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SELECTED ANTHEMS OF RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: A STUDY
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A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Graduate School

Appalachian State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Wilma Sue Jackson

June 1974



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AN ABSTRACT OF A THESIS ENTITLED
SELECTED ANTHEMS OF RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: A STUDY

This study concerns itself with a critical analysis of ten selected anthems by Ralph Vaughan Williams. The ten anthems are analyzed, depicting stylistic aspects as utilized by Vaughan Williams. These aspects include general stylistic elements of sound, form, harmony, melody, rhythm, and relationship of the text to the music.

The Second Chapter is composed of a biography of Ralph Vaughan Williams. Certain forces influenced his music and his style, and aided in shaping his style to be one which is uniquely personal. These forces include the influence of former teachers, sources for his music, the English folk song and Tudor polyphony, and his affiliation with the church and church music.

Chapter Three includes the analysis of each of the ten anthems. After each anthem, there is a diagram from which the reader can obtain an overview of the anthem. Included in the anthem diagram are cadential points and the general form of each.

Several conclusions were reached as a result of this study. The style of Ralph Vaughan Williams was shaped by past idioms as well as his present-day environment. It is the culmination of these two time periods which makes the music of Vaughan Williams unique and quite personal.

He incorporated the modality of the church modes into his music and utilized the folk song, which was also modal in nature. Vaughan Williams had the desire to bring art into the most direct relationship

to life; therefore, the English folk song, being a product of the English people, provided him with a medium through which this might be expressed. Musically, he has been one of the strongest influences in breaking down the tyranny of the bar line. This was accomplished through his very flexible rhythms.

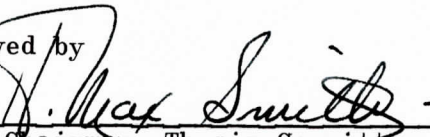
Following Chapter Four is an appendix including an alphabetical listing of each anthem. Given for each anthem are the arrangement of the work used for analysis in this study and other versions which might be available, the catalogue number (when available), the copyright date, the publisher, and an approximate duration time for each work.

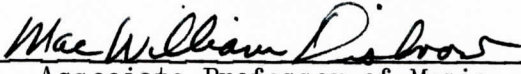
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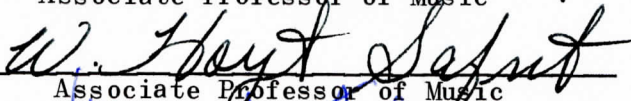
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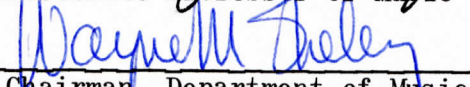
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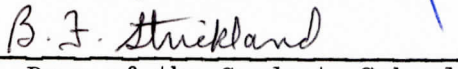
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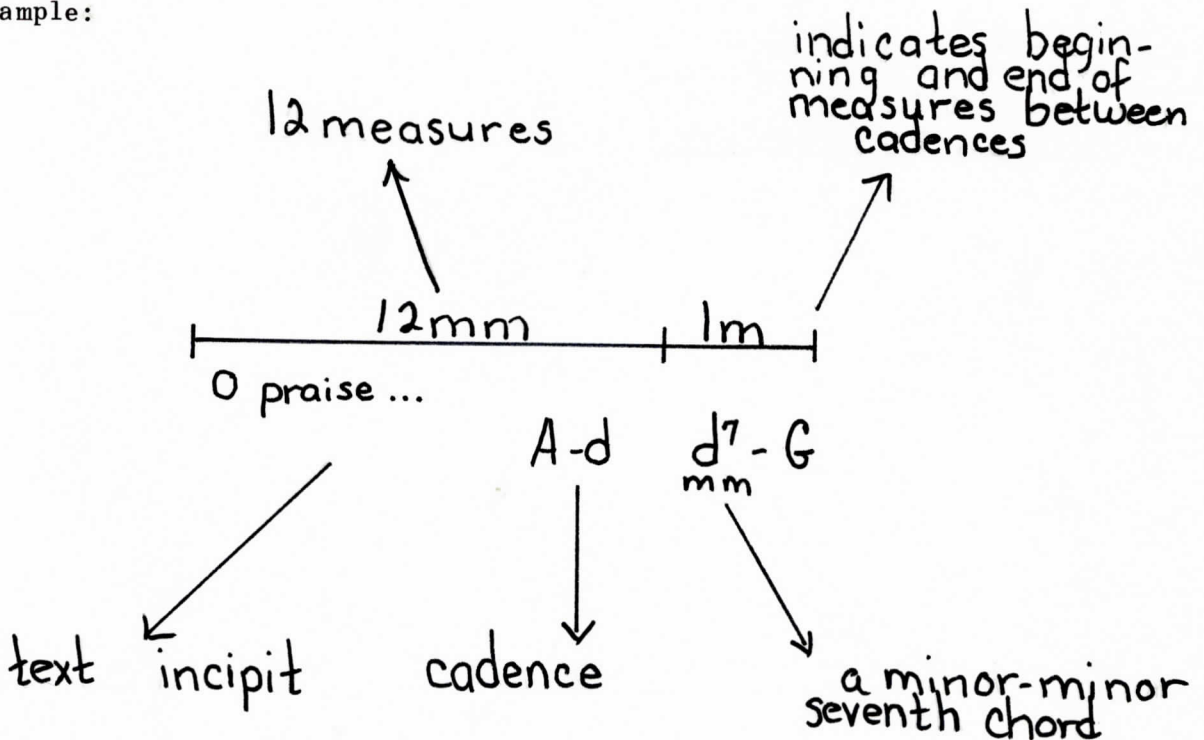
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TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS

- ↪ - indicates segment of measures to be continued on the next line of diagram.
- || - double bar
- mm - measures
- m - measure
- mm - minor-minor seventh chord
- dm - diminished-minor seventh chord
- large letters - major chord quality
- Small letters - minor or diminished chord quality

Text incipit is given for each group of measures.

Example:



Chapter 1

THE PROBLEM

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to present an analysis of ten selected anthems of Ralph Vaughan Williams. The study will be one depicting stylistic aspects in the music of Vaughan Williams. These stylistic aspects will be discussed in Chapter 2 and the sources from which these aspects evolved will be examined. It is hoped that such a study would provide insight which would aid the performance of the choral works of Ralph Vaughan Williams.

RELATED RESEARCH

Relatively little research has been done on the choral works of Ralph Vaughan Williams.

Bersagel,¹ in a study of "The National Aspects of the Music of Ralph Vaughan Williams," designates as his central thesis that music must express the composer as a product of his environment. Bersagel proceeds to investigate the nationalistic influence of the English folk song and English Tudor music on Vaughan Williams' musical style.

¹ John Dagfinn Bersagel, "The National Aspects of the Music of Ralph Vaughan Williams" (unpublished Doctor's dissertation abstract, Cornell University, 1957), p. 2026.

Crighton,² in a study, "Te Deum Laudamus in 20th Century English Coronations; with a Performance of Settings by Stanford, Parry, Vaughan Williams, and Walton," stylistically analyzes the Te Deum. These four settings of the Te Deum were critically examined both in their relationship to the coronation ceremony and as to the place which they occupy among other works by the respective composers.

PROCEDURE

Ten choral compositions of Vaughan Williams were selected for analysis. Each work was analyzed according to various general music components: sound, form, harmony, rhythm, melody, etc.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

The depth of perception of a musical work, on the part of performers, is a factor in the effectiveness of communication between performers and the audience. Depth of perception occurs primarily through a detailed study on the part of the performers of these works. It is hoped that because of this study, the choral works of Ralph Vaughan Williams can be more artistically performed.

The fact that there have been relatively few studies on the choral works of Vaughan Williams, also establishes a need for more research in this area.

² Arthur Bligh Crighton, "Te Deum Laudamus in 20th Century English Coronations; with a Performance of Settings by Stanford, Parry, Vaughan Williams, and Walton" (unpublished Doctor's dissertation abstract, University of Southern California, 1967), p. 4277.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

In analyzing the works of Ralph Vaughan Williams, various terms will be used which occur frequently throughout the discussion and analysis. For the sake of clarity, the following aspects will be defined in terms of the foregoing study: (1) folk song - the music repertory of the English communities, generally implying a song of no known authorship, which has been preserved by oral tradition. Many of the folk songs are modal, which may be evidence of extreme antiquity. The melodies frequently have irregular rhythmic patterns. It was not until the nineteenth century that the use of them became identified with nationalist sentiment. Twentieth century composers in many countries have used them and have imitated their idioms; (2) modality - refers to the tonal make-up of the medieval church music used during the sixteenth century; (3) cadence - a melodic or harmonic formula which occurs at the end of a composition, a section, or a phrase, conveying the impression of a momentary or permanent conclusion. Most cadences used in the music of Ralph Vaughan Williams were modal in nature, progressing generally from a chord built on the flat seventh scale degree to the tonic or from a chord built on the supertonic, proceeding to the tonic. He also uses the traditional dominant seventh sound proceeding to the tonic chord; (4) mystical quality - that quality which has a "spiritual meaning or reality that is neither apparent to the senses nor obvious to the intelligence." It is "based upon intuition, insight, or similar subjective experience;"³ (5) bimodality - the simultaneous

³ A. Merriam-Webster, Webster's Seventh New Colligate Dictionary (Massachusetts: G. and C. Merriam Co., 1963), p. 560-561.

use of two or more different tonalities; and (6) pentatonic scale - a scale which has five tones to the octave.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study will be limited in scope to ten selected anthems by Ralph Vaughan Williams. It will not encompass works for chorus and orchestra; neither will it include works entirely for women's voices or men's voices.

The scope can be further narrowed by designating these anthems as those for a chorus of mixed voices (S.A.T.B.), either with organ or piano accompaniment or a cappella.

All of the works examined in the foregoing study are sacred rather than secular in nature.

It is not the intent, on the part of the researcher, to compare these works with those of any other composer, or even to compare these works with those of different disciplines by the same composer, but rather to point out musical aspects utilized by Vaughan Williams, which show a direct influence of the English folk song, Tudor church music, and English nationalism.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The major component of this study involves primary sources. This includes the anthems of Vaughan Williams. Secondary sources were used in obtaining information concerning the life and works of Ralph Vaughan Williams. These sources were used in order to understand better the style of Vaughan Williams.

Chapter 2

A BIOGRAPHY OF RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

His Life

Ralph Vaughan Williams, a leading British composer, was born in Down Ampney in Gloucestershire on October 12, 1872. His initial exposure to the church was through his family background--his father was a clergyman.⁴

His first music theory teacher was his aunt, Miss Wedgwood. After having established a solid background under Miss Wedgwood, he studied Stainer's Harmony. Some of his early education was evidently taken by correspondence through Edinburgh University. During his early life, he also studied piano, violin, and organ, but soon realized that he was "entirely unsuited" for the organ.⁵

He attended preparatory school at Rottingdean, where he studied violin with W. M. Quirke, a well-known Brighton teacher. At Rottingdean, Mr. C. T. West, his piano teacher, gave him his first Bach. The music of Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) made a particular impression on him. This is evident because of his remark about Bach--"This Bach Album (Novello's Bach Album) was a revelation, something quite different from

⁴ A. L. Bacharach (ed.), British Music of Our Time (Penguin Books, 1951), p. 83.

⁵ Ralph Vaughan Williams, "Musical Autobiography," in Hubert Foss, Ralph Vaughan Williams: A Study (New York: Oxford University Press, 1950), pp. 18-19.

anything I knew, and Bach still remains for me in a niche by himself."⁶

In the 1880's, he had his first encounter with English music through Stainer and Bramley's Christmas Carols, New and Old.⁷

He began his formal education at Charterhouse School in London (1887-1890), and at Trinity College, Cambridge (1892-1895). In 1890-1892, and again in 1895-1896, he studied at the Royal College of Music in London where his teachers were Sir Walter Parratt (1841-1924), organ; Sir Charles Hubert Hastings Parry (1848-1918) and Sir Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924), composition.⁸ On his second trip to the Royal College of Music, he was privileged to help with the orchestra, under the guidance of Cecil Forsyth (1870-1941) and Gordon Jacob (1895-).⁹ In 1897, he studied abroad. He went to Berlin against the wishes of Stanford, who suggested that he go to Italy. From 1897-1898, he studied with Max Bruch (1838-1920) in Berlin. In 1900, he asked Sir Edward Elgar (1857-1934) if he might study with him. Lady Elgar responded by saying that Elgar was much too busy and she suggested Sir Granville Bantok (1868-1946). In the same year, he first met Cecil Sharp (1859-1924). This meeting with Sharp helped to substantiate what he already knew about the folk song as he states, "My intercourse with Cecil Sharp crystalized and confirmed what I already vaguely felt about the folk song and its relationship to the composer's art."¹⁰ During the summer

⁶ Ibid., pp. 19-21.

⁷ Ibid., p. 32.

⁸ Nicolas Slonimsky (ed), Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians (5th ed., New York: G. Schirmer, 1958), p. 1692.

⁹ Ralph Vaughan Williams, op. cit., p. 29.

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 30, 31, 34.

holidays, while in school, he heard his first Wagner opera at Munich.¹¹ At Cambridge he studied organ with Alan Gray (1855-1935) and directed a small choral society. As a music student, he learned by listening to rehearsals of Robert Schumann (1810-1856) and Johannes Brahms' (1833-1897) Pianoforte Quintets.¹² After his Doctor of Music degree from Cambridge in 1901, he devoted himself fully to the folk song.¹³ From 1901 on, "he appears rightly as a musician of the twentieth century."¹⁴ In 1903, he began collecting English folk songs and went to Sussex in search of folk songs in 1904.¹⁵ In 1904, he joined the English Folk Song Society and became quite interested in the native materials of English music.¹⁶ In 1905, he collected folk tunes in Norfolk. Folk music was now his first significant enthusiasm.¹⁷ From 1904-1906, Vaughan Williams was music editor of the new English Hymnal. He also composed a half dozen new hymn tunes, one of which is the well-known tune Sine Nomine (For All the Saints).¹⁸ In 1909, when he was already a mature composer, he went to Paris to seek advice from Maurice Ravel (1875-1937), and had several sessions with him to advance his techniques of composition still further.¹⁹ In 1911, a new trend of thought appeared

¹¹ Ibid., p. 22.

¹² Ibid., p. 26.

¹³ Percy M. Young, Vaughan Williams (London: Dennis Dolson, Ltd., 1953), p. 24.

¹⁴ Bacharach, op. cit., p. 84. ¹⁵ Young, op. cit., p. 24.

¹⁶ Slonimsky, op. cit., p. 1692. ¹⁷ Bacharach, op. cit., p. 84.

¹⁸ Donald Jay Grout, A History of Western Music (New York: W. W. Norton, Co., 1973), p. 672.

¹⁹ Slonimsky, op. cit., p. 1692.

with a new style of expression. "In this, the modern semi-mystical aspirations of Whitman are abandoned; their place is taken by the metaphysical mysticism of George Herbert. The music becomes 'aloof and cool.'"²⁰ The period before 1914 (during which his early works were written), was a period of discovery.²¹ In 1925, he helped to edit Songs of Praise and three years later, in 1928, he compiled the Oxford Book of Carols.²² He composed Job (the Blake ballet), his most popular work, in 1930.²³ It was a ballet whose inspiration came from the book of Job and the illustrations for it were by William Blake.²⁴ On December 18, 1931, at a celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of University College, Liverpool, he was given a degree of Doctor of Laws.²⁵ By February, 1939, his music was on Hitler's black list and his music was banned in Germany owing to his anti-Nazi propaganda. During this time, the London Music Festival took place, opening with a service at Westminster Abbey during which his Festival Te Deum was sung.²⁶ On December 14, 1951, the University of Bristol conferred

²⁰ Bacharach, op. cit., p. 86.

²¹ Hubert Foss, Ralph Vaughan Williams: A Study (New York: Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 80.

²² Grout, op. cit., p. 672.

²³ Bacharach, op. cit., p. 94.

²⁴ Simona Pakenham, Ralph Vaughan Williams: A Discovery of His Music (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1957), p. 94.

²⁵ Ursula Vaughan Williams, R. V. W.: A Biography of Ralph Vaughan Williams (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 189.

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 218, 226.

on him an honorary doctorate degree.²⁷ Vaughan Williams died in London, on August 26, 1958.²⁸

Influence of Former Teachers

Various teachers, throughout his education, had a great influence on him, and consequently, on the music which he wrote.

Some of his earlier teachers noted that Vaughan Williams was endowed with a "bubbling imagination;" late in developing, he was "unexpressive, almost incoherent, and yet totally unwilling to write commonplaces," and "determined to write what he wanted."²⁹

Charles Wood (1866-1929), a student of Stanford, taught Vaughan Williams. The grounding with Charles Wood must have stimulated his powers of thinking musically.³⁰ Vaughan Williams once remarked that he "was the finest technical instructor I've ever known."³¹

The teachers who were heralds of the English music of the Renaissance were C. H. H. Parry and Sir Charles V. Stanford.³² He was allowed to become a student of Parry at the Royal College of Music. Parry's watchword was "characteristic." Parry instructed Vaughan Williams to study more Beethoven, which he detested. Parry, as his instructor, insisted more on form than color; he also abhorred mere

²⁷ Ibid., p. 313.

²⁸ Slonimsky, op. cit., p. 1692.

²⁹ Ralph Vaughan Williams, op. cit., p. 44.

³⁰ Bacharach, op. cit., p. 84.

³¹ Ralph Vaughan Williams, op. cit., p. 25.

³² Grout, op. cit., p. 673.

luscious sound.³³ From Parry he gained "breadth of vision;" from Stanford, "the proprieties of construction, texture, and movement of parts;" and from another of his teachers, Bruch, "some hint of how to add the spice of color to a page of full score."³⁴ He was able also to learn from the two Wesleys, Samuel and Samuel Sebastian, but particularly from the younger.³⁵

A trace of impressionism is sensed through his works because of his study with Ravel in France. Ravel showed him how to orchestrate in points of color rather than in lines.³⁶ He achieved his special form of impressionism by "drawing away from the subtleties of Debussy's method, particularly in the matter of harmony, and by placing limitations on his own capacity for blunt utterance."³⁷ The mystical side of his nature shows itself musically in the form of impressionism which may owe something to this study with Ravel.³⁸ Ravel once told him that "one should only develop for the sake of arriving at something better."³⁹

Concerning style, Vaughan Williams once remarked that "He who has nothing to assert, has no style, and can have none; he who has something to assert will go as far in power of style as its momentousness

³³ Ralph Vaughan Williams, op. cit., pp. 23-24.

³⁴ Bacharach, op. cit., p. 84. ³⁵Foss, op. cit., p. 45.

³⁶ Ralph Vaughan Williams, op. cit., pp. 34-35.

³⁷ Young, op. cit., p. 32.

³⁸ Kenneth R. Long, The Music of the English Church (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1971), p. 425.

³⁹ Ralph Vaughan Williams, op. cit., p. 35.

and his conviction will carry him."⁴⁰ With Vaughan Williams, the strength of the assertion is the clue to his style.⁴¹

Sources for His Music

The motivational sources for his music were both national and cosmopolitan: the English folk song, hymnody, and literature on one hand, and the European tradition of Bach and Handel, Debussy, and Ravel on the other.⁴²

Vaughan Williams drew from three sources for his works in hymnody: (1) sixteenth and seventeenth century church melodies, (2) nineteenth century Welsh Methodist tunes, and (3) English secular folk songs.⁴³ The basic ingredients of his style derive from the Elizabethan madrigalists and the polyphonists of the Tudor era of church music. He uses a massive, broad, bare choral style,⁴⁴ e.g., vide discussion of O Praise the Lord of Heaven, p. 25.

The English Folk Song and Tudor Polyphony

In the revival of Tudor polyphony and English folk music, he introduces a new vocabulary, communicated to the generality of musicians and listeners through his music. It is for this reason that his influence on church music was so great. Tudor music gave of its best to the church, and English folk song of the ballad kind was, by reason of the

⁴⁰ George Bernard Shaw, Man and Superman; quoted in Percy M. Young, Vaughan Williams (London: Dennis Dolson, Ltd., 1953), p. 177.

⁴¹ Young, op. cit., p. 177. ⁴² Grout, op. cit., p. 672.

⁴³ Long, op. cit., p. 399.

⁴⁴ Joseph Machlis, Introduction to Contemporary Music (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1961), p. 297.

accident that the typical hymn-metre is still the metre of ballads, carols, and folk songs of the late middle ages, easily adaptable for the congregational singing of hymns.⁴⁵ Though the folk song had little direct effect on the composers of Services and anthems, it became an important element in English hymnody. It was Vaughan Williams who first tapped traditional secular folk melody, and he and Martin Shaw introduced others into Songs of Praise.⁴⁶ The way of the folk song was the way of freedom for the Englishman, and Vaughan Williams, being a collector, saw the English folk song in its own environment. The focal point of school music during this period was that of the folk song. He was the first English composer of recent time to contemplate not only nature, but nature as reflected in the simplicity of dance and the ballad.⁴⁷

The folk song shared certain characteristics--irregular phrases, rhythmic variation, the use of modes, and certain melodic devices--with Tudor music, and reinforced the latter's influence. Various aspects characterized Tudor music, specifically: (1) interest is evenly distributed among the various voice parts, all of which have melodic and rhythmic interest in themselves; (2) the bass shares melodic interest; (3) this music is conceived horizontally and there is interest in contrapuntal texture which is generally polyphonic, though sometimes chordal; (4) rhythmic patterns are usually irregular; (5) the use of irregular phrase lengths, imitation, overlapping of parts, cross accents, and

⁴⁵ Erik Routley, Twentieth Century Church Music (London: Herbert Jenkins, 1966), p. 26.

⁴⁶ Long, op. cit., p. 423. ⁴⁷ Young, op. cit., pp. 22,27,181.

suspensions impel the music forward. The use of these devices delay cadences and minimize their effect; (6) words inspire and partly shape the music; and (7) the music is often modal. Even when written in major and minor keys, they are often used without the harmonic implications of later classical practice.⁴⁸

The English folk song is a complex anthology of widely varying moods and idioms.⁴⁹ It is rhapsodic on one hand, yet narrative and dramatic on the other.⁵⁰

The most distinctive feature or element of the folk song is its melodic curve.⁵¹ The great choral tradition of England is melodic, not harmonic.⁵²

In the folk song, lay fundamentals of musical and emotional expression, and Vaughan Williams never departed from this belief. The folk song, by nature, concentrated in emotion. The words and music are inseparable because rhythmic discipline in the melodic contour is from the pattern of language--not the rhythm of day to day speech, but the more heightened forms of exceptional narrative.⁵³

His matured style assimilates folk song patterns, certain harmonic features that are related to Debussy, and polyphonic values that spring from the Tudor masters.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ Long, op. cit., pp. 422-423. ⁴⁹ Foss, op. cit., p. 68.

⁵⁰ Young, op. cit., p. 184.

⁵¹ A. E. F. Dickinson, Vaughan Williams (London: Faber and Faber, 1963), p. 103.

⁵² Foss, op. cit., p. 43. ⁵³ Young, op. cit., pp. 27, 81.

⁵⁴ Arthur Jacobs, Choral Music (Penguin Books, 1913), p. 283.

Another group of folk melodies have claimed a rightful place in worship; these are traditional, and sometimes ancient, carols, which have been popularized by the modern revival of carol singing. Vaughan Williams affected the folk song style in some of his own works, and a large number of pseudo-folk melodies were produced, supported by quasi-modal harmonies.⁵⁵

His Affiliation with the Church and Church Music

Vaughan Williams' close affiliation with the church and music of the church can be associated with or stem from the fact that he edited or helped to edit several English hymnals. In being an editor, he was trying to put right some of the things that he had found wrong with church music in his short career as an organist.⁵⁶ One of these hymnals was entitled Songs of Praise, first published in 1925. His primary aim was to make a collection of hymns that would be national in character. Robert Bridges, a former Poet Laureate, began the revival of hymnody during this time. His Yattendon Hymnal, published in 1899, was the first challenge to the debased hymnody of the era. It was noted in the Preface to the original edition, that "Songs of Praise is intended to include the full expression of that faith which is common to the English-speaking people today, both in the British commonwealth and in the United States." Most of the hymns were a product of the Victorian era. All of the newer hymnals "showed courage" by replacing weak and poorer hymns by words and music which were more worthy of the

⁵⁵ Long, op. cit., p. 423.

⁵⁶ Ursula Vaughan Williams, op. cit., p. 72.

great English tradition and more suitable for worship. There were "400,000 hymns in common use" at the end of the nineteenth century, but in the seven most important hymnals, only "sixteen hymns were common to them all."⁵⁷

In addition to Songs of Praise, he was also editor of the music for the English Hymnal (1906), and was the compiler of the Oxford Book of Carols (1928).⁵⁸

He was among the first to rebel against the eighteenth and nineteenth century orthodoxy and his music is unlike that of any composer before him. He made no attempt to "forgo" a new music; rather he looked into the distant past. His music formed a bridge across the centuries.⁵⁹

Ralph Vaughan Williams and Gustav Host were the pioneers of the first major English music dissent of the twentieth century and Vaughan Williams was the most prolific of the two.⁶⁰

That part of Vaughan Williams' output, which grows from a religious tradition is of great importance; an understanding of his attitude to music of the hymn tune order is probably as significant to fuller comprehension of his larger works as any other influence. In the hymn tunes, cantatas, and miscellaneous works for church, he naturally expresses the joyous side of the Christian faith.⁶¹ With each work, he lived through a necessary stage in his spiritual development.⁶²

⁵⁷ Percy Dearmer (words ed.) and Ralph Vaughan Williams and Martin Shaw (music eds.), Songs of Praise (London: Oxford University Press, 1931), pp. iii, iv, v.

⁵⁸ Foss, op. cit., p. 212. ⁵⁹ Long, op. cit., pp. 424-425.

⁶⁰ Routley, op. cit., p. 23. ⁶¹ Young, op. cit., pp. 35-36.

⁶² Young, op. cit., p. 178, quoting Neville Cardus of Mahler.

"He had an alert, questioning attitude toward things religious, and had a taste for the mysterious."⁶³ There was zest for local scholarship among the established clergy which had an influence on Vaughan Williams and his writing. Respect for architecture and for liturgy gave to recent English nationalism an apt narrowness. Church music during the late nineteenth century, laid emphasis on the practical, but generally ignored the spiritual. For this, German training was largely responsible--a training which clearly was concerned with the association of a general, rather than a particular, and cognate form of melodic and rhythmic contour with English words.⁶⁴

In liturgical music (including anthems), his contribution is slight and somewhat scanty. He has one large work from this area--the Mass in G Minor, from which came O Vos Omnes (Is it Nothing to You?). He was said to have really captured the old liturgical spirit and atmosphere. The Mass in G Minor was the only work written by Vaughan Williams in a direct recreation of the polyphonic style of earlier English masters.⁶⁵

His Musical Style

His musical style changes with the times in two respects: (1) through the evolutionary principle with the music--trial and error developed new modes of expression; and (2) social factors--Vaughan Williams had no stylistic god parents who nurtured him to maturity nor has he been responsible for the inauguration of a

⁶³ Routley, op. cit., p. 30.

⁶⁴ Young, op. cit., pp. 15,19.

⁶⁵ Foss, op. cit., p. 198.

recognizable school. He has stood apart in independence and has warned others to observe that rule.⁶⁶

His works do not fall naturally into stylistic periods. In general, two main trends are discernable: one has to do with humanity and nature founded on an early attraction toward folk music. The other is the mystical aspect, from his early affinity with Tudor church music.⁶⁷

Vaughan Williams had a natural and national aspiration toward a deeply personal appreciation of the mystical, yet at the same time, observed humanist standards, centering on devotion to the influence of the national church. Musically, mysticism might be connected with a shifting of tonality, thematic transience and certain placement of voices. Also, moving triads in dramatic fervour and a sequence of first inversion triads over an independent bass line give the effect of a mystical quality to the music.⁶⁸

The influence of the plainsong on the style of Vaughan Williams is to be considered as an inevitable stage in the process of English religious and musical thought.⁶⁹

Vaughan Williams had a growing interest and a developing skill in writing a rich and moving contrapunal texture. This contrapunal texture was not fully developed until comparatively late in life. He learned a curious bareness and even a rigid harmonic style,⁷⁰ probably from his German training. Polyphony, in everyday useages, is melodically intensified by harmonic underlining. He, in his writing, relies heavily

⁶⁶ Young, *op. cit.*, pp. 48,178. ⁶⁷ Bacharach, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

⁶⁸ Young, *op. cit.*, pp. 19,41,188. ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁷⁰ Foss, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

on contrapuntal means for moments of great intensity.⁷¹ He was as much concerned with the development of ancient idioms as with the exploiting of new ones.⁷² He aims to assimilate the varied contrapuntal styles of Palestrina and the Elizabethan composers.⁷³ One of the favored old forms was that of the Elizabethan fantasia with flowing counterpoint.⁷⁴

Vaughan Williams also assimilated the contrapuntal style of Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750), featured by thematic development in a contrapuntal context. From Bach, he took the idea of combining voices and instruments at different levels of expression. One characteristic is that of free use of the sharpened sixth moving to the tonic chord. From French impressionism, he learned to draw melodic lines three or four notes deep using liquescent chordal movement,⁷⁵ e.g., vide discussion of Is it Nothing to You?, p. 34. An important innovation of Vaughan Williams was that of substituting two or three-part counterpoint occurring when the texture is enriched, not by adding more parts, but by doubling existing parts at the third and fifth (or sixth) above or below, resulting in streams of parallel chords,⁷⁶ e.g., vide discussion of O Taste and See, p. 57.

Another melodic characteristic is that of a melody which is composed of a gapped scale.⁷⁷

Within the modal system, the tonic acted as a controlling

⁷¹ Young, op. cit., p. 186. ⁷² Routley, op. cit., p. 23.

⁷³ Dickinson, op. cit., p. 89. ⁷⁴ Machlis, op. cit., p. 298.

⁷⁵ Dickinson, op. cit., p. 89. ⁷⁶ Long, op. cit., p. 425.

⁷⁷ Dickinson, op. cit., p. 24.

degree within the scale, while the fifth degree (the dominant) functioned as a source of stabilization. There was a hierarchy of importance as to scale degrees. The bass gravitated to a given tonic from its dominant or pulled to the tonic from the subdominant.⁷⁸

In later works, he adopted daring harmonic procedures, building up simple chord formations into complex dissonances of great expressivity. His natural expression was diatonic, with strong leanings toward modal harmony.⁷⁹ Other techniques include: (1) an enharmonic change and elevation of mood,⁸⁰ (2) a shying away from chromatic harmony,⁸¹ and (3) the use of Brahms-Sibelius-Kodaly pentatonic ladder of rising fourths and a succession of chords waving back and forth.⁸²

Melodically, various aspects characterize the style of Vaughan Williams: he is fond of the flatted seventh scale degree for modal cadences;⁸³ his cadences lead, not to finality, but to new enlightenment; every avoidance of tonic and dominant is sought by the composer--the flattened seventh, the modal variants, the Bach rising bass, the Purcellian moving bass, and strange, but understandable, chord progressions;⁸⁴ the ascending fourth is also predominant;⁸⁵ he is fond of consecutive fifths and other types of continuous patterns;⁸⁶ the

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 89.

⁷⁹ Machlis, op. cit., p. 298.

⁸⁰ Young, op. cit., p. 60.

⁸¹ Machlis, op. cit., p. 298.

⁸² Bacharach, op. cit., p. 91.

⁸³ Machlis, op. cit., p. 298.

⁸⁴ Foss, op. cit., p. 109.

⁸⁵ Machlis, op. cit., p. 299.

⁸⁶ Joseph Holbrooke, Contemporary British Composers (London: Cecil Palmer, 1951), p. 95.

drop of a semi-tone;⁸⁷ pentatonic writing; and, the common chord figure.⁸⁸

As his involvement in the native materials of English music became intense, he remarked on one occasion, "If we want to find the ground work of our English culture, we must look below the surface . . . 'competition,' you will say that is just the sporting spirit; nothing to do with art. Well, unless we have learnt that art comes to the Englishman unconsciously, we have got to learn the first thing about the spirit which has produced our great poetry, our great drama, and our great pictures."⁸⁹ Vaughan Williams was one who believed in being involved as is evidenced in the remark he made--"the composer must not shut himself up and think about art: he must live with his fellows and make his art an expression of the whole life of the community."⁹⁰

His natural instincts as a composer began with the Englishman's desire to sing. The English choral school of the sixteenth century gave him a "model for freedom of rhythm, supplement of phrasing, and unsquareness of balance in phrases."⁹¹ His private language was an instrument able to express all shades of emotion and reasoning that the public might want.⁹² The search for the exact expression of his meaning has always been Vaughan Williams' clearest aim and probably the most troublesome difficulty.⁹³

The democratic zeal of Vaughan Williams caused him to consistently

⁸⁷ Foss, op. cit., p. 90. ⁸⁸ Machlis, op. cit., pp. 298-299.

⁸⁹ W. H. Hadow, Introduction to English Music (London, 1931) in Young, op. cit., p. 55.

⁹⁰ Machlis, op. cit., p. 296. ⁹¹ Foss, op. cit., p. 69, 153.

⁹² Bacharach, op. cit., p. 92. ⁹³ Foss, op. cit., p. 125.

write music for all sorts of conditions of amateur performance. He believed in democracy, but not in luxury. His works were appreciated by contemporary audiences more than almost any other English composer or musician of the time. The music, whether in church or chapel, or choral unions, was a social force.⁹⁴ Perhaps more than any single composer, he ushered church music into the twentieth century.⁹⁵

He had a desire for vocal and linguistic freedom⁹⁶ and ranged in his choice of poets.⁹⁷ The speech rhythm of the English language bears some responsibility for much of Vaughan Williams' rhythmic texture. There is the important idealized by-product of speech rhythm shown in the motet and the madrigals.⁹⁸ He "hammers" musical poetry out of musical prose. He takes a conventional music technique and makes an entirely novel kind of music out of it.⁹⁹ In addition to the variety of poets which he used, the Bible was also used for his texts in vocal music.¹⁰⁰

A hymn tune which was frequently used in England during this time was that of "St. Anne,"¹⁰¹ consequently it is not surprising that

⁹⁴ Young, op. cit., pp. 28,49,294.

⁹⁵ Wienandt and Young, op. cit., p. 362.

⁹⁶ Foss, op. cit., p. 153. ⁹⁷ Machlis, op. cit., p. 297.

⁹⁸ Young, op. cit., p. 186. ⁹⁹ Foss, op. cit., p. 110.

¹⁰⁰ Machlis, op. cit., p. 297.

¹⁰¹ "St. Anne" first appeared anonymously in the Supplement to the New Version of the Psalms, sixth edition (London, 1708), as a setting for Psalm 62, and was named "St. Anne." In Philip Hart's Collection (London, 1720), William Croft is named as the composer. The tune is named for St. Anne's church, Soho, where Croft was organist. Handel used the tune in his Chandos Anthem. The opening phrase of the melody appears in J. S. Bach's "Fugue in E-flat," more popularly known now as "St. Anne Fugue."

Vaughan Williams uses this hymn tune in some of his works,¹⁰² e.g., vide Lord, Thou Hast Been Our Refuge and O How Amiable.

Vaughan Williams found poetry and philosophical literature, in general, an effective guide to creative imagination. In this, he exhibits a national tendency; almost every English composer has conceived music as from a positive literary basis, for literature is the chief mode of artistic expression in England.¹⁰³

The music tradition of England at the end of the nineteenth century was heavily weighted by an artificial diction. There was nothing independent or individualistic.¹⁰⁴

Contemporary music in 1910, referring to the choral works, was contemporary in that it belonged to its period and fulfilled the demands made by musical society. It was, in general terms, intelligible. The last great choral works which may still be considered "popular" are those which were produced during this time.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² William Jensen Reynolds, Hymns of Our Faith: A Handbook for the Baptist Hymnal (Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1964), p. 53.

¹⁰³ Young, op. cit., p. 41. ¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 26.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., pp. 449.

Chapter 3

THE ANTHEMS

In this chapter, each of the ten selected anthems will be analyzed. Various components of music analysis will be utilized in the discussion of these works, those being: (1) sound, (2) form, (3) harmony, (4) melody, (5) rhythm, and (6) relationship of the text to the music.

Those aspects influencing sound include timbre, range, tessitura, and dynamics. The continuous derivation or repetition and contrast are processes which affect the form of a composition. The length of the text and textual climax also influence the form. Harmony, cadences, dissonances, contrapuntal devices, and chords affecting the influence of the text. Rhythm incorporates meter, tempo, texture, syncopation, hemiola, and other special accentuations, and regular and irregular patterning of rhythm. Melody utilizes both new and derived material and characteristics such as range, mode, tessitura, melodic curve and texture influence melody.

When possible, a brief statement as to the background of each composition will be given.

Although Vaughan Williams' anthems are small in number, they have exercised an influence of considerable proportion upon subsequent

development of that form in both England and America.¹⁰⁶

He used the designation of motet for the majority of his church choral pieces, and only seldom, the term anthem. Most of the pieces entitled motet are unaccompanied, although there is no delineation of type or style.¹⁰⁷

Each anthem will be designated as either easy, medium difficult, or difficult. Those designated as easy could be performed by a small, amateur church choir; those of medium difficulty could be performed by a more experienced church choir or a good high school choir; and lastly, those which are difficult should only be attempted by excellent church choirs or college choirs.

In reflecting on Vaughan Williams' work in this area, it can be observed that most of his songs do not have an extensive range, and all are nearly flawless in prosody.¹⁰⁸ The accompaniments of his compositions are often allusive.¹⁰⁹ He has a tendency toward a robust rhythm, serene melody, and modality--all stemming from folk music.¹¹⁰

Vaughan Williams made it a usual practice of writing with his own pen, program notes for the first performance of his works.¹¹¹ Another practice of his, which might explain a differentiation in the

¹⁰⁶ Wienandt and Young, op. cit., p. 362. ¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 348.

¹⁰⁸ Sergius Kagen, Music for the Voice (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1968), p. 536.

¹⁰⁹ Young, op. cit., p. 39.

¹¹⁰ Guido Pannain, Modern Composers (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., 1932), p. 855.

¹¹¹ Foss, op. cit., p. 151.

date of the composition and the date of publication, is that after a first hearing, he invariably revised his works which accounts for dates of publication frequently being much later than dates of the composition.¹¹²

The smaller scale works of Vaughan Williams serve to illustrate two points: (1) the development of the composer, with special reference to the creation of a style, and (2) a decline in domestic appreciation of music.¹¹³

He composed some fifty choral works in all.¹¹⁴

For the purposes of this study, the abbreviation of "m" will be used for the word "measure" while "mm" will designate the plural form.

For the convenience of the reader, Table I of the appendix will contain a listing of each anthem, available versions of each, octavo or catalogue number (when available), copyright date, publisher, and approximate duration.^{time.}

0 Praise the Lord of Heaven

This anthem was first performed at the annual Festival of London Church Choir Association on November 13, 1913 and was Vaughan Williams' first published anthem.

In this composition, Vaughan Williams has freed himself from the strict rhythm of the classical period and has preoccupied himself with the Elizabethan madrigal style. He uses very massive, broad, bare

¹¹² Young, op. cit., p. 43. ¹¹³ Ibid, p. 76.

¹¹⁴ Jacobs, op. cit., p. 283.

chordal style. A primary technique used in divorcing himself of the strict rhythm of the classical period is through the use of hemiola, frequently used throughout.

O Praise the Lord of Heaven is an easy anthem but is intended for a large building and a chorus of "some hundreds of voices." It requires two choruses and a semi-chorus. The semi-chorus should be about one-sixth the size of either of the two full choruses. With small choirs, the semi-chorus may be sung by two soprani, one alto, one tenor, and one bass. This easy anthem, being in the Elizabethan madrigal style, is to be performed without accompaniment.

The text is based on Psalm 148 (the Prayer Book Version). The psalmist exhorts the celestial, the terrestrial, and the rational creatures to the praise of God. The text has a general form of A B A with the form of the music being similar (A B A'). Section A deals with the celestial and terrestrial elements, while section B encompasses the rational being--that of man himself. Section A (mm 1-50); Section B (mm 51-125); Section A' (mm 126-162).

The texture of section A is basically homophonic in nature while section B becomes more contrapunal.

There are frequently points at which tone-painting can be observed. In mm 53-55, his use of parallel octaves in the bass and tenor might be a type of tone-painting, describing the ominous dragons and deeps. The poco animato beginning at m 57 might be used in transmitting the meaning of the words "fire" and "hail" within the context of the entire text.

The anthem begins in the transposed mixolydian mode, but avoids the F-sharp (or the third scale degree). He tends to move away from

the mixolydian mode in mm 43-50 by using F-natural, but quickly returns to the mixolydian mode in m 51 with the insertion of F-sharp and also with the return of the initial theme in the male voices of choruses I and II.

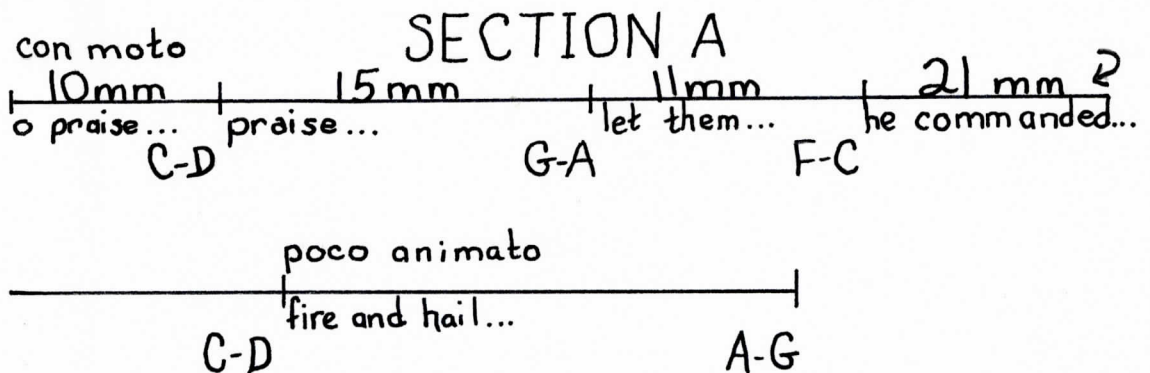
The first part of section B (beginning at m 79) utilizes choruses I and II only. Although the section begins homophonically, it very soon evolves into an imitative, contrapunal texture. There is also a change of tempo from the A section, marked con moto, to a piu lento marking. As the contrapunal part of section B enters (m 86) it is again marked con moto. The contrapunal texture along with the marking of con moto adds vitality and an increase of tension to the composition. An interesting effect occurs at m 101, when each choir utilizes the same text. The designated note values give a type of antiphonal effect as both choirs sing on the first beat, while one of the two choirs releases on beat two. The word which continues to be held through is the word "praise." The last part of section B (mm 111-125) is again marked lento as the semi-chorus again returns with homophonic texture. As the semi-chorus breaks into unison singing, the two choruses serve as a type of chordal accompaniment, or "comment" chordally on the text sung previously by the semi-chorus. This might be verified by the fact that choruses I and II are marked ppp or pp while the semi-chorus is marked p or mp throughout the section. As section B closes, all parts (semi-chorus and choruses I and II) move homophonically to a cadence on E.

As the composition moves on to the recapitulation (section A'), choruses I and II now take the material, which initially was introduced by chorus I, and the semi-chorus is given the response which previously

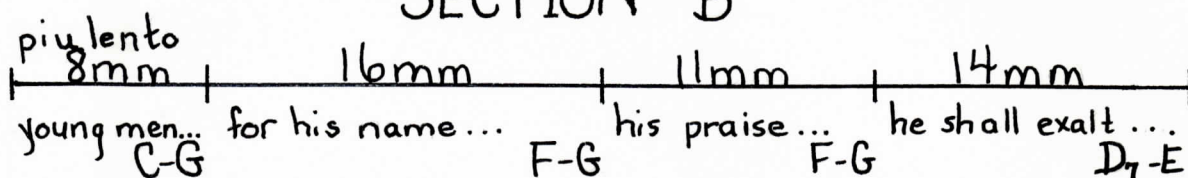
was sung by the second chorus. Again the tempo marking is con moto. The words are reminiscent of section A ("Praise to the Lord of Heaven"). The recapitulation elaborates on a short portion of the complete text. In mm 139-150, there is a gradual crescendo throughout the parts, as each chorus enters one measure after the other, and each chorus crescendos in the same place of the phrase. At m 151, Vaughan Williams divides the semi-chorus still further than four parts (now five parts). As the composition draws to a close, a very full homophonic texture is used as he begins to write in his own ritardando by using dotted whole notes. In the final two measures, there is still a further broadening as indicated by a molto rallentando marking with tenuto marks over each note, a fermata over the last dotted whole note, and the indication of "long pause" written in the music itself.

Vaughan Williams, in his writing, makes frequent use of mediant key relationships. In this composition, this technique can be evidenced in mm 88-91 and mm 92-95 (chorus I)--similar passages occur but in the latter the structure of the inner voice parts differ.

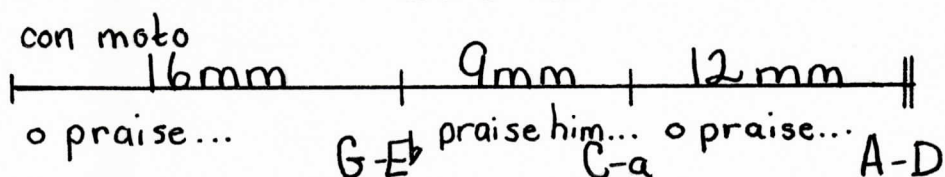
The cadences used throughout are modal in nature. They generally progress from ii - I or from a chord based on a flat seven to I.



SECTION B



SECTION A'

Lord, Thou Hast Been Our Refuge

This anthem has been called a miniature fantasia of declamation and polyphony.¹¹⁵ The first eighty-three measures of this composition are to be performed a cappella. This is followed by an organ interlude, beginning in m 108. From m 108 to the end, the choir and trumpet are accompanied by the organ. This composition, of medium difficulty, calls for a chorus, a semi-chorus, and organ or orchestra. Quite extravagant instrumental forces are used for such a relatively simple anthem.¹¹⁶ The use of accompaniment is unusual in that Vaughan Williams provides the option of an orchestra or organ. The orchestra contains flutes,

¹¹⁵ Dickinson, op. cit., p. 220.

¹¹⁶ Wienandt and Young, op. cit., p. 354.

oboes, clarinets, and bassoons; four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, organ, and strings or simply strings and organ. The instruments are present only in the last third of the piece. After nine pages of a cappella singing with several key changes, it is quite risky to have the accompaniment enter. Vaughan Williams solves this by opening the extensive organ interlude with an F-sharp pedal point, quite far removed from the E-flat major chord on which the choral section ended; thus, obviating any pitch discrepancies. The question of such a sizable orchestra as the composition specifies and of its relatively limited use in a piece apparently intended for normal church use, must be taken either as a sign of his relative inexperience in the genre at its writing, or as an indication that he intended it as much for choral societies as for church groups, for his later works called for extra instrumentation only when a special occasion had been the reason for their composition, and even then, a simple organ part was supplied for ordinary performing circumstances.¹¹⁷

The third section is much like the opening, the whole composition ending in a contrapunal section which borrows fragments from the "St. Anne" theme. In mm 137-146, the rhythm of the words and the accents over the given notes are deceiving. The meter is in three, but the accents over the notes give a feeling of two. The rhythm of the tenor (mm 141-145) is also deceiving because of the hemiola pattern, therefore again, giving a feeling of two. The theme of the chorale returns for the final time in the bass line (m 149). This is begun just before the trumpet finishes its statement of the theme.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 355.

The texture of mm 1-26 is that of homophony in the full chorus which supports the recitative style of the semi-chorus. Measures 27-39 are a continuation of the homophonic texture by the full chorus. As the poco piu mosso section begins, the full chorus serves as a chordal accompaniment in long, sustained tones to the semi-chorus, which engages in imitation between the S/A and T/B. The imitation occurs at the unison, one measure apart. At the conclusion of the phrase (m 49), the full chorus continues in homophonic texture, the semi-chorus returning to the recitative style (m 56). In mm 67-83, the two choirs utilize the same text and except for the first phrase (mm 67-71), they sing antiphonally. The middle portion of the composition consists of an instrumental interlude. Measures 108-121 are reminiscent of the initial motive, introduced by the semi-chorus. From m 122 to the end, the choruses combine in contrapunal section borrowing fragments from "St. Anne." In preparation for the conclusion of the work, m 137 begins a new contrapunal section. The melodic line ascends through the parts as they enter over a two-octave span, the climax on a₂ in the soprano.

The unifying element of the work is the consolidation of Psalm 91, in the Book of Common Prayer with Isaac Watt's versification of the same psalm, "O God Our Help in Ages Past." Musical treatment is made of the two texts in striking contrast: a semi-chorus is assigned the prose text in a unison melodic setting while the full chorus sings the underlying hymn to the traditional tune, "O God Our Help in Ages Past" ("St. Anne") in four-part harmony. The significance of the dynamic marks is to create, in the hymn, a mood of sustained, quiet confidence against the plaintive cry of the psalm. The second major section exhibits a kind of word-painting not found in this anthem prior to this

time. The psalm refers to a thousand years in God's sight as a mere watch in the night, and on the words "They are even as a sleep and fade away suddenly like the grass," Vaughan Williams uses an extremely thick, low-ranged harmonic texture employing at the same time, a descending parallel harmonic structure (mm 29-32). Here, the major-major seventh chords add much to the total effect. The degree of dissonances employed here (mm 36-39), while not at all severe by contemporary standards of secular music, was still novel in early twentieth century church music, at least in England and America.¹¹⁸

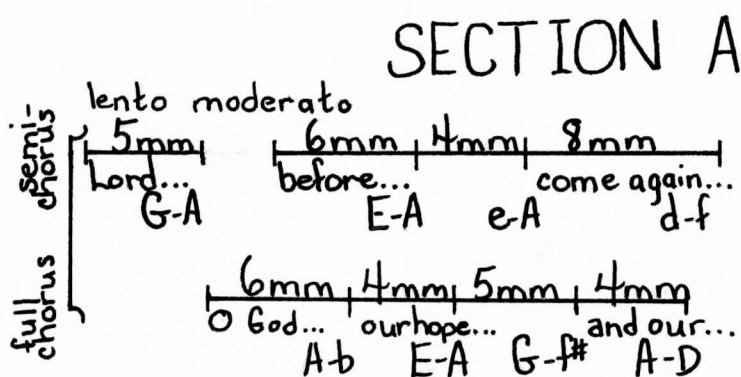
Word-painting occurs in mm 27-39 in particular. The fact that the first phrase ends on the weak part of the beat might give one a feeling of "scattering" as stated in the text. Likewise, in m 32, the triplet ending on the weak part of a beat, and the feeling of the triplet itself suggests "suddenly." In the third phrase (mm 33-36), the span of the melody is a third, the top note C, occurring on last syllable of the word "groweth"--the progression of the phrase is from A to B-flat and then to C. In the next phrase (mm 36-39), the melodic line moves down by step and then up again by step, depicting "the evening is cut down, dried up and withered."

The melodic line--mm 3-5--establishes the key of D minor, only to shift abruptly to D major, with the entry of the full choir in m 6. Tension is heightened in mm 15-16 as the semi-chorus reverts again to D minor while the full choir remains in D major--a momentary bimodality. Vaughan Williams may have given, at this point, purposeful musical underscoring to the textual dichotomy, apparent in the phrase, "Thou

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 362.

turnest man to destruction," and the reference to God as "Our hope for years to come."¹¹⁹

In m 25, there is a return to D minor. In this homophonic section (mm 27-39), most of the chord qualities are those of the major or major seventh. The F-natural in the melodic line, which is the mediant in D minor, makes a smooth transition to the section in F-major. The F-major section ends in m 39 on the minor dominant, which smoothly progresses to the next section in G minor. The middle part of the poco piu mosso section, beginning in m 51, begins in C minor but quickly changes to E-flat minor (m 54). The entire section ends in the key of E-flat major (m 80). The organ interlude begins on a distant tone, F-sharp. This F-sharp becomes the main stabilizing feature in the interlude as it is being used as a pedal point. The return of section A' (m 108) is again in D minor, changing to D major in m 112 and to B minor in m 116. There again is a shift of key at the con moto section to D major and this key remains to the end of the composition.



¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 363.

SECTION B

poco meno lento (andante) *poco più mosso* *poco più lento*

semi chorus

7mm | 8mm | 8mm | 9mm | 10mm

as soon... in the morning.. we consumed.. for when... is told...

E^b-F g^7-c $F-c$ E^b-F D^b-E^b

turn thee... satisfy...

d^b-E^b a^b-e^b

full chorus

4mm | 4mm | 6mm

turn thee... be gracious... so shall...

F^b-e^b d^b-e^b f^7-E^b

ORGAN INTERLUDE
(25 mm)

SECTION A'

tempo primo (lento) con moto

both choruses

5mm | 6mm | 14mm | 24mm

Lord... before... and the glorious... prosper thou...

$G-A$ $E-A$ $f^\#-G$

trumpet

7mm | 4mm | 8mm

$A-b$ $E-A$ $G-f^\#$

trumpet & both trumpets

15mm

$G-D$

$G-D$

Is it Nothing to You? (O Vos Omnes)

This motet is scored for eight parts, S.S.A.A.T.T.B.B., and alto solo, and is to be performed a cappella. It might be classified as a composition of medium difficulty. The text comes from Lamentation I, 12-14, and Hosea XIV, 1. The words come from the service of Tenebrae for Maundy Thursday, a ceremony that he had heard at Westminster

Cathedral and found deeply impressive.¹²⁰ The frequent change of meter gives the text a natural flavor, a "chant-like" character as is designated in the marking "in free rhythm." In m 29, the quarter rest in all parts except the alto solo gives emphasis and importance to the word "desolate." This gives a dramatic musical effect. From m 53 to the end, the phrase, "O Israel" is stated various times. The first three times the dynamic level is that of pp; the fourth time it is a ff level, possibly indicating a plea. The last time this phrase is sung at a piano dynamic level, perhaps as an afterthought. The texture throughout is generally homophonic, utilizing imitative devices in various places. The female choir opens the composition, singing for quite an extended time, after which, the male choir joins in m 53. There is a type of dialogue or antiphonal singing which occurs in the latter portion of the composition. As the composition draws to a close, both choirs combine and sing as one.

This motet, as are many of his other works, is modal. The first part (mm 1-52) is in the transposed mixolydian mode (from C to C) with E-flat and A-flat serving as chromatic tones. The last half (mm 53-end) is composed of frequent mediant relationships: The section begins with an A major chord, the mediant relation to C, the tonality of the first part. In mm 55-57 one finds an F-minor sound, the mediant relation to A. This phrase ends in m 58 on a C-major triad which might relate back to the tonality of the first part. Measure 58 begins a phrase in A major, again, the mediant relation to F. The pick-up by the female choir in

¹²⁰ Ursula Vaughan Williams, op. cit., p. 142.

m 62 is an A-major chord which proceeds to an F-sharp major triad, a mediant relation to F-sharp. F-sharp then progresses to a D minor tonality, then to B major, back to D minor, and finally to A major as the composition concludes.

The basic movement throughout the entire work, but more specifically in the first half, is that of a "string" of parallel triads or triads in parallel motion, so very characteristic of the musical style of Vaughan Williams. Juxtaposition or near juxtaposition of tones only a half step apart seem to "confuse" the ear as to the tonality. The first real break in the continuous quarter note rhythm occurs in m 48. It is truly a definite contrast in the constant quarter note pattern prevalent from the beginning. This also points up the words "O Israel, O Israel," which is the focal point or crux of the entire work.

Tone-painting, as has frequently occurred in his works, is utilized again. The descending vocal lines in mm 29-31 musically describe the words "desolate and faint." The second time the phrase, "They are wreathed and come about my neck," is sung (mm 39-41) the voices enter at two-beat intervals, not always in imitation, but move in various directions, describing the intertwining of "my transgressions." A melisma occurs in the word "fall" which is characterized by a generally descending melodic line.

SECTION A

andantino

S.S.A.A.	4mm	6mm	8mm	8mm	6mm
	is it... behold... which is...		and it... desolate...		
	B ^b -c	B ^b -c	G-C	c-eb	B ^b -C
Alto Solo			4mm	3mm	4mm
			from... d-c	he hath... F-eb	the yoke...

S.S.A.A. | 16mm |
 they are... B^b-c
 Alto solo | 2mm |
 from whom...
 F-C

SECTION B

più lento

S.S.A.A. | 3mm | 3mm 4mm |
 O Israel... O Israel...
 B^b-c D-B c-A

T.T.B.B. | 4mm | 4mm | 2mm 4mm |
 O Israel... O Israel... Return...
 C₇-f G-a D-B c-A

O How Amiable

O How Amiable was originally written for the Abinger Pageant in 1934, and is an anthem to be used for the dedication of church or for other festival occasions.

This composition is an excellent example of the vocal simplicity with which Vaughan Williams can write and it demonstrates his efficient skill in melodic writing. It is written for S.A.T.B. with organ accompaniment. Much of this work is sung in unison and where there are

multiple parts, they are usually doubled--S/T and A/B. Much of the activity and musical complexities occur in the organ accompaniment. The accompaniment adds interest and gives substance to the composition.

The words of the text are taken from Psalms 84 and 90. The composition ends with the hymn tune, "St. Anne" or "O God Our Help in Ages Past."

Vaughan Williams goes through a series of modulations during the course of the work: from E-flat major to G minor to D-flat major. These key relationships give a balance to the composition in that it begins and ends in the same key. There is a definite tempo change, about half way through--from ♩ = 60 to ♩ = 100. This change in tempo and the surge felt in modulating rather abruptly from B-flat major up to D-flat major gives added impetus to the change of direction in the text--from that of earthly creatures to that of God, the higher being.

The main melodic motif can be observed even from the beginning in the organ prelude--it occurs in imitation at a two-beat interval. Motifs from the main theme are seen throughout the accompaniment. The accompaniment can be characterized by parallel movement of chords. This type of writing is particularly evident in mm 23-34.

At the tempo change, one finds the first forecast of the "St. Anne" tune which is not actually sung until the end of the composition, (m 35 - organ pedal entrance). It is interesting to observe the integration of both tunes (mm 35-36 - "St. Anne," and the previous melody - mm 37-38). Part of the "St. Anne" theme also occurs in the melodic line (m 39, beats 2, 3, and 4 - m 40, beat 1). In mm 41-44, the alto and bass lines have the melody and the soprano and tenor have a type of obligato. The entire composition concludes, in chorale style, using

the "St. Anne" hymn with all parts in unison or in octaves, except for the last two measures in which the parts are doubled once more.

SECTION A

andante maestoso
5 mm

organ introduction
Key: E^b

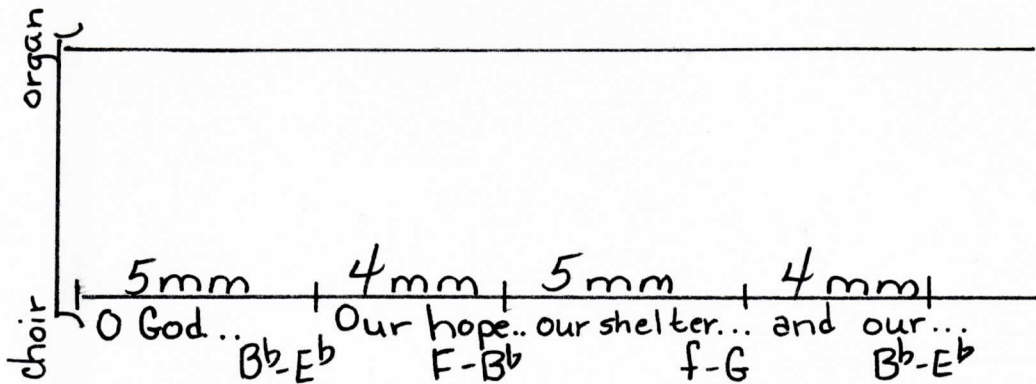
choir
4 mm | 4 mm | 4 mm ||
o how... my soul... my heart...
f⁷-E^b f⁷-E^b f⁷-E^b
mm mm mm

organ
Key: g
Key: A^b
3 mm

choir
2 mm | 3 mm | 3 mm | 2 mm | 5 mm ||
yea... and the... even... my... blessed are...
a⁷-g E^b-g a⁷-g F-B^b F-B^b
dm dm

organ
4 mm

choir
Key: E^b
4 mm | 4 mm || 8 mm
the glorius... prosper... o prosper...
b^b-A^b G-D^b B^b-E^b
mm



Festival Te Deum


The Festival Te Deum is a work which was founded on traditional themes.

The vocal parts (S.A.T.B.) might be categorized as being medium difficult while the accompaniment is somewhat more difficult because of the rhythmic intricacies and the grandiose, full-textured style. The accompaniment is not specified for any particular medium. Full score and orchestral parts may be hired.

The text of the composition reads very much like a creed.



Tone-painting occurs at various points: in the phrase from mm 15-20, the highest note occurs in m 18 on the word "heaven;" a melisma of descending thirds occurs in m 25, describing the word "cry;" in mm 70-71, the relaxation of the rhythm and harmonic action might denote "comforter;" in mm 89-90, the visual appearance of the parts pictures the word "open" as the parts open from a unison, to a second, to a third, and finally to a sixth.

The texture is that of unison and octave singing and homophonic texture. The unison and open fifth and open fourth sound gives the composition a very "festive" sound.

The anthem is based on two unifying factors: numerous mode changes and a rhythmic motif--  . It begins in the transposed mixolydian mode--from F to F with the characteristic lowered seventh scale degree. Vaughan Williams juxtaposes notes only a half step from each other, which tends to "confuse" the ear as to the tonality. Since the lowered scale degree is characteristic of the mixolydian mode, the juxtaposition of, for example, E-flat and E-natural in mm 3-4 becomes very crucial. In mm 7-8, the rhythmic motif, originally appearing in the instrumental introduction, occurs again.

The work begins in the transposed mixolydian mode, the mode changing in mm 12-26 (except for mm 14-15) to that of the transposed aeolian mode (D to D). Although this section appears to be in the aeolian mode, there is a hint at the mixolydian mode in mm 14-15 with the inclusion of E-flat. In mm 12-14, Vaughan Williams seems to have made it a point to avoid the note C, which is the leading tone. In m 27, he promptly resolves the dominant sound in an avoided cadence, by progressing to a vi chord, rather than the usual V chord in D. This progression puts one now in the ionian mode. Again, the main rhythmic motif recurs in the vocal parts. Measure 31 is a diminution of note values from the previous four measures. Measure 33 begins a new ionian mode, but at a fourth below the previous one. He deceives the ear, again, by inserting E-flat in the vocal score and accompaniment (m 39), but quickly changes back to E-natural three beats later. The lower part in mm 39-40 is a melody within itself. The melodic motif from the beginning of the composition to this point has gradually become more complex: in m 1, it was stated very simply in octaves; in m 12, it was stated and is supported with ornamentation in the lower part of

the accompaniment; and in m 39, it was preceded with a scale passage in the right hand and a type of countermelody in the left hand. Measures 42-71 are in the dorian mode with a hint of the mixolydian mode in mm 51-52 with E-flat and B-flat. The portion of the melody in m 49 sounds very much like one of the previous anthems which was analyzed-- "O How Amiable," (vide, p. 37.). The D-major triad in m 57 acts as a tierce de picardi in the dorian mode, but he immediately cancels the F-sharp one beat later, although the tierce de picardi is again present on beat one of m 58. He introduces a section (m 58) which is well established in a D major tonality, but extinguishes it very quickly with the lowered leading tone, C-natural. The alternation of octaves and triads from a low point to a high point (mm 58-64) gives an almost "fanfarish" effect. The near juxtaposition of F-natural and F-sharp in mm 57-66 and the lowered leading tone creates a tension for the listener. The tonality settles down with more stability in m 67 possibly giving a more "comforting" feeling, as depicted by the words. Measure 72 begins a very brief portion which is in phrygian mode (D to D). This measure is actually built or based on a chord which is the sixth scale degree of the phrygian mode. With the inclusion of E-natural (m 74), there is, again, a return to the aeolian mode. In mm 77-80, Vaughan Williams avoids B-flat entirely, which might leave a question in the mind of the listener as to whether he is in the dorian mode or the aeolian mode. The measures from 80-89 are also in the aeolian mode, but at a fourth above D. The melody is sung over a dominant pedal point with the recurrent rhythmic motif in the upper part of the accompaniment. The section from mm 90 (with the pick up) to 99 is in the ionian mode. This section is composed of triplet patterns in the accompaniment under the

duple rhythm in the voices. The syncopation in m 97 gives impetus to the melodic line and rhythmic drive. The poco meno mosso section (mm 100 ff.) begins in the aeolian mode with a dark quality of sound from the altos and basses who sing in octaves. Vaughan Williams even adds the word "ONLY" in the score after altos and basses. He uses triplets in the accompaniment to keep the half notes and whole notes in the voice line moving. In m 108, he adds soprano and tenor--every-one now singing in unison--again, with the friction of two against three. There is now constant triplet patterns in the accompaniment moving into m 111, where the parts (voices) and accompaniment move in triplets. Once again syncopation occurs. The dynamic level has come from piano (m 108) to ff in m 111, to the words "Glory everlasting." With the third statement of the phrase, "in glory everlasting," the melodic line and tessitura of the voices increases and the phrase again ends on the picardy third. The motif returns in octaves in the accompaniment and is again in the transposed mixolydian mode as it was in the beginning. This begins a type of recapitulation with some variation (m 118). Measure 136 begins a section in the aeolian mode with B-natural. At the tempo (m 146), there is a change to the transposed ionian mode. The rhythmic motif again recurs frequently. In m 159, the motif changes from  to  etc. to prepare for the largamente in m 160. The composition ends in a very simple $I_4^6 - V - I$ cadence with a 4 - 3 suspension. The dynamic level change occurs very quickly in mm 161-164--from ff to pp. It is interesting to note the marking in the middle of the last phrase. Because of the flow of the phrase, normally it should be sung as one phrase with no break--but after the word "never," in the middle of the phrase, he

indicates a breath in all parts, not only with a comma, but also with "railroad tracks."

andante risoluto

Accompaniment

3mm
g-C

3mm
g⁷-C
m/m

Choir

5mm | 4mm | 6mm | 6mm²
we praise... all the... to Thee... to
B^b-c C-d a-d

Accpt.

3mm
F-d

Choir

7mm | 6mm
Thee... Holy... heaven and...
c-d g⁷-F C-F

Accpt.

2mm

Choir

3mm | 3mm | 4mm | 6mm | 3mm
the glorious... the noble... the hdy... the Father...
e-d e-d F-C C-D E-D

Accpt.

2mm | 6mm

Choir

3mm | 3mm
Thine... Also the...
E-D E-D

Detailed description: The score is written on a single page and consists of five systems. Each system has two staves: 'Accompaniment' and 'Choir'. The first system shows a 3mm breath mark for the accompaniment (g-C) and a 3mm breath mark for the choir (g⁷-C, m/m). The choir part has four phrases: 'we praise...' (5mm, B^b-c), 'all the...' (4mm, C-d), 'to Thee...' (6mm, a-d), and 'to' (6mm², F-d). The second system shows a 3mm breath mark for the accompaniment (F-d) and a 7mm breath mark for the choir (c-d) and a 6mm breath mark for the choir (g⁷-F, C-F). The third system shows a 2mm breath mark for the accompaniment. The fourth system shows a 3mm breath mark for the choir (e-d), a 3mm breath mark for the choir (e-d), a 4mm breath mark for the choir (F-C), a 6mm breath mark for the choir (C-D), and a 3mm breath mark for the choir (E-D). The fifth system shows a 2mm breath mark for the accompaniment and a 6mm breath mark for the choir. The sixth system shows a 3mm breath mark for the choir (E-D) and a 3mm breath mark for the choir (E-D).

poco più lento

Acpt. |----- 8mm -----|----- 10mm -----|

Choir |----- 4mm -----|----- 4mm -----|----- 5mm -----|----- 2mm -----|

Thou art... Thou art... when Thou...

C-D D-G g-d c-B^b

Acpt. |----- Tempo I 11mm -----||----- 10mm -----|

Choir |----- 4mm -----|----- 5mm -----|----- 7mm -----|----- 3mm -----|

Thou didst... Thou sittest... We believe... make...

g-d F-d f-c b^b-c

Acpt. |----- 8mm -----||----- 3mm -----|----- 1m -----|----- 1m -----|

Choir |----- 2mm -----|----- 3mm -----|----- 3mm -----||----- 2mm -----|----- 3mm -----|----- 3mm -----|

in glory... in glory... O Lord... and... govern...

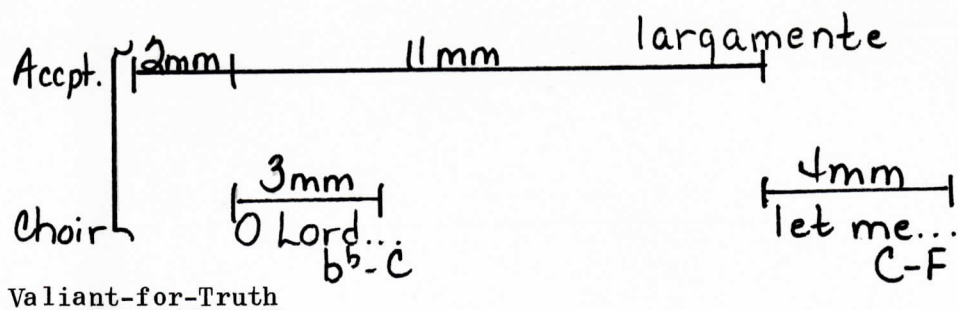
E^b-c E^b-c C-F B^b-c B^b-c C-d

Acpt. |----- 2mm -----|----- 7mm -----|

Choir |----- 5mm -----|----- 5mm -----|----- 6mm -----|

day by day... vouchsafe... have mercy...

C-d g-a g-a



V Valiant-for-Truth is probably Ralph Vaughan Williams' most powerful and most characteristic motet.¹²¹ When he wrote this motet, all of his friends who had passed away were probably in his mind, though perhaps it was of Dorothy Longman he thought most, for her friendship and musicianship had been particularly precious to him. He wrote it in November, 1940, and he recorded the date on a copy he sent to Bobby Longman when it was published, nearly a year later. The first performance was on June 29, 1941, by Harold Darke and the St. Michael Singers.¹²² The words come from John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. This composition, of medium difficulty, demands a good choir--S.A.T.B.--with organ or piano accompaniment.

The introduction should be performed ad libitum as indicated. This is followed by the alto entrance in m 6 which is to be performed quasi recitative. The accompanying instrument is only used for the introduction. Throughout the composition, the recitative-style sections alternate with that of homophonic texture. At various times, the voices act as an accompaniment figure supporting the solo line.

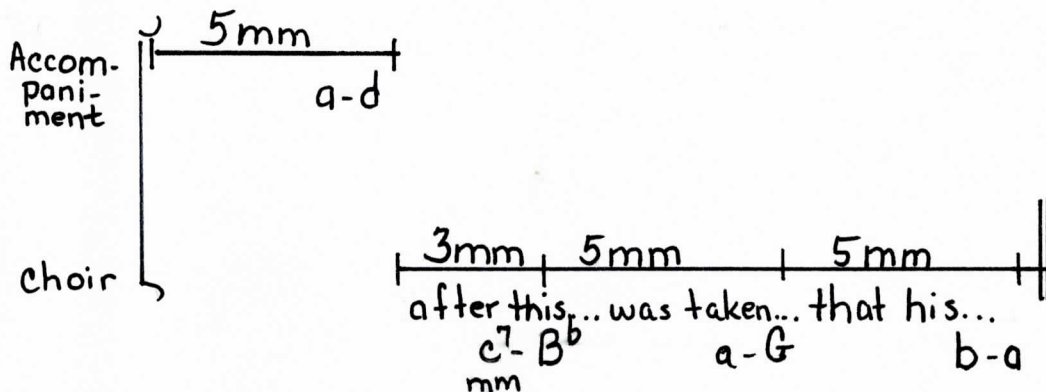
This work begins in the aeolian mode. In m 12, the near juxtaposition of E-flat and E-natural serves to confuse the ear of the

¹²¹ Long, op. cit., p. 426.

¹²² Ursula Vaughan Williams, op. cit., pp. 237,249.

listener as to the tonality. Tone-painting occurs in m 14 as homophonic chordal structure moves chromatically--from the word "was" (on a C minor chord) to the word "broken" (on a B minor chord). This chromatic movement down one-half step might be suggestive of the Mannheim sigh, a characteristic of the Mannheim School during the mid eighteenth century. With a change to F-natural in m 15, the mode changes to the aeolian in m 20 as the basses enter with the recitative style. In m 31, the parts are in homophonic texture and the key is now that of G major. Measure 34 is based on B-flat major, the mediant relationship to G. Again, the progression of a descending minor second occurs in m 36, possibly depicting the reality of "my marks and scars." With the F-natural in mm 37-38, Vaughan Williams hints at the dorian mode. The mediant relationship can again be observed in mm 40-41--B-flat to D, with a change of mode in m 41 to that of the ionian. Harmonic dissonances begin to occur quite frequently in mm 42-46--for example, the major seventh, minor second, major second, etc. Beginning in m 41 with the basses, imitation occurs within the voices. Measure 47 begins in the aeolian mode and is thematically reflective of the opening melody. In mm 53-56, Vaughan Williams becomes much more dramatic in his writing. The melody, beginning with the basses and continuing through the tenor, forms an ascending scale from E to E, and is in the melodic minor key. As the basses sing an A on the word "sting," the tenors enter with a B on the word "death"--creating a dissonance, resolved in the bass on beat two. This is pointed up in the fact that there is a crescendo into the created dissonance. There is also a minor second dissonance on beat two of the same measure (m 54), musically describing the effect of the word "sting." This dissonance occurs again in the last half of the last beat of m 55 and on

beat one of the following measure. The tessitura of this measure is quite high in all parts which adds to the intensity. Imitation occurs again in mm 58-61 as the intensity of the text increases. There is also a change of mode to that of aeolian on beat two of m 61, again with very close dissonances. At this point (mm 63-64), there is quite a drastic change in dynamics--from ff to ppp. The text also depicts this change--ff occurs on "Grave, where is thy victory?" and immediately changes to ppp on "So he passed over. . . ." A change of key also occurs in m 65 to G minor--again, a mediant relationship to the previous measure in B-flat. From m 66 to the end, Vaughan Williams employs onomatopoeic writing on the word "Trumpets" with the use of the thirty-second notes. The alto imitates the bass, and the soprano, the tenor. This imitation ends in m 71 as the cadence approaches in a triplet figure on the words, "sounded for him." The triplet figure in m 77 occurs throughout an entire measure and is used in order to ritard or slow down the composition as it concludes.



Choir |----- 12mm -----|| 3mm | 8mm |
 then said he... |----- c#°-D | my sword... | and my
 |----- c-G |-----

Choir |----- 6mm -----|| 6mm | 4mm |
 courage... |----- G-D | who now... | when the day... death...
 |----- e7-D |----- |----- a-e |----- c#°-b
 |----- mm |-----

Choir |----- 7mm -----| 8mm | 7mm |-----||
 and as he... |----- c#°-b | so he passed... | sounded... |-----
 |----- c-Bb |----- |----- a-G |-----

The Souls of the Righteous

This work shows a different side of Vaughan Williams' choral writing for church.¹²³ It was specifically composed for the dedication service of the Battle of Britian Chapel in Westminster Abbey, London, July 10, 1947. It is a most effective and unusual setting.

This motet, of medium difficulty, is scored for treble, tenor, and baritone soli, with treble, alto, tenor, and bass chorus and is to be performed a cappella.

The text comes from the Wisdom of Solomon III, 1-5. The utilization of unisons, octaves, and fifths might point up the meaning of the words concerning destruction and misery. There is a completely different contrast in the text, beginning in m 14, and consequently,

¹²³ Wienandt and Young, op. cit., p. 358.

a change in texture of the music and harmonic structure. During this section, Vaughan Williams uses full, broad chords homophonically with the words, "But they are in peace." Again, mediant relationships can be observed, e.g., in mm 14-15, chords proceed from E major to C minor, and finally to A major.

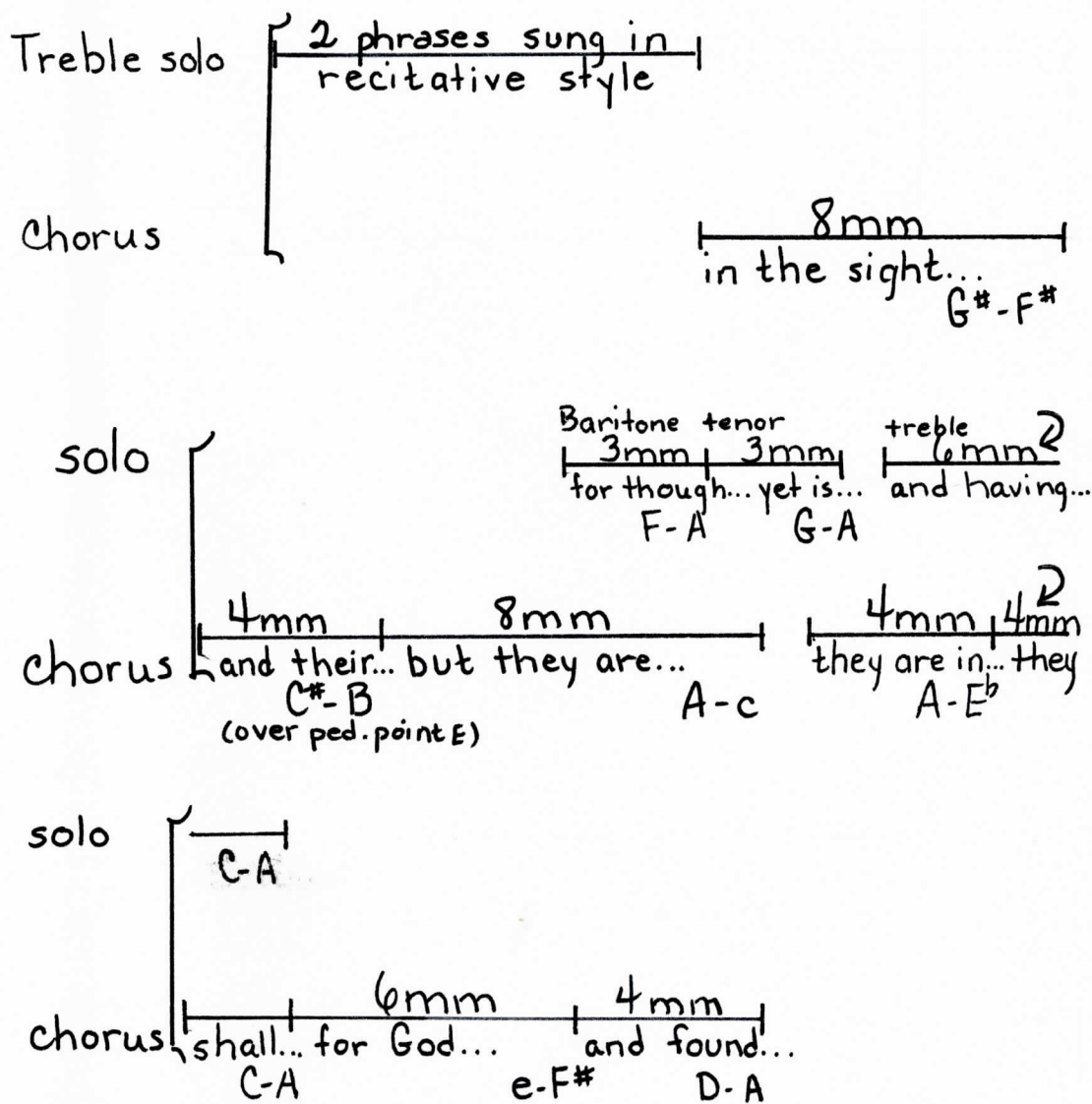
Unaccompanied choral passages with varying textures leading into remote harmonic areas combine with the introductory treble solo in free recitative style to enhance the mystical quality of the text.

The composition begins with a treble solo "in free time" or in the style of a recitative. The interval between the first and second notes is that of a perfect fifth, from which one initially feels or senses a mystical quality. The chorus enters and overlaps the cadence of the solo voice--again, the open fifth is sounded as the solo voice ends on C-sharp and the chorus enters on F-sharp. The choir sings in unison between S/A and T/B, but soon divides and employs generally open fifths, unisons, and octaves.

With reference to key, this motet begins in the aeolian mode (F-sharp to F-sharp). At m 9, the aeolian mode continues but at a lower pitch level. Beginning with m 14 a shift or contrast in text and musical presentation of the text is heard. The whole atmosphere of the work changes--from that of destruction and misery to that of peace and hope; from the unison, open fifth and octave sound, to a rich, full, chordal sound; from a faster tempo to a "very slow" tempo; and from a *p* to a *ppp* dynamic level. Beginning with m 16, the choir takes the role of an accompaniment figure, supporting the baritone solo, and there is also a return to tempo I. At this point, Vaughan Williams employs bimodality--A major occurs in the chorus while the baritone solo is in

the aeolian mode with F and G-naturals. Chordal movement in the chorus parts, beginning in m 19, is by that of the mediant relationship: A major to F minor and back to A major, then to C minor and back to A major at the beginning of the phrase in m 21. In mm 19-21, one finds the aeolian mode again, but now built on C as opposed to the previous final on A. Since this is an elevation of musical sound, it points up the fact that though the righteous be punished in the sight of man, their "hope is full of immortality." In m 21, Vaughan Williams returns to the A-natural, foreign to the aeolian mode on C, possibly to prepare for the A-major entrance of the choir. The chord on the word "peace" (m 22) is spelled D-sharp, F-double sharp, A-sharp, enharmonic with an E-flat major chord. One of the first impressions of this writer was the strangeness of this particular measure and those following--the choir sings a chord based on sharps and the soloist sings a melodic line containing flats. Through this section it is interesting to note that the choir is dynamically marked ppp while the solo is marked p. On the words, "they shall be greatly rewarded," the solo and choir parts become one and the same as the solo now has the soprano notes. The chromatic step up from C-natural to C-sharp on "rewarded" gives a sense of tension release and satisfaction. In the last section (mm 29 to the end), the solo is now sung with the entire chorus, "solo con tutti." Also, the soprano voices become a part of the entire choir. This section also begins with imitation throughout the voices. Measures 29-30 of the first and second soprano are reminiscent of another previously analyzed anthem--"O How Amiable." The imitation occurs in a type of augmentation to the note values previously used, e.g., the primary movement prior to m 27 was in quarter notes as

opposed to the predominantly half-note movement from m 27 to the end of the composition.



Prayer to the Father of Heaven

Vaughan Williams dedicated this anthem "to the memory of my master Hubert Parry not as an attempt palely to reflect his incomparable art, but in the hope that he would have found in this motet (to use his own words) 'something characteristic.'¹²⁴ It is "characteristic" from its mysterious opening. It is also characteristic from its majestically solemn and complicated final chord. His cadences are a study in themselves.¹²⁵ It was written for the Parry Centenary Celebration at Oxford. It was a difficult and interesting poem to set and there were many discussions about accentuation.¹²⁶

It is scored for S.A.T.B. chorus and is to be performed a cappella. This motet is difficult because of the harmonic dissonances and unusual chord progressions.

The words of the text are by John Skelton and are set homophonically. This early poem is in the medieval, impersonal style. The second of the two balanced strophes is fresh and compressed at first, in order to leave a margin for the echoing last line: "and after this life, to see thy glorious face." The style is repressed, and the texture hardly recognizable apart from the vocal concentration. In several of Vaughan Williams' anthems, the vocal writing is congenial to a singer's natural extension of register and often striking in itself. The voice is properly treated as a medium of declamation and affirmation,

¹²⁴ Ralph Vaughan Williams, Prayer to the Father of Heaven (London: Oxford University Press, 1948), p. 2.

¹²⁵ Routley, op. cit., pp. 27-28.

¹²⁶ Ursula Vaughan Williams, op. cit., p. 282.

not a quasi-instrumental expression. His choral works have a variety of texts, and he was creating the taste for his styles as he went on.¹²⁷

One of the first impressions upon hearing this work is the fact that it is a work which deals in the study of color because of the rich chordal sounds. It is based on chords with the various "color" of seventh chords, and utilizes chords including the interval of a ninth above the root. Indeed, it is quite different from any of the other compositions analyzed.

Vaughan Williams begins the composition with a minor-minor seventh chord on C rather than that of the normal root position tonic. This sound is a forecast of the basic sound throughout the composition. He uses various shades of seventh chords and employs the added ninth sound, e.g., in m 1, beat 1, a minor-minor seventh chord occurs; in m 1, beat 4, a major-major seventh chord occurs; in m 3, beat 2, a major-minor seventh chord occurs with an added ninth; in m 13, beat 4, a diminished minor seventh chord occurs. This might be descriptive of the words which have an ethereal or celestial meaning. He uses very interesting rhythms, e.g., syncopation in m 3 points up one of the most important words in the phrase--"light"--as all parts move up; he ends the phrase in m 4 on the weak part of beat four with a quarter rest on beat one of the following measure, thereby, emphasizing the word, "celestial;" he uses two against three in m 6 to give a feeling of friction and tension within the parts; also, there are numerous meter changes throughout, in keeping with the natural flow of the words. In mm 7-8, he deceives the ear by employing B-flat, C-flat, and D-flat melodically, only to

¹²⁷ Dickinson, op. cit., pp. 230,233-234,246.

change them one beat later to D-natural, C-natural, and B-natural. Measure 10 begins much as the beginning of the composition, but is fuller harmonically and is at a lower tessitura, except for the first soprano. From m 13 to m 14, the diminished minor sound is quite prevalent. Throughout, Vaughan Williams juxtaposes the triplet figure with that of the duple rhythm. The following phrase (beginning in m 18) is of the mediant relationship to the ending of the previous phrase. The choir (S.A.T.) acts as an accompaniment for the bass, which has the melody. This balance between solo and accompaniment is also evident in view of the dynamic markings: the upper voices are marked pp while the bass line is p; also, the bass line is to be sung cantabile. Through this section, the text is speaking of God, the maker of mankind. Perhaps this is the reason for Vaughan Williams' assigning the solo to the bass section--to better describe, musically, the "power" of God. A frequent change of meter occurs in mm 18-31 in keeping with the natural flow of the text. There is a crescendo from mm 22-29 as the meaning of the text heightens in intensity--"the imperial power comprehendeth every place! my heart, my mind, my thought, my whole delight is." At this point (on the word "is"), there is a subito piano. This occurs in order to attract the ear of the listener because the climax of the whole sentence is to follow--"after this life to see Thy Glorious Face." The phrase terminates in m 37 in G major. The text, beginning in m 38 seems to be that of awe as Skelton speaks of God's magnificence as being comprehensible. This change is also evidenced musically in the fact that there is a change of mode--the previous phrase ends on a G major chord while this phrase begins on B-flat. This B-flat serves to destroy the G-major tonality for the listener. There is also a dynamic marking

of pp. The tension of the text is heightened as the pitch level of the following phrase (mm 41-42) has a similar rhythm pattern but at a higher pitch level. There is also an increase from two female voice lines to that of three. The male voices continue in the same type of movement-- the first phrase (mm 43-45) in two voices and the second phrase (mm 45-46) in three. The musical intensity is heightened by the use of triple and duple rhythm used within the same phrase. Male and female voices sing together as the next phrase comes to a cadence, ending on E-flat major. Again, there occurs a quick change of mode with the flatting of the third of the E-flat major triad. The following phrase (mm 50-55) resembles a previous phrase (from mm 17-21) in form, as again, the choir is an accompaniment supporting the melody, sung by the basses. The intensity is heightened in the last part of the phrase (mm 52-55) with the utilization of very close harmony, various colors of seventh chords, triple and duple rhythm, and a crescendo throughout this part of the phrase. There is also a reiteration of part of the text which gives added emphasis. The following phrase (mm 55-64) begins subito piano because of the change in the meaning of the text--to that of life after death. The climax of the phrase occurs in m 60 with the melisma on the word "face." The climax is also evident in the fact that the tessitura at this point is high in all of the voices. The phrase ends with a melisma on the word "glorious," but at a lower and more comfortable pitch level. This melisma is characterized by sets of parallel sixths in the alto and tenor moving in contrary motion. The melisma in the concluding phrase (mm 64-67) is characterized by parallel movement of triads in first inversion. As the composition concludes, Vaughan Williams writes in his own ritard by using half notes as opposed to

the previous use of quarter notes. There is also a change of meter from 4/4 to 3/2. The last note is a whole note, tied to an eighth note, with a fermata over the final note.

Chorus |----- 9mm -----|----- 7mm -----|----- 13mm -----|

o radiant... | of heaven... | o Maker...

$f^{\#7}-E$ dm $C-G$

2

chorus |----- 7mm -----|----- 12mm -----|

is, after... | whose

$f^{\#7}-E$ dm $C-G$

2

chorus |----- 14mm -----|

magnificence... | assist me...

f^7-E^b dm

2

chorus |----- 4mm -----|

C-G | to see thy...

F^7-JG

O Taste And See

This motet was composed for the Coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in Westminster Abbey on Tuesday, June 2, 1953. It was sung during the Queen's Communion, where verse eight from Psalm 34

has obvious relevance.¹²⁸

It consists of only thirty-five measures but shows the simplicity with which Vaughan Williams can write. It is scored for a chorus of mixed voices (S.A.T.B.), and except for a three-measure introduction by the organ, it is to be performed a cappella.

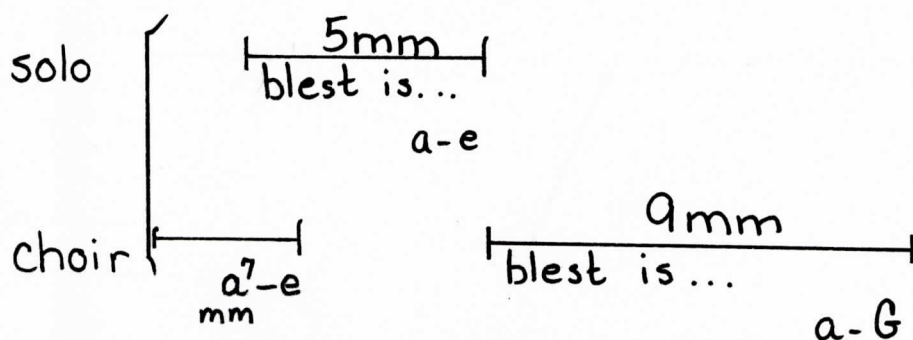
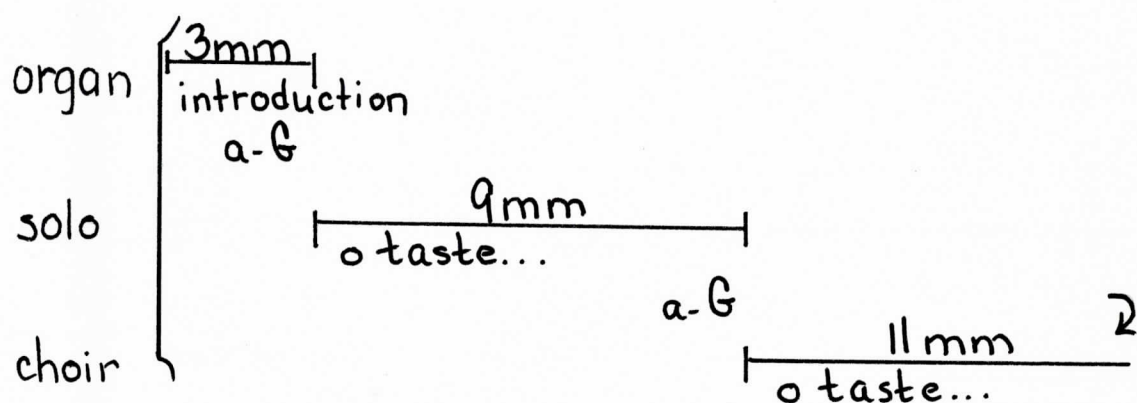
The text for this very short introit comes from Psalm 34: v. 8.

The form of the composition centers around alternation of solo voice and choir, the choir singing in homophonic texture. If it is to be effective, it must be sung with a high degree of musical sensitivity.

The entire composition is built on the pentatonic scale, the notes involved being G, A, B, D, and E. An unusual aspect is that although it is in the key of G, the organ introduction begins in E minor. The organ prelude overlaps with the entrance of the solo or a few soprano voices, which might be used optionally. The melody is quite lyrical and is characterized by the use of intervals of an ascending or descending second or third, except on very rare occasions. The melodic line begins at a high point and descends rather than the usual contour of an ascending portion of the melody to a climax, followed by a descending line. After the conclusion of the statement of the main theme, this theme enters in all voices imitatively. The trebles (sopranos) are imitated by the tenors and the altos by the basses. From mm 13-17, as the imitative parts enter in the soprano (m 13) and conclude with the bass in m 17, a pentatonic scale used over a two-octave span can be observed. Again, in m 23, the solo line overlaps with the conclusion of the first idea with the choir. This overlapping of sections gives continuity to

¹²⁸ Wienandt and Young, op. cit., p. 358.

this short work, which otherwise, might be very uncohesive. Again, the contour of the melody begins at a high pitch level and reaches a low plateau in m 27. As the choir enters in mm 27-28, the soprano and alto lines move in parallel sixths while the tenor and bass parts imitate this movement an octave lower. Vaughan Williams ends the motet very simply with a ii - I cadence. The hemiola is used to aid in establishing a sense of finality after the constant quarter note movement throughout.



A Choral Flourish

This composition, of medium difficulty, is scored for S.A.T.B., unaccompanied, except for the opening phrase which should be played on trumpets or organ. Vaughan Willaims also suggests that the high baritones should support the tenor part.

The original setting of this work is for the Latin text, Exultate justi. The English version is offered as an alternative. The words of the text come from Psalm 32 (authorized English version, Psalm 33).

The texture is generally homophonic with points of imitation occurring throughout.

The composition begins with the trumpets or organ providing the introduction. In addition to the trumpet timbre, the intervals of unison and the perfect fourth and fifth forecast the "fanfarish" character of the entire piece. The continuous use of eighth notes in m 2 also gives the indication of a "flourish" as designated in the title of the composition. The time signature, 3/4, at an allegro maestoso tempo might also give rise to the exuberance of the text, "O be joyful." As the choral parts enter in m 3, they are also characterized by movement in parallel octaves, fourths, and fifths, continuing with the "fanfarish" quality. The beginning of almost every phrase which consists of running eighth notes, is with that of two quarter notes on beats two and three. This aids in establishing a very solid beginning of the phrase, and also allows the melisma to occur on the word "joyful" in English, or in Latin, on the stressed or most important syllable in the word "exultate." The intervals which occur melodically in each voice are, with very few exceptions, those of an ascending or descending

second or third. In general, the soprano and tenor run in parallel octaves and the altos and basses run in parallel octaves.

The first variance in the rhythm occurs in m 11 with the use of the dotted quarter and eighth notes. The phrases gradually increase in length as more text is added to the previous part of the text. Various things occur on the first note of m 15: this is the first climax of the composition--it is the highest point in the composition thus far; the tessitura of all parts is high, relatively speaking; this might be a case of tone-painting on the word "Lord" or "God;" this is also the first true break in the continuous running eighth notes; and, it is also the first chord which contains a third.

It is interesting to note in much of Vaughan Williams' writing that he ends the phrase on a partial beat rather than on the main beat. This is reflective of his study with Ravel in France. His purpose in this device was to end the phrase gradually without the abruptness of having to release on a specific beat.

There is also a key change from mm 14-15 from A major to G major. He prepares for this unusual key change with the insertion of a G-natural in the bass line of m 14. He establishes the key of G major, by immediately using an A-major seven chord, resolving to G. Although this is not a normal progression for an A-major seven chord, two of the tones, C-sharp and A, resolve or move smoothly to two of the tones of the G major triad. The G of the A major seventh chord remains a common tone. The end of the phrase does not occur on the root position, but on the second inversion. From m 17 to the double bar (m 28), a perfect canon occurs between soprano/tenor and alto/bass at the interval of a perfect fifth, one measure apart. There is also a tempo change to marcato.

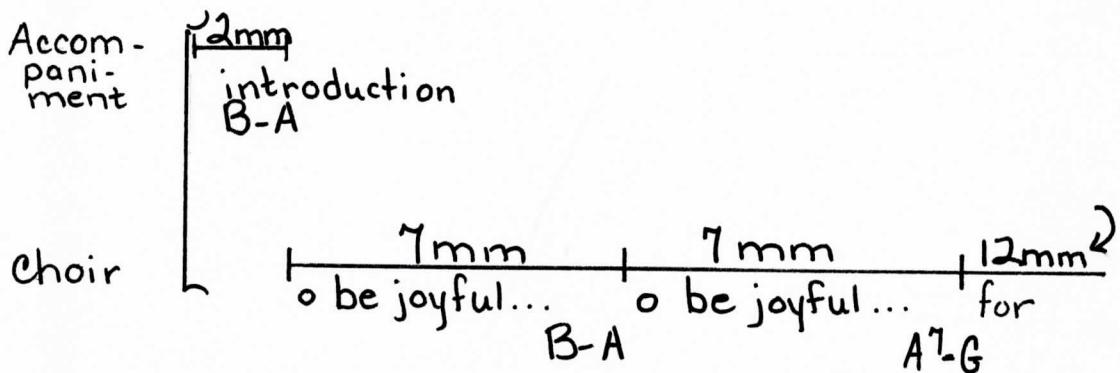
Here, as in many instances, marcato is more of a characteristic marking than a tempo marking. This section overlaps with the beginning of the next section or phrase (m 29). Again, there is a key change to A major. The basses end the phrase (m 29) on E, which links the two keys: E is the sixth scale degree of G major and functions now as the dominant pedal point in A major. It is interesting to note that Vaughan Williams avoids G-sharp, the leading tone.

With few exceptions, mm 29-35 are based on only four notes--E, B, A, and F-sharp. As the parts have evolved from the beginning, they have increasingly become more independent of each other.

As the words begin to take on a different meaning, the texture and style of the music changes. Beginning in m 36 and continuing through m 46, the words change from that of praise and exaltation to that of the works of the Lord. Musically, this section is to be sung piano, in contrast with the forte sound up to this point. It is also a section which brings relief from the previous material of continuous eighth notes--the note values have now been augmented to quarter notes. He utilizes very straight-forward homophonic, chordal structure, although he does some unusual things harmonically: from mm 35-46, he proceeds from a B-major triad to that of an F-major triad, which seems to disturb the ear of the listener. From F major he proceeds to a D-flat major chord, then to a G major (second inversion), G-flat major, E-flat major, B-flat major, A major, G major, and A major respectively. In m 44, as the section closes, he manipulates the note values so as to give two pulsations per measure (two dotted quarter notes) in a 3/4 meter. In order to vary the rhythm, he also makes use of hemiola.

Beginning in m 47, the tenors and basses again introduce the

initial thematic idea and the initial portion of the text. There is also a marked dynamic change from p of the previous section to ff as the tenors and basses enter. The sopranos and altos enter ff one measure later. From mm 47-63, the soprano and alto parts parallel each other in a rhythm, principally of eighth notes as the tenor and bass parts support in quarter and half-note movement. Again, hemiola is a characteristic of the tenor and bass parts in mm 51-52 and in the soprano and alto parts in m 55. Beginning in m 59, one observes a continuous flourish of eighth notes in all parts. As the same text is repeated four times (mm 57-61), he changes the syllabification of the eighth notes. As he prepares for the cadence, he makes use of quarter notes to slow down the rhythm and has also given the marking of allargando. In the last measure, he uses the same cadence formula as was used previously in m 15, this time progressing from a major-minor seventh chord on B to an A major final chord.



Chapter 4

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the style of Ralph Vaughan Williams was shaped by past idioms as well as his present-day environment. It is the culmination of these two time periods which makes the music of Vaughan Williams very unique and quite personal.

As has been stated on numerous occasions, history repeats itself. The revival of Tudor church music, English folk music, the form of the Elizabethan madrigal, and the early church modes may be reflective of this statement concerning the repetition of historical styles and events. Vaughan Williams was able to take the idioms and forms of earlier music, while at the same time, revitalizing the vocabulary of these forms, communicated to the generality of musicians and listeners through his music. It is for this very reason that his influence of church music was so great. Since the typical hymn-metre of ballads, carols, and folk songs was the same as that of the late middle ages, the English folk song was easily adaptable for the congregational singing of hymns.

Since one of the most important features of the folk song is that of modality, much of his work is based on this practice. Of the ten anthems analyzed in this study, eight of them involve one or more of the church modes. His works depend on a sense of tonality and the establishment of pivotal centers of intonation.¹²⁹

¹²⁹ Dickinson, op. cit., p. 25.

Basic to his view was the desire to bring art into the most direct relationship to life.¹³⁰ The English folk song, being a product of the English people, offered him a logical vehicle to accomplish this goal. The fact that he was born into a German-thinking, Italian-singing world,¹³¹ yet was brought up in a classical-romantic, central European tradition,¹³² supplied Vaughan Williams with a background of varied styles. Connected with the folk song, Vaughan Williams, musically, has been one of the strongest influences in breaking down the tyranny of the bar line, and restoring the seventeenth century rhythmic freedom.¹³³

Much of what makes the music of Vaughan Williams so appealing to many, both professional and amateur musicians alike, is the fact that, on a whole, he is a conservative composer. In being a conservative composer, he shared the Englishman's typical distrust of theories, especially theories pushed to extremes in practice.¹³⁴ Jacobs has stated that "the elements of his greatness are simplicity, sincerity, and serenity."¹³⁵ Fundamental simplicity, along with a good sense of humor and strong ethical and musical emotions, help to shape music with universal appeal. Musically, he is practical and exhibits direct musical expression and fine, imaginative sensitiveness to his texts.¹³⁶ Vaughan Williams is a respecter of personality. This is implicit in the

¹³⁰ Machlis, op. cit., p. 296. ¹³¹ Foss, op. cit., p. 43.

¹³² Salzaman, op. cit., p. 91

¹³³ Rosemary Manning, From Holst to Britten (London: Workers' Music Association, 1949), p. 20.

¹³⁴ Grout, op. cit., p. 675. ¹³⁵ Jacobs, op. cit., p. 283.

¹³⁶ Grout, op. cit., p. 675.

directness of his style and in its stimulation of national response. His personal treatment of the material brought from the ecclesiastical and placed within the ambit of more general observation. His is very much indebted to a festival tradition.¹³⁷

In view of Vaughan Williams' personality, even his visual appearance, we gain insight into general characteristics of his music. In keeping with the traits of his own personality, his music has a certain roughness and directness of manner.¹³⁸

One aspect which makes his music so exciting is his unpredictability in composing. It has been said that "Vaughan Williams is unpredictable in a way no other British composer is; the next move may not be taken for granted or its nature foreseen."¹³⁹

Numerous terms have been used to describe Vaughan Williams in reference to his music. Foss¹⁴⁰ states that Vaughan Williams, at base, is a melodist. This has become very apparent throughout this study, and undoubtably carries over into works of his in other mediums. He has also been described as being a symbolist. His intense appreciation of poetic symbols places him with the Elizabethans, the Jacobians, and like Purcell he transmutes such values into musical terms--ideas are intellectually assimilated, and his style is derived from these aspects; hence, the frequency of experiments in techniques. As an empiricist, he relied upon practical experience. The outstanding feature of his melodic structure is that it is quite lyric and very singable. Melodically, he is a fundamentalist. He has also been described as a moralist,

¹³⁷ Young, op. cit., p. 21,49,195. ¹³⁸ Machlis, op. cit., p.298.

¹³⁹ Bacharach, op. cit., p. 82. ¹⁴⁰ Foss, op. cit., p. 43.

with singly-minded determination to improve human discontent by drawing the mind of the audience to communicate with what, in his view, are the verities. A feature of his philosophy is a continual aspiration toward spiritual unity.¹⁴¹

In reflecting on his early music, we find Vaughan Williams' music self-contained and satisfying in its own aesthetic design. The predominance of choral writing in his early works was partly due to a natural predilection of the voice and its words, but also attributable to greater chances of audition.¹⁴² These early works contain separate approaches to national literature, and in their several ways, display versatility.¹⁴³

In reflecting on his later works, we can observe the characterization of an expansion and consolidation of technique and style in an attempt to create a large-scale English symphonic manner with new tonal techniques enclosed in adaptations of traditional forms. This was a big symphonic style, characteristic of English twentieth century music.¹⁴⁴

In these later works, he also adapted an advanced technique of harmonic writing, with massive agglomerations of chordal sonorities; parallel progressions of triads are favored, but, there is no intention of adhering to any uniform method of composition; rather, there is a great variety of procedures ingrained into a distinctively personal and thoroughly English style.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹ Young, *op. cit.*, pp. 36,54,177,181,186.

¹⁴² Foss, *op. cit.*, pp. 88,114. ¹⁴³ Young, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

¹⁴⁴ Salzman, *op. cit.*, p. 91. ¹⁴⁵ Slonimsky, *op. cit.*, p. 1692.

The Mass In G is an exercise in his matured style, and he assimilates folk song patterns, certain harmonic features that are related to Debussy, and polyphonic values that spring from the Tudor masters.¹⁴⁶

Generally, the achievement of Vaughan Williams is entirely unspectacular, but his contribution to the world of music cannot be underestimated.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The scope for this study has been focused on a limited amount of material. The study might, with further investigation and expansion, be extended to works of different mediums by Ralph Vaughan Williams. This might be further extended to include a comparison of his works with those of other composers, for example, an interesting study might be one of the impressionist, Maurice Ravel and his influence on the orchestration of the orchestral works of Vaughan Williams.

This study might also be extended by showing a comparison of the modality of Vaughan Williams with the modality found in the English folk songs.

¹⁴⁶ Jacobs, op. cit., p. 283.

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- _____. O Praise the Lord of Heaven. New York: High Press, 1913.
- _____. O Taste and See. London: Oxford University Press, 1953.
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APPENDIX

TABLE I

A Choral Flourish

Version: S.A.T.B. a cappella
Catalogue number: 43.934
Copyright: 1956
Publisher: London: Oxford University Press

Duration: approximately 1 minute 30 seconds

Festival Te Deum

Version: S.A.T.B.
Catalogue number: 5477
Copyright: 1937
Publisher: London: Oxford University Press

Duration: approximately 7 minutes 30 seconds

Is it Nothing to You?

Version: S.S.A.A.T.T.B.B. with alto solo a cappella
Catalogue number: 10582 (octavo)
Copyright: 1922
Publisher: London: J. Curwen and Sons, Ltd.
also: New York: G. Schirmer, Inc.

Duration: approximately 4 minutes 30 seconds

Lord, Thou Hast Been Our Refuge

Version: chorus; semi-chorus or baritone solo; and orchestra
or organ
Catalogue number: 9720
Copyright: 1921
Publisher: London: J. Curwen and Sons, Ltd.
also: New York: G. Schirmer, Inc.

Duration: approximately 8 minutes 45 seconds

0 How Amiable

Version: S.A.T.B. with organ accompaniment
 Catalogue number: 42P056
 Copyright: 1940
 Publisher: London: Oxford University Press

Duration: approximately 3 minutes 45 seconds

0 Praise the Lord of Heaven

Version: S.A.T.B. a cappella
 Catalogue number: Church Choir Library (CCL) 194
 Copyright: 1913
 Publisher: London: Stainer and Bell
 also: New York: Highgate Press

Duration: approximately 4 minutes 30 seconds

0 Taste and See

Versions: S.A.T.B. a cappella with organ introduction
 and: S.S.A. choir a cappella with organ introduction
 Catalogue number: 43P909
 Copyright: 1953
 Publisher: London: Oxford University Press

Duration: approximately 1 minute 15 seconds

Prayer to the Father of Heaven

Version: S.A.T.B. a cappella
 Copyright: 1948
 Publisher: London: Oxford University Press

Duration: approximately 5 minutes

The Souls of the Righteous

Version: Treble, alto, tenor, bass (and treble, tenor and baritone soli) a cappella
 Copyright: 1947
 Publisher: London: Oxford University Press

Duration: approximately 3 minutes

Valiant-for-Truth

Version: S.A.T.B. a cappella (with organ or piano introduction)

Copyright: 1941

Publisher: London: Oxford University Press

Duration: approximately 6 minutes 15 seconds