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MUSIC FOR ROYAL OCCASIONS



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ROYAL MUSICAL COMMISSIONS, ROYAL OCCASIONS

Although providing music for royal or state occasions has not been exclusively the preserve of the house of Novello, as *the* publisher involved in the provision of music for royal events, its historic importance should not be overlooked. It printed *The Form and Order of Service* for the past three coronations (1953, 1937 and 1911) and ceremonial music, anthems and fanfares were always part of its remit.

Of the most recent Masters of the King's/Queen's Music, back as far as Walter Parratt, appointed in 1893, six out of eight have been associated with Novello or Chester Music, today part of Wise Music Group. Far from limiting the output to new work, even from its inception (founded by Vincent Novello in 1811), the emphasis was on making available to a wide public many major, almost exclusively choral, works from the past.



For the coronation in 1727 of George II and Queen Caroline, Westminster Abbey brought together the biggest choir and orchestra that had yet been assembled in England, certainly within living memory¹. It was clear that, from then on, and especially with a Hanoverian in charge, music was going to play an important part in the ceremonial of crowning for each new monarch. With the King's engagement of a composer of the stature of Handel, given his established reputation in church music, including the celebratory *Te Deum* of 1713 commemorating the Peace of Utrecht, and sixteen Italian operas staged already in London, the bar was raised forever for future ceremonial occasions, whether coronations, royal barges on the waters of the Thames or amid Royal Fireworks in Vauxhall Gardens.

Music, of course, had always been part of regal paraphernalia in England. The Chapel Royal, a specialised body of liturgical musicians and a 'royal peculiar', was established around 1300, its function mostly to provide music for the celebration of the

Mass as well as other Christian rites. Its choir later became a component of the king's prestige, by the time of the Tudors numbering up to fifty voices, adult and children, composers amongst the Gentlemen including Thomas Tallis, William Cornysh and John Sheppard. The seventeenth century could boast John Blow and Henry Purcell.

Set piece occasions could, and still may, be seen as the most important sources for royal commissions or music that has already become or is intended to become part of the national fabric. These can be divided broadly into several categories: coronations, next the matches, hatches and dispatches, so to speak, of royal weddings, births and funerals, then assorted jubilees, birthdays, anniversaries and other opportunities for national celebration. The survival into our times of these works may have more to do with taste than quality but royal patronage or public enthusiasm for the monarchy has undoubtedly been a stimulus for many timeless musical works.

¹ Preface to Handel: Four Coronation Anthems, eds. Donald Burrows and Damien Cranmer, Novello 2002.



CORONATIONS

Coronations were always going to be the chief source of ceremonial music, largely specially written or components of the long tradition of works associated with the occasion. Major commissions of works began with the grandeur of the Stuarts and the seventeenth century. Thus, for James II, crowned 1685, they heard Blow's *Let thy Hand be strengthened* at the same occasion as Purcell's settings of two more of the now recognised Coronation anthems: *I was glad* and *My heart is inditing*.

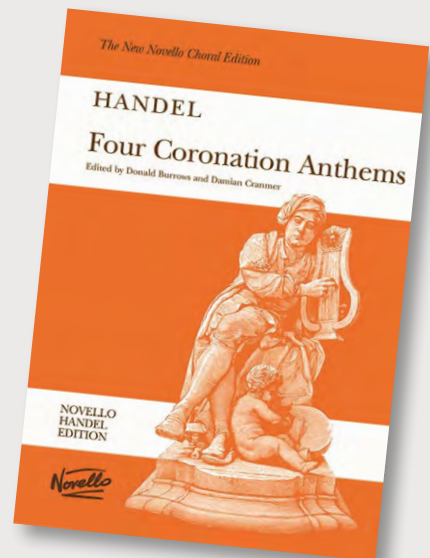
For George II and Queen Caroline in 1727, there could be no more enduring a legacy than Handel's *Four Coronation Anthems*:

1. *Let thy hand be strengthened*
2. *Zadok the Priest*
3. *The King shall rejoice*
4. *My heart is inditing of a good matter*

Certainly, *Zadok* enjoys ever greater popularity today, yet for all that, is not representative of the four, which vary considerably in duration

and in forces needed, sometimes with solo voices.

Notable additions to the coronation repertoire in the twentieth century and beyond would include Elgar's *Coronation Ode*, written for Edward VII's accession in 1901, as well





CORONATION SERVICE, 1911.

ORCHESTRAL MUSIC BEFORE THE SERVICE.

[N.B.—The order may be varied. Please watch the Signal Cards.]

A. Fanfare	...	...	...	...	J. E. Borland
B. Solemn Melody	...	...	...	...	H. Watford Davies
C. Coronation March	...	...	...	...	F. Cliffe
D. Prelude	...	...	...	...	F. H. Cowen
E. Joy Peal	...	...	...	...	A. C. Mackenzie
F. Schiller March	...	...	...	...	Meyerbeer
G. Coronation March	...	...	...	...	Edward German
H. Coronation March	...	...	...	...	Tschaikowsky
J. Huldigungs March	...	...	...	...	Wagner

A. Fanfare repeated (perhaps with cut from A to B)	...	...	...	...	...
I. THE Preparation	...	...	...	...	1
II. The Entrance into the Church	...	...	...	...	1
Anthem—"I was glad"	...	...	...	Sir Hubert Parry	2
III. The Recognition	...	...	...	...	13
IV. The Litany	...	...	...	Tallis	14
V. The Beginning of the Communion Service	...	...	...	...	24
Introit—"Let my prayer come up"	...	...	...	H. Purcell	24
Credo	...	...	...	Morbecke	28
VI. The Sermon	...	...	...	...	33
VII. The Oath	...	...	...	...	33
VIII. The Anointing	...	...	...	...	35
Hymn—"Come, Holy Ghost"	...	...	...	Ancient Plain-song	35
Anthem—"Zadok the Priest"	...	...	...	Handel	37
IX. The Presenting of the Spurs and Sword, and the Girding and Oblation of the said Sword	...	...	...	...	38
X. The Investing with the Armill and Royal Robe, and the Delivery of the Orb	...	...	...	...	54
XI. The Investiture per Annulum et Baculum	...	...	...	...	55
XII. The Putting on of the Crown	...	...	...	...	56
Confestare—"Be strong"	...	...	...	Sir Walter Parratt	57
XIII. The Presenting of the Holy Bible	...	...	...	...	58
XIV. The Benediction	...	...	...	...	59
XV. The Intronization	...	...	...	...	60
XVI. The Homage	...	...	...	...	60
Anthem—"Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous"	...	...	...	Sir Frederick Bridge	62
XVII. The Queen's Coronation	...	...	...	...	74
XVIII. The Communion	...	...	...	...	75
Offertorium—"O hearken Thou"	...	...	...	Sir Edward Elgar	76
Sanctus	...	...	...	Walker G. Alcock	83
Sevenfold Amen	...	...	...	Sir John Stainer	86
Pater noster	...	...	...	Morbecke	89
Gloria in Excelsis	...	...	...	Sir Charles Y. Stanford	91
Threefold Amen	...	...	...	Orlando Gibbons	105
XIX. The Te Deum	...	...	...	Sir Hubert Parry	106
XX. The recess	...	...	...	...	142
National Anthem	...	...	...	...	143

AFTER SERVICE.

K. March	...	...	...	...	Ed. Elgar
L. Imperial March	...	...	...	...	- ii -

as his setting of *God Save the King*, still performed today, though generally minus the second verse. At the 1902 coronation, Hubert Parry's majestic *I was glad* was heard for the first time and keeps a seemingly immovable place at state occasions where there are sufficient musical forces.

For the Coronation of George V and Queen Mary in 1911, Elgar offered the introspective *O Harken thou* and a massive, some might say elephantine, *Coronation March*, rather less spritely than the *Imperial March* of 1897 (see below).

Music took a central role at our current Queen's coronation in 1953. Ralph Vaughan Williams who, by then a national institution himself, had composed a *Festal Te Deum* for the coronation of George VI in 1937, made the brief, meditative *O taste and see*. Commencing with at least an hour of orchestral works, prior to the entry of the future monarch, including the specially written *Walton Orb & Sceptre March* and Sir Arthur Bliss's *Processional*, Sir Adrian Boult conducted Handel's *Music for the Royal Fireworks* during the long procession of dukes, dean and chapter, representatives of the Commonwealth, Viscount Montgomery of Alamein bearing the royal standard, the Keeper of the Crown Jewels at the Tower and many others. Parry's *I was glad* rang out during that amazing procession of dignitaries, striking up shortly before the arrival of the young Queen in the Quire, to resounding cries from Westminster School boys of "Vivat Regina!". Herbert Howells wrote *Behold, O God our Defender* in its orchestral arrangement, a sumptuous alternative to voices and organ accompaniment. Then, there was William Harris' *Let my prayer come up into thy presence* (The Gradual), William Walton's *Coronation Te Deum*, Healey Willan's anthem *O Lord our Governor*, George Dyson's brief *Comfortare*, sung immediately following the crowning, and, a then rare nod to Tudor church music, William McKie's realisation of John Redford's *Rejoice in the Lord*. Several of these pieces were reprised at the sixtieth anniversary of the Coronation service in 2013.

I WAS GLAD WHEN THEY SAID UNTO ME

Psalm cxxii, 1-3, 6, 7

C. HUBERT H. PARRY

Maestoso

ACCOMP. *f*

4

ff

7

ff

10 *rit.* *A a tempo* *f*

1st SOPRANO I was glad,

2nd SOPRANO *f* I was glad,

ALTO *f* I was glad,

1st TENOR *f* I was glad,

2nd TENOR *f* I was glad,

BASS *f* I was glad,

10 *rit.* *A a tempo*

CORONATION OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

WESTMINSTER ABBEY, 2 JUNE 1953

* indicates first performance

ORCHESTRAL MUSIC PLAYED BEFORE
THE SERVICE

Chaconne from 'King Arthur':

Henry Purcell (arranged Herbage)

Trumpet tune: Purcell

March Crown Imperial: William Walton

Fantasia on the Alleluia hymn: Gordon Jacob

Jupiter: Gustav Holst

Epic March: John Ireland

Regalia procession: Oh most merciful: Charles Wood

Regalia procession: Litany for 5 voices: Thomas Tallis

March: Pomp and Circumstance no.2: Edward Elgar

Idyll 'Banks of Green Willow': George Butterworth

Processional*: Arthur Bliss

Greensleeves: arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams

Nimrod: Elgar

March: Orb and Sceptre*: Walton

Fireworks music: overture & minuet:

George Frederic Handel

MUSIC DURING THE SERVICE,
ORCHESTRA AND CHOIRS

Fanfare I

Anthem 'I was glad': C.H.H.Parry

Fanfares II, III, IV, V

Introit: Behold, O God our Defender*:

Herbert Howells

Gradual: Let my prayer come up*: William Harris

The Creed (from G minor mass): Vaughan Williams

Come, Holy Ghost: VIII Mode Melody:

arr. Ernest Bullock

Zadok the Priest: Handel

Confortare*: George Dyson

Rejoice in the Lord: John Redford

O clap your hands together: Orlando Gibbons

I will not leave you comfortless: William Byrd

O Lord our Governour*: Healey Willan

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace: S.S.Wesley

**Homage fanfare VII founded on Scots tune
'Montrose'**

Hymn: All people that on earth do dwell:

arr. Vaughan Williams

Versicles & Responses, Sanctus: Vaughan Williams

O taste and see*: Vaughan Williams

Gloria in Excelsis: Charles Villiers Stanford

Three-fold Amen: Orlando Gibbons

Te Deum*: Walton

Fanfare VIII and God save the Queen:

arr. Gordon Jacob

(fanfares I to VII composed by Sir Ernest Bullock)

ORCHESTRAL MUSIC AFTER THE SERVICE

March: Pomp and Circumstance no.1: Elgar

Coronation March*: Arnold Bax

March: Pomp and Circumstance no.4: Elgar



Such was the public enthusiasm for the Coronation that many associated musical events took place. With the Queen's accession to the throne in 1952, Martin Shaw penned a [Hymn for the Queen](#) to be sung by "Ipswich schoolchildren". Not part of the official programme but just as celebratory is Gordon Jacob's Fanfares and SATB setting of [God save the Queen](#), probably the most frequently heard arrangement since at state occasions. The publication *A Garland for the Queen*, mirrors the artistic tributes paid to the first Queen Elizabeth, containing several secular part songs: Bliss's substantial [Aubade for Coronation Morning](#) for SATB + 2 treble soloists, Lennox Berkeley's [Spring at this hour](#), Howells' [Inheritance](#) for double mixed chorus. Meanwhile, at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Malcolm Arnold provided a handsome ballet score for the choreographer Frederick Ashton and the Royal Ballet: [Homage to The Queen](#), attended by Her Majesty on Coronation night, the evening of her enthronement.

WEDDINGS

Paul Mealor

Attracting only somewhat less public enthusiasm than coronations were royal weddings. In 1734, Handel produced an early large-scale anthem, *This is the day*, for the wedding of George II's daughter Anne, Princess Royal, a ceremony which, incidentally, took place at 10 o'clock at night "continuing with supper at midnight followed by a ball". In between, the guests were treated to this "fine Anthem, compos'd by Mr. Handell" [sic].

Perhaps reflecting the fact royal weddings were more intimate affairs until recent times, whatever the level of popular interest, not much attention was paid to the music used in the ceremonies. By 1960, the then Master of the Queen's Music, Sir Arthur Bliss, provided *Two Royal Fanfares* for the marriage of Princess Margaret at Westminster Abbey, the first major royal event since the Coronation. But possibly the most remarkable and, for those old enough, memorable spectacular was the wedding of Prince Charles and Diana Spencer in 1981. With an orchestra in St Paul's Cathedral conducted by Sir Colin Davis, there was Handel's *Let the bright seraphim* from the oratorio *Samson* gloriously sung by Dame Kiri te Kanawa in daffodil yellow;



Parry's *I was glad* featured, almost inevitably. Despite the enthusiasm, as the whole world knows, it was a marriage that didn't last and, in 2005 in Windsor, Charles and Camilla were finally united as HRH The Prince of Wales and HRH The Duchess of Cornwall. Sir John Tavener offered the dedication of his *Ex Maria Virgine* in "joyful celebration" of their marriage. More recently, Paul Mealor became a familiar name in choral music after his setting of *Ubi caritas* was heard at the union of The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge in Westminster Abbey in 2011. That time, as a change from *I was glad*, it was Parry's grand setting of Milton's *Blest Pair of Sirens* that concluded the choral offerings.



The marriage of The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge



BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays have long been commemorated. Purcell's *Birthday Odes for Queen Mary [II]*, most notably *Come, ye sons of Art* (1694), survive in regular performance. More recently, Howells' *Music for a Prince* was two pieces for orchestra commissioned by the BBC to celebrate the birth of Prince Charles in 1948.

The post of Master of The King/Queen's Music has existed since Nicholas Lanier was appointed in 1625 by Charles I but it remains little more than an honorific appointment with no obligation to create works. Certainly, one holder of the position in the twentieth century, Sir Arthur Bliss, took his duties extremely seriously, producing not only fanfares for the 1953 Coronation or those for Princess Margaret's wedding but, for the birth of Prince Andrew in 1960, *Birthday Song for a Royal Child*, words by C. Day-Lewis and, in 1964, *Cradle Song for a Newborn Child* (Prince Edward) to Eric Crozier's words.

In 1998, Tavener's *Many Years* was written for Charles's fiftieth birthday; one year later, with another dedication to the Prince, he created his mighty *Fall and Resurrection* for St Paul's Cathedral complete with kavals, a ram's horn and Orthodox church Psaltis. Then, written to celebrate the Queen's eightieth birthday in 2006, Maxwell Davies' *A Little Birthday Music* was a setting of a poem by the then Poet Laureate, Andrew Motion. To commemorate the sixtieth birthday of The Prince of Wales

in 2008, Patrick Hawes' *Goddess of the Woods* was commissioned by the Victor Salvi Foundation. Tarik O'Regan's *A Ducal Fanfare* for the ninetieth birthday of HRH The Duke of Edinburgh (2011) was an offering of the Worshipful Company of Musicians. Then, in 2013, proving you are never too old to be celebrated in song, Mealor's *A Welsh Prayer* was written to celebrate the Prince's sixty-fifth birthday and first performed at St Asaph Cathedral. In the same year Mealor and Brendan Graham wrote *Sleep On, a song for Prince George*. Finally, for now, in 2016, current Master of the Queen's Music, Judith Weir, wrote *I love all beauteous things*, commissioned by the Chapter of St Paul's Cathedral to mark the ninetieth birthday of The Queen.



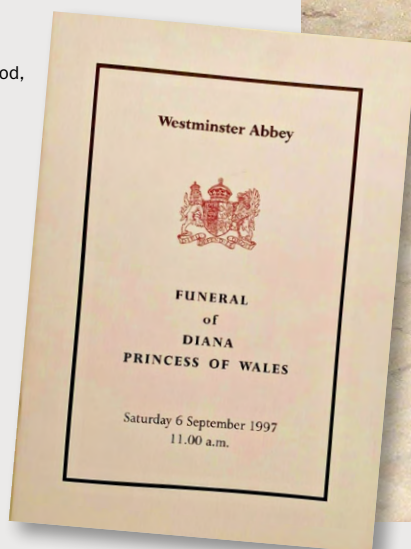
FUNERALS

Nobody has written finer funeral music than Purcell, with *Remember not, Lord*, our offences; *Hear My Prayer*; *In the midst of life* and *Man that is born of woman* still familiar. The 1695 *Funeral Music for Queen Mary [II]* brought together Thomas Morley, James Paisible and Thomas Tollett with Purcell's famous instrumental Funeral March and celebrated anthem, *Thou knowest, Lord*. There is a complete [scholarly edition by Bruce Wood](#)². Not resting there, Purcell's *Elegy upon the Death of Queen Mary* (O Dive custos Auriacæ) is a mournful, reflective piece deserving to be better known. Similarly underrated, Handel's 1737 Funeral Anthem for Queen Caroline, *The ways of Zion do mourn*, is a substantial and gloriously solemn work; several fine recordings do exist.

After Handel, any tradition of important new work for royal funerals seems to have died out. In his book *British Royal and State Funerals and their Music*, Matthias Range observes that "between the end of the seventeenth century and the end of the Georgian period alone there were more than thirty royal funerals... [but that]... the majority of these were unspectacular low-key affairs"³.

² *Funeral Music for Queen Mary*, edited and reconstructed Bruce Wood, Novello 1996.

³ *British Royal and State Funerals and their Music*, Matthias Range, Boydell & Brewer 2016.





We learn from newspaper reports that, at the funeral of George III in 1820, the choir sang [*I know that my Redeemer liveth*](#), presumably from [*Messiah*](#) and not in unison unless solely trebles. It seems that the death of his successor George IV in 1830 inspired little public grief, so there was yet more Handel in the ‘Dead March’ from [*Saul*](#) and little else. Ubiquitous indeed was Handel in the nineteenth century and we recall how, in Thornton Wilder’s *Our Town*, set in the latter part of the century, someone remarks of “culture” in Grover’s Corners that “There ain’t much – Robinson Crusoe and the Bible; and Handel’s ‘Largo’, we all know that”.

It is interesting that, at the funerals of both George III and his Queen Charlotte, as well as their eldest son, there was sung an anthem by James Kent on the words of [*Hear my prayer*](#), including ‘O, for the wings of a dove’. It is not hard to grasp how it may have lost ground to Mendelssohn’s ageless version of 1844.

For subsequent funerals, though full of pomp with attendees from every royal family in Europe and beyond, the services themselves seem to have been understated affairs. There were various reasons for this modesty, not least concerning the etiquette of royalty attending burials: most likely the desire to express grief privately without involving the nation. At the undoubtedly sombre funeral of Queen Victoria in 1901, the Opening Sentences were settings by “Dr Croft”, presumably William (d. 1727), and Thomas Purcell’s Chant. The choices were becoming more international: no Handel this time but Spohr [*Blest are the departed*](#), Tchaikovsky’s Kontakion setting [*How blest are they*](#) and two anthems by Gounod, [*Come unto him*](#) and [*Send out thy light*](#). The Order of Service for her grandson, George V’s funeral in 1936 doesn’t name a single piece, requiring only a “suitable anthem or hymn” to be sung after the reading.

Into our own time, although not written for a royal occasion, Sir John Tavener’s memorial work, [*Song for Athene*](#) contributed with overwhelming effect to the tragic circumstances of the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales at Westminster Abbey in 1997. In 2002, Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother died aged 101. Among the anthems chosen for the occasion was William Harris’ [*Holy is the true light*](#). That same year appeared Tavener’s [*Elizabeth Full of Grace*](#), perhaps an oddity, being written as a prayer for the Grand Duchess Saint Elizabeth, a Holy Royal Martyr who, in 1918 met a terrible end at the hands of the Bolsheviks. Yet it was written to a commission from her grandson The Prince of Wales “to the memory of [the late] Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother” after her death in 2002. It is an extraordinary and far from easy piece, needing double trebles (able to hit top B) as well as double mixed chorus, strings, organ and Tibetan bowl. The end result, however, is quite something. Also in memory of the Scottish-born queen, in 2005, Sir Richard Rodney Bennett’s work for string orchestra, [*Reflections on a Scottish Folk Song*](#), was commissioned at the request of the Prince.

April 2021 saw the funeral of The Duke of Edinburgh in a modest but no less effective and moving ceremony at Windsor, an occasion greatly enhanced not only by the childlike joy of Britten’s setting of Psalm 100, [*Jubilate Deo*](#), but the Walter Parratt/W.J. Birkbeck version of the Orthodox Kontakion for the Faithful Departed, [*Give rest, O Christ*](#). It may be sung by mixed or male voice choir, though COVID-19 necessarily limited the chorus to a solo SATB quartet in St George’s Chapel. Perhaps as a result, they chose to sing in a memorable G minor, rather than the published A or D minor.

REFLECTIONS ON A SCOTTISH FOLK SONG

Richard Rodney Bennett

Andante lento (♩ = 66)

Violoncello
p dolce espr.
p *poco cresc.*

Violin I

Violin II

Viola
sul tasto
div. pp
sul tasto
pp
poco cresc.

Violoncello
sul tasto
div. II
pp
poco cresc.

Double Bass
sul tasto
pp
poco cresc.



8

Vc. solo
mf *poco dim.* *p* *p dolce espress.* *p* *p* *pizz.*
sul tasto *p* *3* *sonore*

Vln. I
p dolce espress.
sul tasto

Vln. II
p dolce espress.

Vla.
mp *poco dim.* *pp* *p*

Vc.
mp *poco dim.* *pp* *p*

Db.
mp *poco dim.* *pp* *half only* *pizz.* *p*



JUBILEES

Jubilees have triggered intriguing results. HM's Silver Jubilee 1977 was celebrated in John McCabe's *Jubilee Prelude*, a commission from London Celebrations of the event and premiered by André Previn and the London Symphony Orchestra. It forms part of a *Jubilee Suite* created for Norman Del Mar some years later. Joseph Horowitz's *Jubilee Toy Symphony* for the same Silver occasion, happened at the Royal Opera House with a remarkable cast of toy percussionists under Colin Davis, including, to name a few, Yehudi Menuhin, Pierre Fournier, Nigel Kennedy, with Ann Murray amongst the singing percussionists, and thespians Dorothy Tutin, Fenella Fielding and Dame Peggy Ashcroft. Tavener's *Hymn for the Sovereign*, a work of 2008, the year of the centenary of the Imperial Society of Knights Bachelor, who commissioned it, celebrated at St Paul's. Perhaps, too, we should mention Tavener's *Exhortation and Kohima* (2003) performed in the presence of Her Majesty at the Royal Albert Hall British Legion Festival of Remembrance 2003. In 2012, Maxwell

Davies wrote his *Ninth Symphony*, dedicated to the Queen on the occasion of her Diamond Jubilee. Add to that Mealor's *Jubilate! Jubilee!* performed by choirs across the land as part of the official celebrations of the Diamond Jubilee, and Rachel Portman's *A Celebration* (2012) out of the Lord Mayor's Fund for Young Musicians, performed as part of the Queen's Thames Diamond Jubilee Pageant.

Of most immediate importance to us today are works written to commemorate The Queen's 70 years on the throne. There is no precedent for a Platinum Royal Jubilee so new music can be exploratory. As befits the holder of a post in the Royal Household, however, Judith Weir has written *By Wisdom*, a choral anthem in the great tradition, with a text from Proverbs. It is to be performed by the combined choirs of St Paul's Cathedral and the Chapel Royal with organ accompaniment and to form a component of the National Service of Thanksgiving for Her Majesty to take place at St Paul's as part of the Platinum Jubilee celebration's long weekend in June 2022.



“This ancient post has no job description; I see it as a very generously extended national composer-in-residence appointment.” Judith Weir CBE, Master of the Queen’s Music

TEXT:
Provverbs Ch. 2

By wisdom Judith Weir (2020)

♩ 66 *Tranquille, spazioso*

Organo

mf *clear, fragrant*

S₁ *mf* Happy is the one who finds wisdom, the one who gains un-der-stand-ing. *f* *mf*

S₂ *mf* Happy is the one, finds wisdom, the one who gains un-der-stand-ing. *f* *mf*

Organo

A commemorative work already heard is [Here Before Promised](#) by Debbie Wiseman, Composer in Residence to Classic FM, who commissioned it. It was given at the Classic FM Live concert on 22nd April at the Royal Albert Hall among more standard royal pieces. The scoring is for solo trumpet, performed at the premiere by Alison Balsom, with chamber orchestra accompaniment and an interjected passage, if so desired, from a Scottish piper.

Cheryl Frances-Hoad has a BBC Proms commission for July, [Your Servant, Elizabeth](#).

It is an intriguing contemporary paraphrase of William Byrd's mixed voice anthem, *O Lord, make thy servant Elizabeth*, the contours of which originally a cappella setting are distributed around choir and full orchestra, including organ. The words, adapted from Psalm 21, blend with selected words from Princess Elizabeth's unforgettable speech broadcast out of South Africa on her twenty-first birthday in 1947 and, as Queen Elizabeth II, sentences from her "letter to the nation" written earlier in 2022.

ANNIVERSARIES

Then there are anniversaries. In 2007, the Diamond Anniversary of the wedding of Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip was honoured by the then Master of the Queen's Music, Sir Peter Maxwell Davies with an anthem for mixed voices, *Almighty God, we beseech thee*. For the same occasion, celebrated at the Abbey, Sir Richard Rodney Bennett who, in his later years, turned increasingly to the medium of choral writing, produced [These Three](#) (I Corinthians xiii).





REMEMBRANCE

Remembrance has become a major feature of royal occasions. Honouring the fallen in war in major musical works under the auspices of the Royal British Legion was a practice as far back as 1923 with [*A World Requiem*](#) by John Foulds, in its use of an eclectic, multi-faith range of texts, bringing to mind Taverer, assembled by his wife, Maud MacCarthy. Or there is Bliss, again, with [*Morning Heroes*](#), choral settings with prominent role for speaker: Homer, Whitman, Li Tao Po, Robert Nichols, Wilfred Owen – not a royal event, its premiere at Norwich Festival in 1930. In 2011 at the same annual November Royal Albert Hall event, Paul Mealor's [*Wherever you are*](#), sung by the Military Wives Choirs under Gareth Malone, captured the public mood at a time when British troops were engaged in seemingly endless wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Both World Wars have recently received major commemorative events, lest we break faith with those who die. To mark the 70th anniversary of D-Day in 2015 and the

centenary of Armistice Day in 2018, Judith Weir received government commissions for mixed voice and organ pieces to be performed at the Westminster Abbey services, respectively [*His Mercy Endureth Forever*](#) and [*The true light*](#).

Beyond established state occasions, there have been some offerings *sui generis*. There have been notable musical works for the state funerals of national figures not connected to the Royal family. For the funeral of the hero of Blenheim, The Duke of Marlborough, Giovanni Bononcini, then resident in London, composed [*When Saul was King*](#), a work on a Handelian scale for SAT soloists, mixed chorus and orchestra. For Lord Nelson's departure in 1805, there was Maurice Greene's highly effective *Lord, let me know mine end*.

For Charles II, Purcell wrote [*O lord, grant the King a long life*](#) – in 1684, a year before the death of the Merry Monarch, and, for William III/Mary II in 1689, another Purcell anthem: [*Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem*](#).

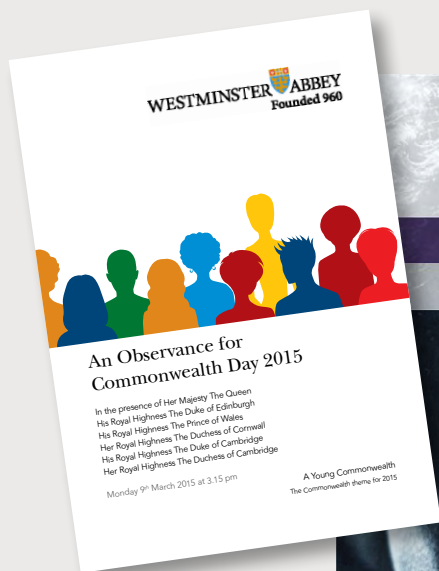
He wrote twenty-four royal Odes, most notably odes of Welcome. Then, for George I, a Te Deum in A (1724) as part of Handel's obligation as Composer of the Chapel Royal. After Handel, there is surprisingly little music of consequence even until the reign of Victoria, an honourable exception being Elgar's *Imperial March* for the Diamond Jubilee of 1897. Beyond that, 1969 was the year of The Prince of Wales' Investiture at Caernarvon Castle, for which Bliss composed the music; there followed in 1973 Bliss's *Fanfare for Princess Anne*. In 2007, The Prince commissioned Tavener's *The Beautiful Names*, a setting of the "99 Names for Allah" from the Qu'ran. In 2015, Meallor wrote *The Lord bless you and keep you* for the 200th anniversary of the Braemar Gathering in the presence of Her Majesty at Crathie Kirk adjacent to Balmoral Castle.

That year, too, a Commonwealth Day Observance service at Westminster Abbey included the Benjamin Britten *Jubilate Deo* and Weir's anthem *Truly I Tell You*.

Finally, we should mention that the funeral service of Baroness Thatcher of Kesteven at St Paul's in 2013 included no fewer than *three* anthems:- *Hear my prayer* by Purcell, *How lovely are thy dwellings* from Brahms' German Requiem and the *In paradisum* from Fauré's Messe de Requiem. Along with those other recent occasions where new works are put out on display, this could be seen as recognition of the importance of music in today's ceremonials and an encouraging sign of the ever-greater influence of public interest in them.

Howard Friend

Howard Friend was *Managing Editor* for *Novello and Chester* 1998-2019





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