Adeste fideles

Christmas Music from Westminster Cathedral

WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL CHOIR
IAIN SIMCOCK organ
JAMES O’DONNELL

hyperion
1. O come, all ye faithful † [3’50]
   ‘Adeste fideles’ by John Francis Wade (c1711–1786); final verse descant by Philip Ledger (b1937)

2. Gabriel’s Message [2’54]
   Basque carol, arranged by EDGAR PETTMAN (1866–1943)

3. O come, O come, Emmanuel † [3’25]
   ‘Veni, Emmanuel’, anonymous fifteenth century, adapted by THOMAS HELMORE (1811–1890) and JAMES O’DONNELL (b1961)

4. Once in royal David’s city † [4’28]
   ‘Irby’ by HENRY JOHN GAUNTLETT (1805–1876), arranged by ARTHUR HENRY MANN (1850–1929); third verse harmony, final verse harmony and descant by JAMES O’DONNELL (b1961)

5. Ding dong! merrily on high [1’52]
   Sixteenth-century French tune, harmonized by CHARLES WOOD (1866–1926)

6. A maiden most gentle † [2’46]
   French tune, arranged by ANDREW CARTER (b1939)

7. I wonder as I wander [3’11]
   Appalachian folk carol, arranged by ANDREW CARTER (b1939)

8. O little town of Bethlehem † [3’27]
   ‘The ploughboy’s dream’, arranged by RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS (1872–1958) as ‘Forest Green’; final verse harmonized with descant by IAIN SIMCOCK

9. In the bleak mid-winter † [4’55]
   HAROLD DARKE (1888–1976)

10. In dulci jubilo [3’52]
    Old German melody, arranged by ROBERT LUCAS PEARSON (1795–1856)

11. The Three Kings [2’28]
    No 3 of Weihnachtslieder, Op 8 by PETER CORNELIUS (1824–1874), arranged by SIR IVOR ATKINS (1869–1953)

12. Of the Father’s love begotten † [3’55]
    ‘Divinum mysterium’, anonymous thirteenth century, adapted by THEODORICUS PETRUS (1582) and JAMES O’DONNELL (b1961)

13. Away in a manger [2’43]
    ‘Cradle song’ by WILLIAM JAMES KIRKPATRICK (1838–1921); harmony and final verse descant by PHILIP MOORE (b1943)

    PETER WARLOCK (1894–1930)

15. The holly and the ivy [3’23]
    Traditional tune arranged by SIR HENRY WALFORD DAVIES (1869–1941)

16. I sing of a maiden † [3’10]
    PATRICK HADLEY (1889–1973)

17. Silent night [3’31]
    FRANZ GRÜBER (1787–1863), arranged by STEPHEN DARLINGTON

18. Sing lullaby [3’21]
    No 3 of Three Carol-Anthems by HERBERT HOWELLS (1892–1983)

19. The Lamb [3’34]
    JOHN TAVENER (b1944)

20. Welcome, Yule! [1’12]
    SIR C HUBERT PARRY (1848–1918)

21. Hark! the herald angels sing † [3’05]
    ‘Mendelssohn’ by FELIX MENDELSSOHN (1809–1847); final verse harmonized with descant by PHILIP LEDGER (b1937)

THE CHOIR OF WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL
with IAIN SIMCOCK organ †
JAMES O’DONNELL The Master of Music
THE CAROL has had a long and varied history in all Christian countries in the west, particularly at Christmastide, but in its early days it had no connection with Christmas or even with Christianity. The French word carole means a round-dance, and the early carol consisted of verses and refrains, the former being entrusted to a soloist, the latter involving everybody present. During the refrain the singers would link hands, men and women alternately, and dance round in a circle. Some carols were used for secular purposes, others to celebrate pagan feasts. Needless to say, the medieval church frowned on this overt heathenry, but its leaders, acknowledging their powerlessness to put an end to the Roman Saturnalia and the winter solstice, took them over, lumped them together, and called them Christmas. Some of the old pagan carols, provided with new words and a Christian message, were also appropriated, and the genre of the Christmas carol was born.

Still, however, secular carols were sung. ‘The Agincourt Carol’, written to commemorate the victory of Henry V’s small army over the forces of France in 1415, has a solid strength and rhythmic vitality; while ‘The Boar’s Head Carol’, published in 1521, proclaims good cheer as a component of Christmas joy. In the first half of the seventeenth century, during the Civil War and the Commonwealth, the carol in Britain more or less fell into disuse, but two centuries later the Victorians revived it, producing foursquare hymn-like examples in which the congregation would join. In 1919, when King’s College, Cambridge, initiated the now familiar Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, the way was prepared for a gradual improvement of standards, and the carol was more specifically associated with Christmas. At King’s, as on the present recording, all types of carol are represented—the straightforward hymn tunes which appear in Victorian hymnals, but with new descants and sometimes alternative harmonies added; the traditional carol based on folk material or plainsong, more or less elaborately and imaginatively arranged; and the original composition.

O come, all ye faithful
O come, all ye faithful is a hymn on the Prose for Christmas Day and should properly be sung between the Gradual and the Gospel. The original words and melody are attributed to John Francis Wade (1711–1786) who was a member of the teaching staff of the Roman Catholic English College at Douai, a French town on the river Scarpe in the Nord department. The text was first printed in the 1760 edition of Evening Offices of the Church, the tune in Samuel Webbe’s An Essay on the Church Plain Chant, published in 1782. The present descant is by Philip Ledger.

O come, all ye faithful,  
Joyful and triumphant,  
O come, ye, O come ye to Bethlehem.  
Come and behold him  
Born the King of Angels:  
O come let us adore him,  
O come let us adore him,  
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!  
God of God,  
Light of Light,  
Lo! he abhors not the virgin’s womb;  
Very God,  
Begotten, not created:  
O come let us adore him,  
O come let us adore him,  
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!  
See how the shepherds,  
 Summoned to his cradle,  
Leaving their flocks, draw nigh with lowly fear;  
We too will thither  
Bend our joyful footsteps:
O come let us adore him,
O come let us adore him,
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

Sing choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing all ye citizens of heaven above;
Glory to God
In the highest:
O come let us adore him,
O come let us adore him,
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

JOHN FRANCIS WADE (c1711–1786), translated by FREDERICK OAKLEY (1802–1880) and WILLIAM THOMAS BROOKE (1848–1917)

2 Gabriel's Message
The Reverend Sabine Baring-Gould (1834–1924) was a prolific novelist, a writer on travel and mythology, a collector of folk songs and, from 1881, the rector of Lewtrenchard in Devon. It was he who wrote the words of Onward, Christian soldiers, so solidly set to music by Arthur Sullivan, and he devised both the words and the music of the gentler Now the day is over. Baring-Gould seems to have had numerous children—though the delightful stories circulating about his forgetfulness in his latter years (“Whose little girl are you, my dear?” “Yours, daddy”’) are almost certainly apocryphal. The tune of Gabriel’s Message is an old Basque noël, arranged here by Edgar Pettman.

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head. ‘To me be as it pleaseth God,’ she said. ‘My soul shall laud and magnify his holy name.’ ‘Most highly favour’d lady.’ Gloria.

Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born
In Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say—
‘Most highly favour’d lady.’ Gloria.

SABINE BARING-GOULD (1834–1924)

3 O come, O come, Emmanuel
O come, O come, Emmanuel is an Advent carol, a fervent plea to the Saviour to come and redeem mankind in accordance with the Old Testament prophecies, with, at the close of each verse, a brief refrain rejoicing in the message those prophecies convey. The words, written in Cologne in 1710 and translated by T A Lacey (1853–1931), are based on ancient Advent antiphons. The melody is from a fifteenth-century French Franciscan Processional kept in the National Library in Paris, adapted by Thomas Helmore (1811–1890) and freely arranged by James O’Donnell. The spirit is one of quiet assurance and timeless devotion.

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head. ‘To me be as it pleaseth God,’ she said. ‘My soul shall laud and magnify his holy name.’ ‘Most highly favour’d lady.’ Gloria.

Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born
In Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say—
‘Most highly favour’d lady.’ Gloria.

SABINE BARING-GOULD (1834–1924)
O come, thou Root of Jesse! Draw
The quarry from the lion’s claw;
From those dread caverns of the grave,
From nether hell, thy people save.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Lord of David’s Key!
The royal door fling wide and free;
Safeguard for us the heavenward road,
And bar the way to death’s abode.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, O come, thou Dayspring bright!
Pour on our souls thy healing light;
Dispel the long night’s lingering gloom,
And pierce the shadows of the tomb.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

ANCIENT ADVENT ANTIPHONS, Cologne 1710,
translated by THOMAS ALEXANDER LACEY (1853–1931)

4 Once in royal David’s city
Henry John Gauntlett (1805–1876) was a lawyer turned
organist and organ designer, and an authority on
Gregorian chant. In the late 1840s, when he was organist
of the Union Chapel in Islington, north London, he ran a
class in which, for due remuneration, he taught more
than two hundred members of the thousand-strong con-
gregation not only the musical items they were expected to
sing, but also the choir anthems in which they regularly
participated. His claim to have composed ten thousand
hymn tunes is questionable, but he certainly wrote a vast
number, of which a mere handful have found their way
into the standard hymnals. They include ‘St Fulbert’
(Ye choirs of new Jerusalem), ‘St Albinus’ (Jesus lives!
thy terrors now) and ‘Iryb’ (Once in royal David’s city).
The present harmonization is not Gauntlett’s, however,
but that of Arthur Henry Mann (1850–1929), who was
organist of King’s College, Cambridge, for more than fifty
years and presided over the music in the first Festival of
Nine Lessons and Carols in 1919. The words are by
the redoubtable Mrs Cecil Frances Alexander, wife of
a sometime Primate of All Ireland. This is a striking
example of Victorian hymnody. The descants and alter-
native harmonies are by James O’Donnell.

soloist MARK KENNEDY treble

Once in royal David’s city
Stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby
In a manger for his bed.
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child.
He came down to earth from heaven
Who is God and Lord of all,
And his shelter was a stable,
And his cradle was a stall.
With the poor and mean and lowly
Lived on earth our Saviour holy.
And through all his wondrous childhood
He would honour and obey,
Love and watch the lowly maiden
In whose gentle arms he lay.
Christian children all must be
Mild, obedient, good as he.
And our eyes at last shall see him,
Through his own redeeming love,
For that child so dear and gentle
Is our Lord in heaven above;
And he leads his children on
To the place where he is gone.
Not in that poor lowly stable
With the oxen standing by
We shall see him; but in heaven
Set at God’s right hand on high.
When like stars his children crowned
All in white shall wait around.

CECIL FRANCES ALEXANDER (1818–1895)

5 Ding dong! merrily on high
The present setting of *Ding dong! merrily on high* is the well-known one with words by G R Woodward and a catchy sixteenth-century French tune harmonized by Charles Wood. The tune is taken from a dance manual called *Orchésographie*, published in Langres in 1588 by a canon named Jehan Tabourot, who used as a pseudonym the anagrammatic form, Thoinot Arbeau. In the book the dance is described as a ‘branle de l’official’—implying particular vibrancy and exuberance. Charles Wood (1866–1926) was a product of the Royal College of Music and studied composition with Sir Charles Villiers Stanford whom he succeeded as professor of music at Cambridge in 1924. Vaughan Williams was among his pupils. His best-known pieces are his anthems, which include *O Thou the central Orb* and *Expectans expectavi*.

Ding dong! merrily on high in heav’n the bells are ringing:
Ding dong! verily the sky is riv’n with angels singing.
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!
E’en so here below, below, let steeple bells be swungen,
And ‘io, io, io’ by priest and people sungen.
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!
Pray you, dutifully prime your matin chime, ye ringers:
May you beautifully rime your evetime song, ye singers.
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!

GEORGE RATCLIFFE WOODWARD (1848–1934)

6 A maiden most gentle
It was The Venerable Bede, the English divine who entered a monastery at the age of seven and later made his mark as priest, theologian, scientist and historian, who wrote the original words of *A maiden most gentle*. The present paraphrase is the work of Andrew Carter, who has set his version to a traditional French melody, adding a sparkling organ accompaniment to alternate verses. His arrangement perfectly catches the mood of the simple Christmas scene and accommodates unaccompanied singing and plenty of contrast between tenors and basses on the one hand and trebles and altos on the other.

A maiden most gentle and tender we sing;
Of Mary the mother of Jesus our King.
Ave Maria.

How blessed is the birth of her heavenly child,
Who came to redeem us in Mary so mild.
Ave Maria.

The Archangel Gabriel foretold by his call
The Lord of Creation, and Saviour of all.
Ave Maria.

Three kings came to worship with gifts rich and rare,
And marvelled in awe at the babe in her care.
Ave Maria.

Rejoice and be glad at this Christmas we pray;
Sing praise to the Saviour, sing endless ‘Ave’.
Ave Maria.

THE VENERABLE BEDE (673–735),
paraphrased by ANDREW CARTER (b1939)

7 I wonder as I wander
In the first decade or so of the twentieth century John Jacob Niles was collecting songs of the North American Indians in and around the Appalachian mountains. He later published them in a book entitled *Songs of the Hill-Folk*. *I wonder as I wander* is from North Carolina, one of the original thirteen states of the Union, and its modality proclaims its folk origins. The present unaccompanied version is by Andrew Carter.

A maiden most gentle and tender we sing;
Of Mary the mother of Jesus our King.
Ave Maria.

How blessed is the birth of her heavenly child,
Who came to redeem us in Mary so mild.
Ave Maria.

The Archangel Gabriel foretold by his call
The Lord of Creation, and Saviour of all.
Ave Maria.

Three kings came to worship with gifts rich and rare,
And marvelled in awe at the babe in her care.
Ave Maria.

Rejoice and be glad at this Christmas we pray;
Sing praise to the Saviour, sing endless ‘Ave’.
Ave Maria.

THE VENERABLE BEDE (673–735),
paraphrased by ANDREW CARTER (b1939)
I wonder as I wander, out under the sky,
How Jesus the Saviour did come for to die
For poor orn’ry people like you and like I
I wonder as I wander, out under the sky.

When Mary birthed Jesus all in a cow’s stall,
Came wise men and farmers and shepherds and all.
But high from God’s heaven a star’s light did fall,
And the promise of ages it then did recall.

If Jesus had wanted for any wee thing,
A star in the sky, or a bird on the wing,
All of God’s angels in heav’n for to sing,
He surely could have it, for he was the King.

O little town of Bethlehem

The words of O little town of Bethlehem are by Phillips Brooks, a nineteenth-century bishop of Massachusetts renowned for his inspired preaching. Vaughan Williams set the carol to an English traditional melody, ‘The ploughboy’s dream’, which he re-titled ‘Forest Green’. The last verse descant and alternative harmony are by Iain Simcock, at present Assistant Master of Music at Westminster Cathedral.

O little town of Bethlehem,
   How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
   The silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
   The everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
   Are met in thee tonight.

O morning stars, together
   Proclaim the holy birth
And praises sing to God the King,
   And peace to men on earth;
For Christ is born of Mary;
   And, gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
   Their watch of wonder love.

How silently, how silently
   The wond’rous gift is giv’n!
So God imparts to human hearts
   The blessings of his heav’n.
No ear may hear his coming;
   But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him, still
   The dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem
   Descend to us, we pray.
Cast out our sin and enter in,
   Be born in us in today.
We hear the Christmas angels
   The great glad tidings tell:
O come to us, abide with us,
   Our Lord Emmanuel.

BISHOP PHILLIPS BROOKS (1835–1893)

9 In the bleak mid-winter

There are two popular settings of Christina Rossetti’s In the bleak mid-winter—Gustav Holst’s, which appears in the standard hymnals and carol collections, and the present one by Harold Darke (1888–1976). Darke, like several other composers represented on this disc, was a product of the Royal College of Music, studying composition with Stanford and the organ with Sir Walter Parratt, who had himself been a church organist from the age of eleven. Darke held the post of organist and choirmaster of St Michael’s, Cornhill, in the City of London, for fifty years from 1916, except for a wartime break when he stood in at King’s College, Cambridge, from 1941 to 1945. He founded the St Michael’s Singers and was an organ professor at the RCM from 1919 until 1969, by which time he was well past his eightieth birthday. Darke’s more substantial compositions include the cantatas Ring out, ye crystal spheres and An Hymn of Heavenly Beauty.

soloists AARON WEBBER treble, MATTHEW VINE tenor
In the bleak mid-winter
Frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron,
Water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow on snow,
In the bleak mid-winter
Long ago.

Our God, heav’n cannot hold him
Nor earth sustain;
Heav’n and earth shall flee away
When he comes to reign:
In the bleak mid-winter
A stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty
Jesus Christ.

Enough for him, whom cherubim
Worship night and day,
A breastful of milk
And a mangerful of hay;
Enough for him, whom angels
Fall down before,
The ox and ass and camel
Which adore.

What can I give him,
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb,
If I were a wise man
I would do my part;
Yet what can I give him,
Give my heart.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI (1830–1894)

In dulci jubilo
Let us our homage show!
Our heart’s joy reclineth
in praesipio
And like a bright star shineth,
matris in gremio.

Alpha es et O. Alpha es et O.

O Jesu parvule! I yearn for Thee alway!
Hear me, I beseech thee,
O Puer optime!

My prayer let it reach Thee,
O Princeps gloriae.

Trahe me post te! Trahe me post te!

O Patris caritas, O nati lenitas!
Deeply were we stained
per nostra crimina;
But Thou hast for us gained
caelorum gaudia.

O that we were there! O that we were there!

Ubi sunt gaudia, where, if that they be not there?
There are angels singing
nova cantica,
There the bells are ringing
in regis curia:

O that we were there! O that we were there!

Words originally Latin and German of unknown origin,
translated by ROBERT LUCAS PEARSALL (1795–1856)

The Three Kings
The German composer Peter Cornelius (1824–1874)
began his professional career in Berlin as a newspaper critic and private teacher, but in 1852 he travelled to Weimar to meet Liszt, whose new ideas in music, together with those of Wagner, attracted him as much as they repelled the followers of Brahms. His comic opera The Barber of Baghdad was produced at Weimar, by Liszt, in
1858, but the furore surrounding Cornelius’s espousal of the Liszt/Wagner school resulted in the opera’s failure and in Liszt’s own resignation. Cornelius then went to Vienna, met Wagner, followed him to Munich and became professor of composition at the Conservatory there. The basis of The Three Kings is the chorale Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern (‘How brightly shines the morning star’). To the fully harmonized chorale Cornelius added an additional line for baritone solo, for which he wrote independent words. The original German chorale text was by Philipp Nicolai (1556–1608).

soloist STEPHEN ALDER baritone

Three kings from Persian lands afar
To Jordan follow the pointing star:
And this the quest of the travellers three,
Where the new-born King of the Jews may be.
Full royal gifts they bear for the King;
Gold, incense, myrrh are their offering.
The star shines out with a steadfast ray;
The kings to Bethlehem make their way,
And there in worship they bend the knee
As Mary’s child in her lap they see.
Their royal gifts they show to the King;
Gold, incense, myrrh are their offering.
Thou child of man, lo, to Bethlehem
The kings are trav’ling; travel with them!
The star of mercy, the star of grace,
Shall lead thy heart to its resting place.
Gold, incense, myrrh thou canst not bring;
Offer thy heart to the infant King.

How brightly shines the morning star!
With grace and truth from heav’n afar
Our Jesse tree now bloweth.
Of Jacob’s stem and David’s line,

For thee, my Bridegroom, King divine,
My soul with love o’erfloweth.
Thy word, Jesu,
Inly feeds us,
Rightly leads us,
Life bestowing.
Praise, O praise such love o’erflowing.

verses PETER CORNELIUS (1824-1874), chorale PHILIPP NICOLAI (1556–1608), translated by HERBERT NEWELL BATE (1871–1941)
He, by prophets, sung, is here now,
Promised since the world began,
Now on earth in flesh descended
To atone for sins of man.
All creation praise its Master,
See fulfilment of his plan.
Evermore and evermore.

Glory be to God the Father,
Glory be to God the Son,
Glory to the Holy Spirit,
Persons three, yet Godhead One;
Glory be from all creation
While eternal ages run.
Evermore and evermore.

AURELIUS PRUDENTIUS CLEMENS (348–after 405),
translated by JOHN MASON NEALE (1818–1866)

Away in a manger

Away in a manger is one of the most popular of all the carols sung in the United Kingdom, yet both the words and the music are American, the words traditional, the music by William James Kirkpatrick (1838–1921). The descant to the final verse is by Philip Moore.

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.
The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky
And stay by my bedside till morning is nigh.
Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay
Close by me for ever, and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
And fit us for heaven, to live with thee there.

ANONYMOUS (Philadelphia, 1883)

Bethlehem Down

Peter Warlock was the pseudonym of the composer, critic and writer Philip Heseltine (1894–1930). His interest in music was encouraged during his school days at Eton, and a high point of his early life was his introduction to Delius by an uncle who lived near Grez-sur-Loing. He came under the influence also of Bernard van Dieren and in 1920 he edited the musical journal, The Sackbut. He is best known for his songs and for the Capriol suite for strings, the latter based on dances from Arbeau’s Orchésographie, already mentioned in the note on Ding dong! merrily on high. Bethlehem Down is a flowing strophic carol, to be sung unaccompanied. The dynamics reflect the changing moods of the text.

‘When he is King we will give him the King’s gifts,
Myrrh for its sweetness, and gold for a crown,
Beautiful robes,’ said the young girl to Joseph,
Fair with her first-born on Bethlehem Down.

Bethlehem Down is full of the starlight,
Winds for the spices, and stars for the gold,
Mary for sleep, and for lullaby music
Songs of a shepherd by Bethlehem fold.

When he is King they will clothe him in grave-sheets,
Myrrh for embalming, and wood for a crown,
He that lies now in the white arms of Mary
Sleeping so lightly on Bethlehem Down.

Here he has peace and a short while for dreaming,
Close-huddled oxen to keep him from cold,
Mary for love and for lullaby music
Songs of a shepherd by Bethlehem fold.

BRUCE BLUNT (1899–1957)

The holly and the ivy

It was in the small market town of Chipping Campden, in Gloucestershire, that Cecil Sharp (1859–1924) collected the tune and most of the words of The holly and the ivy,
both of which are traditional. In the terms of fertility symbolism the dichotomy of holly and ivy parallels that of man and woman. Sir Walford Davies (1869–1941) was in turn organist of the Temple Church in London, professor of music in the University of Wales and organist of St George’s Chapel, Windsor, where he had served his apprenticeship as chorister and, later, pupil teacher. In 1934 he became Master of the King’s Musick in succession to Sir Edward Elgar. His compositions include the famous *Solemn Melody* and the *RAF March Past*.

The holly and the ivy,
When they are both full grown,
Of all the trees that are in the wood
The holly bears the crown.

\[O, the rising of the sun\]
\[And the running of the deer,\]
\[The playing of the merry organ,\]
\[Sweet singing in the choir.\]

The holly bears a blossom
As white as any flower;
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
To be our sweet Saviour.

\[O, the rising of the sun\]
\[And the running of the deer,\]
\[The playing of the merry organ,\]
\[Sweet singing in the choir.\]

The holly bears a berry
As red as any blood;
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
For to redeem us all.

\[O, the rising of the sun\]
\[And the running of the deer,\]
\[The playing of the merry organ,\]
\[Sweet singing in the choir.\]

The holly bears a prickle
As sharp as any thorn;
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
On Christmas Day in the morn.

\[O, the rising of the sun\]
\[And the running of the deer,\]
\[The playing of the merry organ,\]
\[Sweet singing in the choir.\]

**ANONYMOUS**

I sing of a maiden

Patrick Hadley (1899–1973) studied at Cambridge and at the Royal College of Music, returning later to lecture at both places and eventually to the professorial chair at Cambridge, which he held from 1946 to 1962. His compositions are mainly for voices and orchestra and display in various ways the influence of Vaughan Williams and, even more, of Delius. Typical of his style and output is the Symphonic Ballad *The Trees so high*, for baritone solo, chorus and orchestra, but possibly his most familiar piece is the anthem *My beloved spake*, to words from The Song of Solomon. This setting of *I sing of a maiden*, with traditional words dating from the sixteenth century, is for two-part boys’ choir. Hadley intended a piano accompaniment, but the present recording employs the organ.

I sing of a maiden
That is makeless.
King of all kings
To her son she ches.

He came all so still,
Where his mother was,
As dew in April
That falleth on the grass.
He came all so still
  To his mother’s bower
As dew in April
  That falleth on the flower.
He came all so still,
  Where his mother lay,
As dew in April
  That falleth on the spray.
Mother and maiden was never one but she,
Well may such a lady God’s mother be.

JOSEPH MOHR (1792–1848), translated by JOHN YOUNG (1820–1885)

Silent night
No translation of the German Stille Nacht! Heilige Nacht!, not even the English version normally sung, is as evocative and atmospheric as the original, the work of Father Joseph Mohr, parish priest of Hallein, a small village in Austria to the south of Salzburg. But the music, by Mohr’s local schoolmaster and organist, Franz Grüber, is totally apt. It evokes ideally the tranquil Christmas scene of the shepherds worshiping the Christ-Child. Stephen Darlington’s arrangement has some especially ear-catching harmonies in the second verse.

Silent night! Holy night!
All is calm, all is bright;
Round yon virgin mother and Child,
Holy infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace.
Sleep in heavenly peace.
Silent night! Holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heav’nly hosts sing Alleluia!
Christ the Saviour is born!
Christ the Saviour is born!

JOSEPH MOHR (1792–1848), translated by JOHN YOUNG (1820–1885)

Sing lullaby
Herbert Howells (1892–1983) studied with Sir Herbert Brewer at Gloucester and, from 1912 to 1917, at the RCM where his mentors were Stanford and Charles Wood. He later made his mark as an organist and director of music, holding the latter post at St Paul’s Girls’ School from 1936 to 1962, where his predecessor had been Gustav Holst. He joined the teaching staff at the RCM in 1920, remaining there until shortly before his death, and was professor of music at London University for ten years from 1954. His magnum opus is the beautiful choral work Hymnus Paradisi. Sing lullaby is the last of the Three Carol-Anthems of the years 1918–1920, the others being Here is the little door and A spotless rose. With its flowing modality it calls to mind the pastoral style of Vaughan Williams but is imbued with Howells’s unmistakable individuality.

Sing lullaby,
While snow doth gently fall,
Sing lullaby to Jesus
Born in an oxen stall.

Sing lullaby to Jesus,
Born now in Bethlehem,
The naked blackthorn’s growing
To weave his diadem.

Sing lullaby
While thickly snow doth fall.
Sing lullaby to Jesus
The Saviour of all.

FREDERICK WILLIAM HARVEY (1888–1957)
19 The Lamb

John Tavener (b1944) became organist of St John’s, Kensington, at the age of sixteen. He went on to study with Lennox Berkeley at the Royal Academy of Music and, privately, with the Australian David Lumsdaine, and in 1969 he began to teach at Trinity College, London. Later he was received into the Russian Orthodox Church and much of his music is ritualistic in quality. His unaccompanied setting of William Blake’s The Lamb is simple and timeless, rhythmically varied and with telling dissonances. The balance between unison, two-part writing and full choir is meticulously judged, and one particular phrase is hypnotically reiterated. Tavener’s full-scale works include the dramatic cantata The Whale, The Protecting Veil for cello and orchestra, and the hour-long choral work We shall see him as he is (‘Ikon of the Beloved’).

Little lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?
Gave thee life, and bid thee feed
By the stream and o’er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice?
Little lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?
Little lamb, I’ll tell thee,
Little lamb, I’ll tell thee;
He is called by thy name,
For he calls himself a Lamb,
He is meek, and he is mild,
He became a little child.
I, a child, and thou a lamb,
We are called by his name.
Little lamb, God bless thee!
Little lamb, God bless thee!

WILLIAM BLAKE (1757–1827)

20 Welcome, Yule!

The words of Welcome, Yule! date from the fifteenth century and have a lilting rhythm which invites singing. There are several versions, one of which appears in a collection made in about 1430 by John Awdlay, the blind chaplain of Haughmond Abbey in Shropshire. Sir Hubert Parry (1848–1918) obtained his Bachelor of Music degree while still a pupil at Eton but went on to Oxford to study composition. Eventually he became director of the RCM and professor of music at Oxford. He is known for his choral piece Blest pair of sirens, for the unaccompanied Songs of Farewell and, of course, for Jerusalem. The lively setting of Welcome, Yule! is a minor piece but none the less enjoyable.

Welcome be Thou, heavenly King,  
Welcome, born on this morning,  
Welcome for whom we shall sing,  
Welcome, welcome, Yule!  
Welcome be ye, Stephen and John,  
Welcome, innocents, ev’ry one,  
Welcome, Thomas, martyr one,  
Welcome, welcome, Yule!  
Welcome be ye, good New Year,  
Welcome Twelfth day, born in fere,  
Welcome, Saints, loved and dear,  
Welcome, welcome, Yule!  
Welcome be ye, Candlemas,  
Welcome be ye, Queen of Bliss,  
Welcome, both to more and less,  
Welcome, welcome, Yule!  
Welcome be ye that are here,  
Welcome all, and make good cheer,  
Welcome all, another year,  
Welcome, welcome, Yule!

ANONYMOUS
21 Hark! the herald angels sing
Charles Wesley’s words to *Hark! the herald angels sing*, later supplemented by others, first appeared in *Hymns and Sacred Poems* in 1739. A Mendelssohn enthusiast, William Cummings (1831–1915) cast about for a suitable tune and settled on the second number in Mendelssohn’s *Festgesang* (Festive Hymn), a work originally composed for male voices and brass in 1840 to mark a festival at Leipzig commemorating the invention of printing. The descant and alternative harmony in the last verse are by Philip Ledger.

Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled.
Joyful all ye nations rise,
Join the triumph of the skies,
With th’ angelic host proclaim,
Christ is born in Bethlehem.

*Hark! the herald angels sing*
*Glory to the new-born King.*

Christ, by highest heav’n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold him come,
Offspring of a virgin’s womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
Hail th’ incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel:

*Hark! the herald angels sing*
*Glory to the new-born King.*

Hail the heav’n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Ris’n with healing in his wings;
Mild he lays his glory by,
Born that man no more may die;
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth:

*Hark! the herald angels sing*
*Glory to the new-born King.*

CHARLES WESLEY (1707–1788), GEORGE WHITEFIELD (1714–1770)
and MARTIN MADAN (1725–1790)

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THE CHOIR OF WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL

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JAMES TURNER-INMAN, RAYMOND WINTERFLOOD trebles

THOMAS ROAD, ALEXANDER HOOI, PETER KINROSS,
CHRISTOPHER EASTWOOD, ALEXANDER McCLUSKEY altos

DAVID GOULD, NIGEL SHORT, ANDREW WICKENS countertenors

ANDREW CARWOOD, MATTHEW VINE, CLIFFORD LISTER, NICHOLAS KEAY, JOHN BOWEN tenors

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PANIS ANGELICUS Favourite motets
Ave Maria (Gounod); Ave verum, K618 (Mozart); Cantique de Jean Racine (Fauré); Ave verum corpus (Elgar) Ave verum corpus
(Mawby); Jesu, joy of man’s desiring (Bach); Ave Maria (Mendelssohn)
I waited for the Lord (Mendelssohn); Panis angelicus; (Franck); Maria Mater gratiae (Fauré)
Ave Maria (Holst); Beati quorum via (Stanford); Nunc dimittis (Holst); Hymne à la Vierge (Villette)
Tantum ergo (de Séverac); O salutaris hostia (Rossini); Ave maris stella (Grieg); Faire is the heaven (Harris)
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Front illustration: Christ glorified in the Court of Heaven.
A detail from the predella of an altarpiece by Fra Angelico.
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