

MUSICOLOGICAL STUDIES AND DOCUMENTS

2

# THE WORCESTER FRAGMENTS

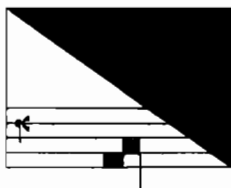
A Catalogue Raisonné and Transcription

by

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With a Foreword by

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## FOREWORD

I was very glad when I heard some time back that Dr. Luther Dittmer was intending to prepare a complete and exhaustive edition of the Worcester Fragments in conformity with the principles of modern musicology. Such remarks as he invites me to make by way of introduction will not attempt to deal with the actual Fragments themselves, for the text of this volume contains all the available information about them. But there are a few things which may usefully be said here concerning the process of their recovery for actual use.

It is now some fifty years since the time when the Worcester music first claimed the attention of scholars. The frontispiece of "Floyer and Hamilton"<sup>1</sup> (1906), together with some notes on pp. 159-163 of that work, were sufficient to arouse the attention of W. H. Frere, Pierre Aubry and Fr. Ludwig: but it was not until 1912 that the present writer was entrusted with the task of making the first detailed examination and the first scoring. In the pages of *The Cathedral Quarterly* (No. 12, March 1916) and *Laudate* (No. 1, March 1923), and in a lecture to the Royal Musical Association (*Proceedings of the R.M.A.*, Dec. 1924), when three musical examples were sung, some of the results were communicated. In 1928 a comprehensive list, with many facsimiles and examples in modern notation, was published under the title of *Worcester Mediaeval Harmony*.

Much water has flowed under musicological bridges in the last thirty years. It is perhaps not easy for scholars of the present generation to realise the poverty of equipment available for students in the earlier part of the century. We all know far more than it was possible to know in 1926, and we have the further advantage of being able to work in correspondence with a large and growing number of enthusiastic and competent researchers on both sides of the Atlantic. The present writer looks back, therefore, on his *Worcester Mediaeval Harmony* with much the same eye of pitying condescension with which he himself, thirty years ago, looked at Coussemaker, Fleischer, and Riemann. The book did not claim to be exhaustive: and it was realised that other examples of this style would assuredly be found in due course, at Worcester or elsewhere - and Dr. Dittmer's work shows to what extent they have been so discovered. *Worcester Mediaeval Harmony* was rather an attempt at supplying a relatively small public, whose interest had been stirred by finding that the examples sung before the Royal Musical Association had a genuine musical appeal, with a more comprehensive idea of the nature and extent of the Worcester sources.

For if there is one thing of supreme importance about the Worcester music it is this musical appeal. Up to the time it became known, no specimen of early mediaeval music (with the single exception of *Sumer is icumen in*) had ever been found satisfying in performance - that is to say, if an audience desired something more than a merely interesting archaeological noise. Arnold Dolmetsch, Percy Grainger, Mother Georgia Stevens, and other experts were quick to discern the artistic value of such items as *Alleluia psallat* (No. 46) or *Puellare gremium* (No. 76) for their programmes of early choral music. Nor has the popularity of these pieces waned with the years that have passed.

<sup>1</sup>) *Catalogue of Manuscripts preserved in the Chapter Library of Worcester Cathedral*. By J. K. Floyer and S. G. Hamilton. Worcester Historical Society.

## INTRODUCTION

**T**he Worcester Fragments present the largest extant repertory of English polyphonic music of the 13th and early 14th centuries. The survival of these fragments in the bindings of manuscripts of Worcester provenience attests to the fact that this music was sung in Worcester, undoubtedly at the Cathedral, from the beginning of the 13th century (the earliest fragments) to the middle of the 14th century (the latest fragments). The repertory itself was kept up to date by the inclusion from time to time of individual palimpsests.

With the advent of a new style of musical composition at the end of the 14th century the older repertory was completely abandoned and the older manuscripts were used as bindings for other codices; the occasional addition of 15th century mensural notation on an older leaf betrays the time of such proceedings. Lacking literary evidence on the practice of music at Worcester during the 13th and early 14th centuries, and also lacking other large groups of fragments of common provenience, it is most difficult to appraise correctly the original contribution that Worcester may have made to polyphonic music. Certain compositions are definitely French in origin, *e.g.* Nos. 70 and 95; others appear to have been composed by Willelmus de Winchecumbe, *e.g.* Nos. 19 and 54ff. Nevertheless, it would appear that Worcester was one of the most important centres for the cultivation of polyphonic art in the period in question. This edition, together with a series of articles published separately, attempts to recapture this art according to scientific principles.<sup>2)</sup>

Luther Dittmer, Novo Eboraco  
In die ante festum Sancti Joannis  
Chrysostomi anno 1954<sup>o</sup>

2) The articles include: *Db*, *Dd*, *De*, *Dm* and *Dr*. *Dd* includes a discussion of the contributions of the scientific literature to the study of the Worcester Fragments; it includes, furthermore, an index of cross references to *Db* and *De* as well as a short summary of these articles. *Dr* was to have appeared under the title *Beiträge zum Studium der Worcester Fragmente* in the *Handschrift Festschrift*; with the death of this great scholar this project was abandoned, and this article will appear in *Die Musikforschung* X (1957). I wish to pay my respects to this great musicologist, without whose patient help and guidance this project might never have come into being. I should like to pay an especial debt of gratitude to Prof. A. Bruckner, who gave unstintingly of his time and energy to read through the texts of the fragments and to act as consultant in paleographical questions. My thanks also go to the librarians of the various libraries consulted: Worcester Chapter Library, Oxford (Bodleian and College Libraries), Cambridge (University and College Libraries), the British Museum, the herzogliche Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel, the Universitätsbibliothek in Göttingen and the Library of the University of Chicago, who so kindly assisted me in every way possible. Especially, however, I wish to acknowledge the graciousness of Dr. Hunt and Mr. Long, *Keepers of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library*, who so obligingly complied with my wishes in rearranging some of their manuscripts. Finally I wish to acknowledge the assistance of my wife, Dr. (Med.) J. Dittmer, who aided me immeasurably in the work of transcribing and preparing this publication.

voices in the transcription follows the system of Heinrich Husmann, I referring to the lowest voice, II to the voice immediately above this, III and IV etc. The unmodified numbering of compositions refers to those which have been transcribed: compositions whose numbers are modified by a letter have not been transcribed, since they are either for only one voice or are illegible. Whereas many fragments are missing and may be discovered subsequently, it is requested that future historians intercalate these new compositions in their proper places with the use of some such numbering system, so that the present numbers and foliation may remain standard.

1. . . . .  
Not in *WMH* . . . . . Christe lux mundi (f. 1r 1-8)  
. . . . .
2. . . . . anges animae fit in (f. 1v 1-7) and (f. 2v 1-4)  
*WMH* 2 Lux et gloria regis coelici (f. 2r 1-7 & x)  
Kyrie (i) (f. 2r 7), Christe (f. 1v 8), Kyrie (2) (f. 2v 5) and Kyrie  
(last) (f. 2v 4)
3. Benedicta domina (f. 2v 5-9)  
*WMH* 16 . . . . .  
. . . . .
4. . . . .  
*WMH* 34 Felix namque Maria (f. 3r 1-7)  
. . . . .
5. De supernis sedibus (f. 4r 1-5)  
*WMH* 98 De supernis sedibus (f. 4r 6-10)  
De supernis sedibus (f. 3v 1-5)
6. Prolis aeternae genitor (f. 4v 1-9)  
*WMH* 60 Psallat mater gratiae (f. 5r 1-9)  
Pes super Prolis & Psallat (f. 5r 9)
7. Quem non capit fabrica magnifica (f. 5v 1-8)  
*WMH* 31 (Quem non capit) . . . hoc munera debuit (x, f. 6r 5-7 & x)  
Pes super Quem non capit (f. 5v 8)

the last in L/B. The physical condition of the leaf indicates how much was missing.

- 31 The introduction to this compositions has some canonic imitation (III 5-12 = II 6-13) but there is no voice exchange in this section. Although musically this composition is a rondellus, only voices III and I interchange their texts. The form is best described in the following manner, using minuscules to indicate the various musical sections and majuscules the textual parts.

cC aA bB c'F a'D' b'E'  
Introduction bH cJ aK b'L c'M a'N Conclusion  
aA bB cC a'D b'E c'F

- 32 A modified version of this pes is used in the motet *O Maria stella maris|Iesu fili summi patris* (cf. the transcription in *Dr.*) The pes is stated four times, so that we can supply the lacunae, but the third and fourth statements (m. 37 & 61) double the first and every subsequent fifth note. The text of the second voice is derived from *Chev.* 18408. The text of the third voice is derived from that of the second, as e.g. III 41-43 = II 33-37.
- 33 The text of the pes is derived from V 1, 2a, 2b, others and 4 of *Chev.* 18314 = *AH XLVII* 292 (cf. Gautier, *Les Tropes...* I 274 & 277); the textual lacunae have been supplied from this source. The second voice and the conclusion of the pes were contained on the missing leaf Vol. 1 f. CII<sup>r</sup>. By means of the one extant clef, f. 19<sup>v</sup> acc. 2, it is possible to determine the pitch of acc. 2-5 and 9. The pes I 16-43 is repeated I 44-69 with different division, so that only the approximate continuation (m. 53-69) can be given, which agrees with the physical conditions of the damaged leaf. The text of III 67-69 is undoubtedly *Gaudia* to rhyme with *Omnia*.
- 34 The third voice and the odd numbered lines of the first voice were, as shown by the directors, contained on the missing leaf Vol. 1 f. CXXXV<sup>v</sup>. The lacunae can be measured according to the physical evidence of the missing strip of the leaf.
- 35 The second voice and the middle of the pes were contained on the missing leaf Vol. 1 f. CXXXVII<sup>r</sup>. The pes has been completed according to the Gregorian melody.
- 36 The third voice and the beginning of the pes were contained on the missing corresponding verso. The pes has been completed from the repetition. This is an example of an independent motet derived from a tropic motet used in an English organum.

Ad honorem summi regis, *Seq.*, 81b.  
Aeterne virgo mater, *Mot.*, 15.  
Aeterne virgo memoriae, *Mot.*, 15.  
Aeterne virgo memoriae, *Seq cit.*, 15.  
Agmina, *Pes*, 37.  
Agnus dei, à 3, 84.  
Alleluias, cf. under incipit of verse.  
Alleluia canite, *Trmot.*, 27.  
Alleluia concinat, *Stmot.*, 46.  
Alleluia moduletur, *Stmot.*, 55.  
Alleluia psallat, *Stmot.*, 46.  
Alma iam ad gaudia, *Trmot.*, 28.  
Almae matris dei, *Trmot.*, 28.  
Alme veneramur, *Stmot.*, 52.  
Amor patris praesentatur, *Mot.*, 20.  
Ave Maria grátia plena, *Hy. à 1*, 97e.  
Ave Maria gratia plena virgo, à 1, 97b  
Ave magnifica Maria, *Stmot.*, 19.  
Ave magnifica Maria, *Stmot.*, 56.  
Ave mirifica Maria, *Stmot.*, 19.  
Ave mirifica Maria, *Stmot.*, 56.  
Ave virgo concipiens, à 1, 97c.  
Ave virgo mater dei, *Ro.*, 25.

Beata supernorum, *Trmot.*, 26.  
Beala viscera Mariae virginis, *Con.*, 91.  
Benedicta domina, mundi, *Mot. or Trmot.*, 3.  
Benedicta et venerabilis, *Grad. Pes*, 26.  
Benedicta et venerabilis, *Grad. Pes*, 80a  
Benedicta supernorum, *Trmot.*, 26.  
Benedictus es coelorum, à 1, 97g.  
Benedictus Mariae filius, *BeTr. Pes*, 59.

Candens crescit lilium, *Mot.*, 53.  
Candens lilium columbina, *Mot.*, 53.  
Christe factor et amator, *Trmot.*, 29.  
Christe lux mundi, *Trmot.*, 1.  
Conditio naturae, *Mot.*, 65.  
V Confitemini domino, *Cit.*, 15.  
Crucifixum dominum, *Trmot.*, 96.  
Crucifixum in carne, *Respond Pes*, 96.

Dei cuncta nutriente, *Trmot.*, 19.  
Dei genitrix, cf. V Virgo dei genitrix.

Kyrie-Eleyson

de - li - a, No - bis e - ley - - son. Me - di - ci - na vi - tae li - li - a,  
tas flo - ret Ma - ri - a, e - ley - son.

Eg - ro - to - rum fu - ne - ra; Pel - le spes ve - ra, Ne di - a - bo - li - ca fal - la - ci -

a; E - os op - pri - mat, A - li - qua ver - su - ri - a Si - bi red - de vi - tae spa - ci -

a, Ma - ri - a, quae re - gen - tem por - tas - ti cun - ta pro fa - mu - lis

iu - gi - ter iu - va - mi - na, in fun - de et no - bis e - ley - - - son.