1 Solo Tenor *p* (poco)

O Sa-lu-ta-ris Hos-ti-a, O Sa-lu-ta-ris

Tenor I

Do-mi-no, Qui vi-tam si-ne ter-mi-no No-bis

Tenor II

Do-mi-no, Qui vi-tam si-ne ter-mi-no No-bis

Bass I

Do-mi-no, Qui vi-tam si-ne ter-mi-no No-bis

Bass II

Do-mi-no, Qui vi-tam si-ne ter-mi-no No-bis

81

Hos-ti-a,

do-net in pa-tri-a, O Sa-lu-ta-ris Hos-ti-a. *HP*

do-net in pa-tri-a, O Sa-lu-ta-ris Hos-ti-a. *HP*

do-net in pa-tri-a, O Sa-lu-ta-ris Hos-ti-a. *HP*

do-net in pa-tri-a, O Sa-lu-ta-ris Hos-ti-a. *HP*

APPENDIX L

O Salutaris Hostia

Text and Translation

O salutaris hostia
quae coeli pandis ostium,
bella premunt hostilia:
da robur, fer auxilium

Uno trinoque Domino
sit sempiterna gloria,
quae vitam sine termino
nobis donet in patria.

O saving victim
who opens the gate of heaven,
hostile wars press on us:
give strength, bring aid.

To the Lord, three in one,
be everlasting glory,
for life without end
he gives us in (his) Kingdom.

O Salutaris Hostia
William Mathias

Measures:	1	12	13	32
Form:	A			
Key:	A minor	Eb		
Tempo:	Lento assai	Allegro agitato	poco a poco rit ^{m.24}	
Dynamics:	<i>pp</i>	<i>f</i>		<i>pp</i>
33	46	47	62	63
B		B'		B''
C major		C major		C major
Allegro ritmico	fermata	Allegro		Allegro
<i>P</i>	<i>ff</i>	<i>mp</i>	<i>ff</i>	<i>mp</i>
73	74	86		
	A'			
	C major			
	Lento			
<i>F</i> ^{m.67}	<i>ff</i> ^{m.71}	<i>ppp</i> ^{m.83}		
	<i>pp</i>			