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THE PENGUIN BOOK OF ENGLISH SONG

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SEVEN CENTURIES OF POETRY FROM CHAUCER TO AUDEN

Edited by **Richard Stokes**

THE PENGUIN BOOK OF ENGLISH SONG

RICHARD STOKES is Professor of Lieder at the Royal Academy of Music. His previous books include *The Book of Lieder* and *J. S. Bach*: *The Complete Cantatas* and he is co-author of *A French Song Companion* and *The Spanish Song Companion*, all of which are much admired by musicians and concert-goers. His English versions of *Wozzeck*, *Lulu*, *Parsifal* and *La Voix Humaine*, and his translations from Kafka, Kleist and Jules Renard, have also been widely acclaimed.

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The Penguin Book of English Song

Seven Centuries of Poetry from Chaucer to Auden

RICHARD STOKES

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Of the books listed in the Bibliography, I am especially indebted to Professor Stephen Banfield's *Sensibility and English Song* (Cambridge University Press, 1985). This encyclopedic survey of English song from the late nineteenth century to the middle of the twentieth ends with the song lists of fifty-four composers and over 5,000 songs – invaluable information for anyone interested in the development of English song – and I should like to thank Professor Banfield for allowing me to make use of his research into the dating of these songs. When two dates appear in brackets after the title of a song, roman denotes date of composition or completion, *italics* refer to the year of publication.

Many people have helped in the preparation of *The Penguin Book of English Song*. Graham Johnson, as always, has been generous with his time, knowledge and library; with Iain Burnside I had fruitful discussions about contemporary English song. Judith Chernaik, Lucasta Miller, Roy Foster, David Gilmour, Steven Curran and Philip Reed advised me on the chapters devoted to Shelley, Emily Brontë, Yeats, Kipling, Joyce and Auden; Gavin Griffiths and Jonathan Keates read the typescript with an eagle eye and made many valuable suggestions; Jonathan Katz supplied translations from Greek and Latin; Kathy Adamson and her staff at the Royal Academy of Music have been tireless in their search for elusive books and scores. Finally, I should like to thank my family for their patience with my technological incompetence; and Carola Lotzenburger and Gina Thomas for their timely belief in the book.

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Introduction

Poetry and music have been associated with each other from the very beginning. Short poems are still called lyrics, even though they are now not usually sung to a lyre; Virgil's *Aeneid* begins: 'Arma virumque cano' – 'I sing [not tell] of arms and man'; a sonnet, though rarely sung, derives its name from the word 'song'; many poems from the Elizabethan age to the present have been called 'Song', with no musical setting; and music, for many of us, is an integral part of poetry. *The Penguin Book of English Song* contains a great variety of poems from the fourteenth to the twentieth century that have reached a wider audience through the magic of music. As John Dryden wrote in the dedication of Purcell's *The Vocal and Instrumental Musick of The Prophetess, or The History of Dioclesian* (1690):

> Musick and Poetry have ever been acknowledg'd Sisters, which walking hand in hand, support each other; As Poetry is the harmony of Words, so Musick is that of Notes: and as Poetry is a Rise above Prose and Oratory, so is Musick the exaltation of Poetry. Both of them may excel apart, but sure are most excellent when they are join'd, because nothing is then wanting to either of their Perfections: for thus they appear like Wit and Beauty in the same Person.

There are many books available in English that introduce the reader to the world of French, German, Italian and Spanish song, among them *A French Song Companion* (OUP), *The Book of Lieder* (Faber and Faber), *Italian Art Song* (Indiana University Press) and *The Spanish Song Companion* (Scarecrow Press). There is no equivalent book on English song, no book that provides an anthology of English verse with commentaries on poets, composers and, when textual explanations are needed, poems. Each of the 100 chapters of *The Penguin Book of English Song*, arranged chronologically from Chaucer to Auden, opens with information about the poet's life, work and, often, approach to music. This is followed by a choice of poems that have inspired musical settings, arranged chronologically by composer. Piano-accompanied song predominates, but not exclusively. Benjamin Britten, for example, is represented not only by such works as *Winter Words* (Hardy) for voice and piano, but also his *Spring Symphony* (Spenser, Clare, Milton, Herrick); *Nocturne* (Shelley, Tennyson, Wordsworth, Owen, Keats, Shakespeare) for tenor, seven obbligato

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instruments and string orchestra; *A Ceremony of Carols* (Southwell) for trebles and harp; *Serenade* (Tennyson, Blake, Jonson, Keats) for tenor, horn and strings; *Five Flower Songs* (Herrick, Crabbe, Clare) for unaccompanied chorus; 'Canticle III' (Sitwell) for tenor, horn and piano; *War Requiem* (Owen); and *Peter Grimes* (Crabbe) – reminding us that Britten was one of the very few composers who were equally at home in opera and song.

Many of these English poems have also inspired songs – in German translation – by the great Lieder composers, which explains the presence within these pages of Beethoven, Haydn, Loewe, Mendelssohn, Schubert, Schumann, Strauss, Wolf and so on. The bulk of the book comprises verse of undisputed literary pedigree – a rich anthology of English poetry (including Irish, Scots and Welsh writers) from Chaucer to Auden, with very few of the great poets omitted. American verse has been excluded for lack of space, though American composers such as Argento, Barber, Beach, Chanler, Hoiby, Rorem etc. feature regularly in the selected list of composers printed in parenthesis at the end of a poem.

The volume, despite the presence of many composers of different nationalities, remains quintessentially English, and includes pieces that have a firm place in our national consciousness: 'Rule, Britannia!' (James Thomson), sung each year at the Last Night of the Proms; 'Abide with me' (Henry Francis Lyte), bawled each year at the Cup Final; 'Twinkle, twinkle, little star' (Jane Taylor), cooed by every child in its pram; 'Tom Bowling' (Charles Dibdin), caressed each year by the BBC Orchestra's first cello at the Last Night of the Proms; 'Auld lang syne' (Robert Burns), intoned, not just by the Scots, each Hogmanay; 'Jerusalem' (William Blake), the official hymn of the England and Wales Cricket Board; and 'Once in royal David's city' (Cecil Frances Alexander), whose first verse is sung by a lone treble each year at the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols from King's College, Cambridge. Patriotic poems include 'For those at sea' (William Whiting), known to every English-speaking sailor the world over; 'Our God, our help in ages past' (Isaac Watts), sung at Winston Churchill's funeral and every Remembrance Day; and the National Anthem.

W. H. Auden wrote in *The Poet's Tongue* (1935) that 'we do not want to read "great" poetry all the time, and a good anthology should contain poems for every mood'. He also pointed out (Introduction to *19th Century British Minor Poets*, 1966), in an attempt to define 'major' and 'minor' poets, that it was not simply 'a matter of the pleasure the poet gives an individual reader: I cannot enjoy one poem by Shelley and am delighted by every line of William Barnes, but I know perfectly well that

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Shelley is a major poet and Barnes a minor one.' *The Penguin Book of English Song* includes many so-called minor poets: William Allingham, the friend of Tennyson, who wrote one indestructible poem; Thomas Lovell Beddoes, the haunted poet of 'Dream-pedlary'; Colley Cibber, the poet of 'The blind boy', immortalized by Franz Schubert; George Crabbe, whose 'Peter Grimes' from *The Borough* is now celebrated the world over through the music of Benjamin Britten; tragic Ernest Dowson, one of Delius's favourite poets; Francis Ledwidge, much admired by Seamus Heaney; Sidney Keyes, who died aged twenty in the Second World War; Alun Lewis, another war victim, for whom Robert Graves predicted a shining future; Walter de la Mare, who penned some of the most magical poems in the English language; and many more.

The texts printed here are those of the original poems, even when composers have tweaked the text to suit their settings; and the title of each poem is the one used by the poet. Gurney's 'By a bierside' is therefore titled 'The Chief Centurions', and the poem is printed as it originally appeared in Masefield's *Pompey the Great* – Gurney, when setting the poem from memory in the trenches, misremembered fourteen words. Square brackets after the title of a poem denote the composer's title, and square brackets within the poem indicate verses that the composer has omitted.

Francis Turner Palgrave, in his Introduction to a volume of poems by Robert Herrick (Macmillan and Co., 1877), writes perceptively that 'the poet's own spelling and punctuation bear, or may bear, a gleam of his personality' – and it is for this reason that the poems in *The Penguin Book of English Song* are printed with their original orthography and punctuation. This also enables us to trace the development of the English language as the book progresses. Modernizing the spelling of Chaucer's language affects both the sound, sight, rhythm and flavour of the poem. Compare Chaucer's original opening of 'The General Prologue' to the *Canterbury Tales* with Geoffrey Dyson's modern version of the same lines and the difference is at once apparent:

Whan that Aprill with his shoures soote
The droghte of March hath perced to the roote,
And bathed every veine in swich licour
Of which vertu engendered is the flour;
Whan Zephirus eek with his sweete breeth
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne

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Hath in the Ram his halve cours yronne,
And smale foweles maken melodie,
That slepen al the night with open ye
(So priketh hem nature in hir corages);
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages [. . .]

When that April with his showers sweet
The drought of March hath piercèd to the root,
And bathèd every vein in such moisture
Of which virtue engendered is the flower;
When Zephyr eke with his sweet breath
Inspirèd hath in every holt and heath
The tender branches, and the young sun
Hath in Ram's sign his half course run,
And small birds make melody
That sleep all night with open eye, –
So worketh nature in their hearts, –
Then folk do long to go on pilgrimage [. . .]

John Skelton's zaniness is diminished by tampering with his spelling and punctuation (just as Mussorgsky's raw individuality is smoothed out in Rimsky-Korsakov's version of *Boris Godunov*). It's only by reading the poems of Robert Southwell in their original form that we can involve ourselves in the experiences of the poet entangled in the turmoil of post-Reformation Europe – to change the orthography in Britten's settings of 'This little babe' ('This little Babe, so fewe daies olde') and 'In freezing winter night' ('In freesing Winter nighte') is to deny the reader the experience of appreciating the poems exactly as they appeared, clandestinely and illicitly, from the printing presses of the period. And by reproducing the authentic spelling of Traherne's *Centuries* (see Finzi's *Dies Natalis*), we become aware that the poet's use of capitals frequently gives emphasis to certain words.

The orthography of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century writers is not difficult if the words are read aloud and a few basic peculiarities are borne in mind: apostrophes are often used to indicate elision, as in John Donne; many possessive apostrophes are omitted; the ending *-ed* is usually pronounced; 'then' and 'than' and 'thorough' and 'through' are often interchangeable; 'to' is occasionally printed for 'too'. Although it is sometimes difficult to detect a consistent principle governing the erratic spelling of the Elizabethan period, during which a word can appear spelt several

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different ways within the same poem, and although it must be borne in mind that the orthography and punctuation of a poem were often decided by the printer – especially when the poem was an extract from a play – to read a poem in its original orthography is part of our aesthetic response to poetry.

Later writers also had their orthographical idiosyncrasies. William Blake's 'Illuminated Books' are a case in point. The spelling and punctuation of the fifty-four plates that Blake made for the *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* should not be tampered with, since the simplicity of these poems is harmed when editors impose an over-sophisticated punctuation. The use of ampersands, the absence of commas, apostrophes, capital letters and full stops never interferes with the sense and should be honoured – even though it has not been possible to reproduce Blake's 'long s'. The erratic spelling, irregular grammar and virtual absence of punctuation of John Clare's poetry allow us an insight into his madness that is denied us when editors meddle with his verse. Elizabeth Barrett Browning, like Blake, preferred ampersands to 'and's, tended to use two rather than three ellipses (. .) and often used equal signs (=) for dashes in her manuscripts – see the British Library manuscript notebook of *Sonnets from the Portuguese*; to change her orthography would be as ill-advised and perverse as altering Emily Dickinson's idiosyncratic spelling and punctuation, although we have not replicated typographically Elizabeth Barrett Browning's exclamation marks which lack the point. When vocal scores have modernized a poet's spelling and punctuation, we have reinstated the original version.

Footnotes provide information about the more recondite classical and learned references, difficult syntax and first performances, and give biographical details relevant to either composer or poet. Biography – *pace* the deconstructionists – enables singer, pianist and listener to engage more fully with a poem and its musical setting. Information about Thomas Hardy's relationships, for example with Elizabeth Bishop, Emma Gifford, Louisa Harding, Florence Henniker, Fanny Hurden and Julia Martin, can only deepen a performer's interpretation of Hardy songs by Ireland, Finzi and others. Or as D. H. Lawrence put it, referring to his own poetry in his introductory Note to *The Collected Poems* (1928): 'It seems to me that no poetry, not even the best, should be judged as if it existed in the absolute, in the vacuum of the absolute. Even the best poetry, when it is at all personal, needs the penumbra of its own time and place and circumstance to make it full and whole. If we knew a little more of

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Shakespeare's self and circumstance how much more complete the Sonnets would be to us, how their strange, torn edges would be softened and merged into a whole body!' *The Penguin Book of English Song* gathers together in a single volume a huge amount of information about English Song that will assist musicians in performing these works and enlighten all those enthusiasts who delight in the fusion of words and music, which has produced countless moments of incandescent magic.

Richard Stokes, London 2016

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GEOFFREY CHAUCER

(*c.*1343–1400)

In Chauser I am sped,
His tales I have red;
His mater is delectable,
Solacious, and commendable;
His Englysh well alowed,
So as it is enprowed,
For as it is enployd,
There is no Englysh voyd,
At those days moch commended;
And now men wold have amended
His Englyssh, whereat they barke
And mar all they warke.
Chaucer, that famus clerke,
His termes were not darke,
But pleasaunt, easy and playne;
Ne worde he wrote in vayne.

JOHN SKELTON: *Phyllyp Sparowe* (?1505)

The Canterbury Tales were most probably written – in Middle English – during the final twenty years of Chaucer's life; in other words, it had taken more than 300 years after the Norman Conquest of 1066 for the English tongue to evolve into the language that we can still read today without the trappings of scholarship – which cannot be said of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, for example, a work which used the more archaic West Midlands dialect. When Lord Harewood interviewed Benjamin Britten in the series *People Today* (23 June 1960, BBC Home Service), the composer reminisced on how Auden had introduced him to Chaucer for the first time: 'I'd always imagined that was a kind of foreign language, but as he [Auden] read it, which was very well, I understood almost immediately what it meant, and I find now that it isn't so difficult to read – one must just have confidence and read ahead and then the meaning comes very strongly, very easily.' A glance at the language of Vaughan Williams's

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Merciles Beaute reveals how accessible Chaucer's East Midlands language is to the modern eye and ear. The manuscript of these poems, attributed to Chaucer, is held by Magdalene College, Cambridge, and printed by the Chaucer Society. The work is subtitled 'A Triple Roundel', which reminds us that it was Chaucer who introduced the rondel into England from France, though his form of the genre differs from that used by Charles d'Orléans, in that more of the lines are used as refrains.

Very little is known of Chaucer's life between 1360 and 1367, although he married in 1366 and had two sons: Lewis (to whom he dedicated *A Treatise on the Astrolabe*) and Thomas. Edward III offered him a pension in 1367. He spent much time abroad on diplomatic missions between about 1368 and 1378, and during the same decade probably received the patronage of John of Gaunt. He was given a house in Aldgate in 1374 and lived there for just over ten years. It was in 1374 that he became Controller of the Customs for wool, a post he held for some ten years, before he left the Custom House in 1385 and moved to Kent, which he represented in Parliament and where he was a Justice of the Peace. It was during those years that he translated Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*, wrote *Troilus and Criseyde* and *The Parliament of Fowles* and drafted the first stories that were later to appear in *The Canterbury Tales*. He seems to have begun the *Prologue* in 1387. In 1389 he was appointed, perhaps by Richard II himself, Clerk of the King's Works, a post he resigned in 1391, to become Deputy Forester in the royal forest of Petherton in Somerset. Despite receiving a number of grants from Richard II, he was continually in debt during the final decade of his life. He died in late October 1400 in a house that he had leased in the gardens of Westminster Abbey, where he is buried. Chaucer's career as a courtier, diplomat and civil servant enabled him to observe a huge variety of human kind; and he had the privilege of writing for an aristocratic audience who, he knew, would both understand and accept him.

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RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

Merciles Beaute
for soprano or tenor, two violins and cello (1921/*1922*)[1]

I

Your yen[2] two wol slee[3] me sodenly:
I may the beauté of hem not sustene,
So woundeth hit thurghout my herte kene.

And but your word wol helen[4] hastily
My hertës wounde, while that hit is grene,
Your yen two wol slee me sodenly:
I may the beautee of hem not sustene.

Upon my trouthe I sey you feithfully,
That ye ben of my lyf and deeth the quene,
For with my deeth the trouthe shal be sene:

Your yen two wol slee me sodenly;
I may the beauté of hem not sustene,
So woundeth it thrurghout my herte kene.

(Bax, Finzi, Gurney)

II

So hath your beautee fro your herte chaced
Pitee, that me ne availeth not to pleyne;
For Daunger halt your mercy in his cheyne.

1. Edith Sitwell adored this poem and wrote of it in *A Poet's Notebook* (1943): 'Much of the variation in sound of this wonderful poetry is due (as I have said already) to the fact that some lines are divided sharply in two by a deep pause, whilst at other times there is no pause at all, or else several small pauses. An example is that miracle, the first rondel of "Merciles Beaute" – to me the only perfect rondel in the English language. The English rondel is usually a giggling, trivial horror; but this poem has a most clear, noble, and grave beauty.' 2. eyes. 3. slay. 4. heal.

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Giltles my deeth thus han ye me purchaced;
I sey you sooth, me nedeth not to feyne[5]:
  So hath your beautee fro your herte chased
  Pitee, that me ne availeth not to pleyne.

Allas! that Nature hath in you compassed
So greet beautee, that no man may atteyne
To mercy, though he sterve for the peyne!

  So hath your beautee fro your herte chaced
  Pitee, that me ne availeth not to pleyne;
  For Daunger halt your mercy in his cheyne.

(Bax, Rubbra)

III

Syn I fro Love escaped am so fat,[6]
I never thenk to ben in his prison lene;
Syn I am free, I counte him not a beane.

He may answere, and seye this or that;
I do no fors,[7] I speke right as I mene:
  Syn I fro Love escaped am so fat,
  I never thenk to be in his prison lene.

Love hath my name ystrike out of his sclat[8],
And he is strike out of my bokes clene
For evermo; this is non other mene[9].

  Syn I fro Love escaped am so fat,
  I never thenk to ben in his prison lene;
  Syn I am free, I counte him not a bene.

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5. feign. 6. Chaucer enjoyed alluding to his own portliness. 7. I care not. 8. slate. 9. course of action.

SIR GEORGE DYSON: from *The Canterbury Pilgrims* (1931)[1]

General Prologue *[Prologue]*

Whan that Aprill with his shoures soote[2]
The droghte of March hath perced to the roote,
And bathed every veine in swich licour[3]
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;[4]
Whan Zephirus[5] eek with his sweete breeth
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
The tendre croppes[6], and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram[7] his halve cours yronne,
And smale foweles maken melodie,
That slepen al the night with open ye
(So priketh hem nature in hir corages);[8]
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages,
And palmeres[9] for to seken straunge strondes,
To ferne halwes, kowthe in sondry londes;[10]
And specially from every shires ende
Of Engelond to Caunterbury they wende,
The hooly blisful martir for to seke,[11]

1. The composer writes in his Note to the printed vocal score: 'In presenting Chaucer to a modern public, some degree of adaptation and translation has been necessary in order to make the words generally intelligible. Archaic forms have been freely modified [. . .]. It is hoped that Chaucer's lyric beauty and the inimitable vividness of his characterization will remain clear to all readers.' We have chosen to print Chaucer's original text, which, with the help of footnotes, is not difficult to understand. Dyson's work is scored for strings, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, kettledrums, two percussion players (cymbals, bass drum, triangle and tambourine), harp (ad lib.), and organ (ad lib.) The 'Prologue' is followed by twelve movements: an 'envoi' and character sketches taken from the 'Prologue': 'The Knight', 'The Squire', 'The Nun', 'The Monk', 'The Clerk of Oxenford', 'The Haberdasher and his Fraternity. The Merchant', 'The Sergeant of the Law. The Franklin', 'The Shipman', 'The Doctor of Physic', 'The Wife of Bath' and 'The Poor Parson of a Town'. **2.** sweet. **3.** moisture. **4.** whose creative influence brings flowers into blossom. **5.** the warm west wind – hence a generative force. **6.** branches. **7.** Ram = the zodiacal sign of Aries. A symbol of sexual potency, it gives a sense of vital processes at work on the land. **8.** so worketh nature in their hearts. **9.** pilgrims who had returned from the Holy Land, bearing a palm-leaf or palm-branch in their hand. **10.** to distant saints known in sundry lands. **11.** Thomas à Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury. Murdered in 1170 at the behest of Henry II, Thomas was canonized three years later and his relics placed in a coffer at the base of a shrine in

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That hem hath holpen whan that they were seeke[12].
    Bifil[13] that in that seson on a day,
In Southwerk at the Tabard[14] as I lay
Redy to wenden on my pilgrimage
To Caunterbury with ful devout corage,
At night was come into that hostelrie
Wel nine and twenty in a compaignie,
Of sondry folk, by aventure yfalle[15]
In felaweshipe, and pilgrimes were they alle,
That toward Caunterbury wolden ride.
The chambres and the stables weren wide,
And wel we weren esed atte beste[16].
And shortly, whan the sonne was to reste,
So hadde I spoken with hem everichon
That I was of hir felaweshipe anon,
And made forward erly for to rise,
To take oure wey ther as I yow devise.
    But nathelees, whil I have time and space,
Er that I ferther in this tale pace,
Me thinketh it acordaunt to resoun[17]
To telle yow al the condicioun
Of ech of hem, so as it semed me,
And whiche they weren, and of what degree,
And eek in what array that they were inne;
And at a knight than wol I first biginne.

---

one of the cathedral chapels. One end of the coffer was glazed – which allowed the faithful to glimpse the relics on religious occasions. According to contemporary figures, the shrine was visited by 100,000 pilgrims in the jubilee year of 1420. A pilgrimage, though still an act of piety, had changed in character by the time Chaucer wrote his poem, and offered for some the opportunity of seeing the world and enjoying the companionship of people from all walks of life. Chaucer depicts the life and manners of English men and women as he knew them. **12.** sick. **13.** it befell. **14.** The Tabard was an inn in Southwark, a suburb of London south of London Bridge. It continued to exist until it was destroyed by fire in 1676. **15.** by chance come together. **16.** made very comfortable. **17.** it seems to me a logical arrangement.

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WILLIAM DUNBAR

(?1456–?1513)

Sometimes Dunbar is a blinded, blundering, earthy giant, sometimes he has the vastness and strength of a genial, blustering, boisterous north wind, – a geniality that can blacken and turn dangerous. Yet even when he is most wind-like, his spirit has at the same time a queerly animal quality, – almost a smell; his genius has a terrible animal force, stinking and rank like that of Swift; but it is for the most part a genial and friendly rankness, unlike that of Swift. This rank darkness and animal stink is present, or can be present, in nearly all genius, but in most, 'the angel that stands near the naked man' has interfused it with sweetness and light.

EDITH SITWELL: *A Poet's Notebook* (1943)

Little is known of Dunbar's life that is certain. Mention is made of a William Dunbar who studied at St Andrew's, obtaining a bachelor's degree in 1477 and a master's in 1479. There seems to be no documentary evidence of his whereabouts between 1479 and 1500, but it has often been deduced from his poems that he was a Franciscan novice, became a preaching friar and travelled abroad in the King's service. He was granted a royal pension of £10 in 1500, and by 1504 had taken priest's orders. He probably died at the Battle of Flodden Field. Among his greatest poems are 'The Thrissil and the Rois' (1503) and 'The Dance of the Sevin Deidly Synnis' (1507). The 'Tua Mariit Wemen and the Wedo', which deals with three women who discuss their experiences of marriage, is reminiscent of Chaucer's satire on women in the 'Wife of Bath's Prologue' in the *Canterbury Tales*. Dunbar's 'The Lament for the Makaris' is an elegy about the ephemerality of life, and laments the passing, among other figures, of Chaucer and Gower. 'The Flyting of Dunbar and Kennedie' (a *flyting* is a Scots literary form that blends literary criticism and lampoon) displays Dunbar's Rabelaisian humour. Some eighty poems survive in manuscript, with no obvious line of development.

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FRANCIS GEORGE SCOTT: from *Scottish Lyrics III* (1934)

Rorate cœli desuper
[Of the nativitie of Christ] (1922)[1]

Rorate celi desuper.[2]
Hevins distill your balmy schouris,
For now is rissin the bricht day ster
Fro the ros Mary, flour of flouris;
The cleir sone quhome no clud devouris,
Surmunting Phebus in the est,
Is cummin of his hevinly touris
Et nobis Puer natus est.[3]

[Archangellis, angellis, and dompnationis,[4]
Tronis, potestatis, and marteiris seir,
And all ye hevinly operationis,
Ster, planeit, firmament, and spear,
Fyre, er, air, and watter cleir,
To him gife loving, most and lest,
That come in to so meik maneir
Et nobis Puer natus est.

Synnaris, be glaid and penance do
And thank your maker hairtfully,
For he that ye mycht nocht cum to

1. 'Some of Dunbar's finest work was done in religious poetry of a more ordinary kind. He does not deal much in solitary devotional feeling, like the Metaphysicals or the Victorians; he is public and liturgical. His two supreme achievements in this vein are his poems on the Nativity and on the Resurrection. The first of these (*Rorate celi desuper*) might almost claim to be in one sense the most lyrical of all English poems – that is, the hardest of all English poems simply to *read*, the hardest not to sing. We read it alone and at night – and are almost shocked, on laying the book down, to find that the choir and organ existed only in our imagination. It has none of the modern – the German or Dickensian – attributes of Christmas. It breathes rather the intoxication of universal spring and summons all Nature to salute "the cleir sone quhome no clud devouris" [. . .] I would hesitate to read Milton's Hymn on the same evening with this.' (C. S. Lewis: *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century Excluding Drama* (1954)). **2.** See Isa. xlv. 8: 'Shower, O heavens, from above, and let the skies rain down righteousness'. **3.** See Isa. ix. 6: 'For to us a child is born, to us a son is given [. . .]' **4.** The hierarchies of heaven, as elaborated in the Middle Ages. The first comprised seraphim, cherubim and thrones; the second, dominations, virtues and powers; the third, principalities, archangels and angels.

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To yow is cumin full humly;
Your saulis with his blud to by
And lous yow of the feindis arrest,
And only of his awin mercy
Pro nobis Puer natus est.

All clergy do to him incline
And bow unto that barne benyng,
And do your observance devyne
To him that is of kingis king;
Ensence his altar, reid and sing
In haly kirk, with mynd degest,
Him honouring attour all thing
Qui nobis Puer natus est.

Celestiall fowlis in the are,
Sing with your nottis upoun hicht,
In firthis and in forrestis fair
Be myrthfull now, at all your mycht;
For passit is your dully nycht,
Aurora hes the cluddis perst,
The son is rissin with glaidsum lycht,
Et nobis Puer natus est.

Now spring up, flouris, fra the rute,
Revert yow upwart naturaly,
In honour of the blissit frute[5]
That rais up fro the rose the rose Mary;
Lay out your levis lustily,
Fro deid tak lyfe now at the lest
In wirschip of that Prince wirthy
Qui nobis Puer natus est.]

Syng hevin imperiall[6], most of hicht,
Regions of air mak armony;
All fishe in flud and foull of flicht

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5. Cf. the 'Ave Maria': 'benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus ventris tui'. **6.** the highest heaven where God and His angels dwelled.

Be myrthfull and mak melody;
All *Gloria in excelsis* cry,
Hevin, erd, se, man, bird, and best:
He that is crownit abone the sky
Et nobis Puer natus est.

RONALD CORP: from *Flower of Cities* (2000)[1]

To the City of London

London, thou art of townes A *per se.*
Soveraign of cities, semeliest in sight,
Of high renoun, riches, and royaltie;
Of lordis, barons, and many goodly knyght;
Of most delectable lusty ladies bright;
Of famous prelatis in habitis clericall;
Of merchauntis full of substaunce and myght:
London, thou art the flour of Cities all.

[. . .]

Strong be thy wallis that about the standis;
Wise be the people that within the dwellis;
Fresh is thy ryver with his lusty strandis;
Blith be thy chirches, wele sownyng be thy bellis;
Riche be thy merchauntis in substaunce that excellis;
Fair be thy wives, right lovesom, white and small;
Clere be thy virgyns, lusty under kellis[2]:
London, thow art the flour of Cities all.

[. . .]

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1. Corp's cycle comprises songs to poems on London by William Dunbar, Lord Byron, William Blake, William Wordsworth and Henry Carey. 2. 'kell' = a woman's head-dress.

JOHN SKELTON

(?1460–1529)

What could be dafter
Than John Skelton's laughter?
What sound more tenderly
Than his pretty poetry?
So where to rank old Skelton?
He was no monstrous Milton,
Nor wrote no *Paradise Lost*,
So wondered at by most,
Phrased so disdainfully,
Composed so painfully.
He struck what Milton missed,
Milling an English grist
With homely turn and twist.
He was English through and through,
Not Greek, nor French, nor Jew,
Though well their tongues he knew,
The living and the dead:
Learned Erasmus said,
Hic, unum Britannicarum
Lumen et decus literarum.
But oh, Colin Clout!
How his pen flies about,
Twiddling and turning,
Scorching and burning,
Thrusting and thrumming!
How it hurries with humming,
Leaping and running,
At the tipsy-topsy Tunning
Of Mistress Eleanor Rumming!
How for poor Philip Sparrow
Was murdered at Carow,
How our hearts he does harrow!
Jest and grief mingle
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In this jangle-jingle,

For he will not stop
To sweep nor mop,
To prune nor prop,
To cut each phrase up
Like beef when we sup,
Nor sip at each line
As at brandy-wine,
Or port when we dine.
But angrily, wittily,
Tenderly, prettily,
Laughingly, learnedly,
Sadly, madly.
Helter-skelter John
Rhymes serenely on,
As English poets should.
Old John, you do me good!

ROBERT GRAVES: 'John Skelton' (1917)

John Skelton, born some sixty years after Chaucer's death, was also a court poet for much of his life. There is no one quite like him in the whole of English literature (although his witty juggling with words clearly influenced Edith Sitwell and Stevie Smith), and his verse owes nothing to foreign influences. A classical scholar of distinction, he was created *Orator Regius* by the universities of Oxford, Louvain and Cambridge. As tutor to Prince Henry (later Henry VIII), he spent much time at court, despite the outspokenness with which he criticized court life, especially in *The Bowge of Courte*, a satirical allegory on the court of Henry VII. *Why Come Ye Nat to Courte* contained a withering attack on Cardinal Wolsey, which earned him a term of imprisonment – he later buried the hatchet and joined Wolsey in combating Lutherism, which was beginning to thrive at Cambridge in the 1520s. He took holy orders in 1498, which did not prevent him in *Collyn Cloute* from fulminating against the decadence of the Church, the ignorance and laxity of the clergy and the poor example set by bishops. His poetry teems with lowly, zany characters, crudities and wit, yet can also be exquisitely tender. His language is characterized by dizzy rhythms and the most original recurring rhymes – indeed, modern scholars have coined the term 'skeltonic verse' to describe the sort of breathless doggerel

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that he so favoured, short lines, usually with three stresses and irregular but persistent rhyme. As he himself wrote (*Collyn Cloute*, 53–8):

For though my ryme be ragged,
Tattered and jagged,
Rudely rayne-beaten,
Rusty and mothe-eaten,
Yf ye take well therwith,
It hath in it some pyth.

As well as entertaining and abusive satire, he also wrote some charming and tender lyrics, such as those addressed to the Countess of Surrey and Mistress Margaret Hussey. Skelton was highly regarded by many of his contemporaries: Erasmus called him 'the light and glory of English letters' and Caxton delighted in his 'polished and ornate terms'.

HERBERT HOWELLS: from *In Green Ways*, Op. 43, for soprano and piano or orchestra (1928/*1929*)

To maystres Margaret Hussey *[Merry Margaret]*[1]

Mirry Margaret,[2]
As mydsomer flowre,
Jentill as fawcoun
Or hawke of the towre:[3]

With solace and gladnes,
Moche mirthe and no madnes,
All good and no badnes,
So joyously,
So maydenly,
So womanly
Her demenyng
In every thynge,

1. The poem forms part of Skelton's *Garlande or Chapelet of Laurell*. 2. Margaret Hussey, née Blount, was the wife of John Hussey. Skelton puns on her name, Margaret, which also means 'daisy', the 'mydsomer flowre'. 3. that towers aloft.

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Far, far passynge
That I can endyght,
Or suffice to wryght
Of mirry Margarete
As mydsomre flowre,
Jentyll as fawcoun
Or hawke of the towre.

As pacient and as styll,
And as full of good wyll
As fair Isaphill[4];
Colyaunder,
Sweet pomaunder,
Good Cassaunder[5],
Stedfast of thought,
Wele made, wele wrought;
Far may be sought
Erst that ye can fynde
So corteise, so kynde
As mirry Margarete,
This midsomer flowre,
Jentyll as fawcoun
Or hawke of the towre.

RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: from *Five Tudor Portraits*, choral suite for alto/mezzo, baritone, SATB and orchestra (1935)

The genesis of *Five Tudor Portraits* is described by Ursula Vaughan Williams in a note that accompanies the EMI recording: 'One day at a Three Choirs Festival Elgar said to R.V.W., "You should write an oratorio on *Elinor Rumming*." This was in the early thirties, and Philip Henderson's edition of Skelton's poems had recently appeared. R.V.W. acquired the book at once, and found it much to his liking. The two long poems he chose to set were balanced by three short ones to give dramatic shape to the work.'

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4. Hypsipyle. 5. Cassandra.

Vaughan Williams followed Henderson's edition closely in matters of orthography and punctuation, but we print here the authentic version published in John Scattergood's edition from the Penguin English Poets series. Vaughan Williams not only cut many passages [denoted by square brackets] from these long poems (Skelton's *Elynour Rummynge* runs to over 600 lines, and *Phyllyp Sparowe* exceeds 1,350), but also mixed up lines from different parts of the poem. Aware that he was treating the poems in cavalier fashion, he sought to placate the public by appending the following note to the work:

> In making a Choral Suite out of the poems of Skelton I have ventured to take some liberties with the text. In doing this I am aware that I have laid myself open to the accusation of cutting out somebody's 'favourite bit'. If any omissions are to be made this, I fear, is inevitable. On the whole I have managed to keep all my own 'favourite bits', though there are certain passages which I have omitted unwillingly. The omissions are due, partly owing to the great length of the original, partly because some passages did not lend themselves to musical treatment, and partly because certain lines which would sound well when spoken cannot conveniently be sung. I have occasionally, for musical reasons, changed the order of the lines. This seemed to me legitimate as there does not appear to be an inevitable sequence in Skelton's original order. [. . .] The spelling has been modernized except where the final *e* is to be sounded.

The five movements are: 'Ballad: The Tunning of Elinor Rumming'; 'Intermezzo: My Pretty Bess'; 'Burlesca: Epitaph on John Jayberd of Diss'; 'Romanza: Jane Scroop (her lament for Philip Sparrow)'; and 'Scherzo: Jolly Rutterkin'.

The Tunnyng[1] *of Elynour Rummynge*
per Skelton Laureat
[Ballad: The tunning of Elinor Rumming]

Tell you I chyll,
If that ye wyll
A whyle be styll,
Of a comely gyll
That dwelt on a hyll: [. . .]

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1. storing liquor in barrels.

For she is somwhat sage
And well worne in age,
For her vysage
It woldt aswage
A mannes courage. [. . .]
    Droupy and drowsy,
Scurvy and lowsy;
Her face all bowsy[2],
Comely crynklyd, [. . .]
Lyke a rost pygges eare,
Brystled with here. [. . .]
    Her nose somdele hoked,
And camously croked[3],
Never stoppynge,
But ever droppynge;
Her skynne lose and slacke,
Greuyned lyke a sacke;
With a croked backe. [. . .]
    Jawed lyke a jetty;
A man wolde have pytty
To se howe she is gumbed,
Fyngered and thumbed,
Gently joynted,
Gresed and anoynted,
Up to the knockles: [. . .]
Lyke as they were with buckels
Togyder made fast.
Her youth is farre past; [. . .]
And yet she wyll jet,
Lyke a joyly fet[4]
In her furred flocket[5],
And graye russet rocket[6],
With symper-the-cocket[7].
Her huke of Lyncole grene,
It had ben hers, I wene,

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2. boozy, intoxicated. 3. snub-nosed. 4. strut like a neatly attired woman. 5. coat with sleeves. 6. cloak. 7. affected, simpering manner.

More then fourty yere;
And so doth it apere,
For the grene bare thredes
Loke lyke sere wedes,
Wyddered lyke hay,
The woll worne away.
And yet I dare saye
She thynketh her selfe gaye
Upon the holy daye,
Whan she doth her aray,
And gyrdeth in her gytes[8]
Stytched and pranked[9] with pletes;
Her kyrtell[10] Brystowe red,
With clothes upon her hed
That wey a sowe[11] of led,
Wrythen[12] in wonder wyse
After the Sarasyns gyse,
With a whym-wham[13]
Knyt with a trym-tram[14]
Upon her brayne-pan[15],
Lyke an Egypcyan
Lapped about.
Whan she goeth out. [. . .]

And this comely dame,
I understande, her name
Is Elynour Rummynge[16],
At home in her wonnynge[17];
And, as men say,
She dwelt in Sothray,
In a certayne stede[18]
Bysyde Lederhede.
She is a tonnysh gyb[19],
The devyll and she be syb[20].

8. clothes. **9.** decked. **10.** gown, skirt, outer-petticoat. **11.** large lump. **12.** twisted, contorted. **13.** trinket. **14.** pretty trifle. **15.** skull. **16.** Elinour Rumming was a real person – she kept an ale-house in Sothray (Surrey), at Leatherhead, traditionally associated with 'The Running Horse'. She is mentioned in the Court Rolls of Leatherhead for 1525. **17.** dwelling. **18.** place. **19.** beery old woman. **20.** akin.

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But to make up my tale,
She breweth noppy[21] ale,
And maketh thereof port-sale
To travellars, to tynkers,
To sweters, to swynkers[22],
And all good ale drynkers,
That wyll nothynge spare,
But drynke tyll they stare
And brynge them selfe bare[23],
With, 'Now away the mare,
And let us sley care!'
As wyse as an hare!
Come who so wyll
To Elynoure on the hyll,
With, 'Fyll the cup, fyll!'
And syt there by styll,
Erly and late.
Thyther cometh Kate,
Cysly and Sare,
With theyr legges bare, [. . .]
She ran in all the haste,
Unbrased[24] and unlast;
Wyth theyr heles dagged[25],
Theyr kyrtelles all to-jagged,
Theyr smockes all to-ragged,
Wyth tytters and tatters,
Brynge dysshes and platters,
With all theyr myght runnynge
To Elynour Rummynge,
To have of her tunnynge.
She leneth them on the same,
And thus begynneth the game.

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21. heady, strong. 22. labourers. 23. destitute. 24. with dress unfastened. 25. muddy.

Some wenches come unlased,
Some huswyves come unbrased, [. . .][26]
Some be flybytten,
Some skewed[27] as a kytten; [. . .]
Some have no herelace,
Theyr lockes aboute theyr face, [. . .]
Suche a lewde sorte
To Elynour resorte
From tyde to tyde[28].
Abyde, abyde,
And to you shall be tolde
Howe hyr ale is solde
To mawte and to molde[29].

Some have no mony
That thyder commy,
For theyr ale to pay;
That is a shreud aray[30]!
Elynour swered, 'Nay,
Ye shall not bere awaye
Myne ale for nought,
By hym that me bought!'
With 'Hey, dogge, hay,'
Have these hogges away!'
With, 'Get me a staffe,
The swyne eate my draffe[31]!
Stryke the hogges with a clubbe,
They have dronke up my swyllyng tubbe[32]!' [. . .]

26. A pity that Vaughan Williams, perhaps prudishly, omitted the following lines:

Wyth theyr naked pappes,
That flyppes and flappes,
That wygges and it wagges
Lyke tawny saffron bagges;

27. irregularly marked. **28.** occasion. **29.** to malt and to mould. **30.** an array of rascals. **31.** dregs.
32. a tub for hog-wash – a reference to heavy drinking.

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Than thydder came dronken Ales
And she was full of tales,
Of tydynges in Wales,
And of Saynte James in Gales[33],
And of the Portyngales[34];
Wyth, 'Lo, gossyp, iwys[35],
Thus and thus it is,
There hath ben greate war
Betwene Temple Bar
And the Crosse in Chepe,
And thyder came an hepe
Of mylstones in a route[36].'
She spake thus in her snout,
Snevelyng in her nose,
As though she had the pose[37],
'Lo, here is an olde typpet[38],
And ye wyll gyve me a syppet
Of your stale ale,
God sende you good sale!' [. . .]

'This ale', sayd she, 'is noppy[39];
Let us syppe and soppy,
And not spyll a droppy,
For so mote I hoppy,
It coleth well my croppy[40].' [. . .]

Than began she to wepe,
And forthwith fell on slepe. [. . .]
With, 'Hey', and with, 'Howe,
Syt we downe arowe
And drynke tyll we blowe.' [. . .]

Nowe in cometh another rabell; [. . .]
And there began a fabell[41],
A clatterynge and a babell.

33. Galicia. 34. Portuguese. 35. certainly, indeed. 36. riotous gathering. 37. cold in the head. 38. a long narrow strip of cloth. 39. a fermented drink made from malted barley. 40. throat. 41. jabbering.

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They holde the hye waye,
They care not what men saye! [. . .]
Some lothe to be espyde,
Some start in at the backe syde,
Over the hedge and pale[42],
And all for the good ale. [. . .]
With, 'Hey' and with 'Howe,
Syt we downe arowe
And drynke tyll we blowe.' [. . .]

Theyr thurst was so great,
They asked never for mete
But, 'Drynke,' styll, 'Drynke,
And let the cat wynke!
Let us wasshe our gommes
From the drye crommes!' [. . .]

Some brought a wymble[43],
Some brought a thymble, [. . .]
Some brought this and that,
Some brought I wote nere what. [. . .]
And all this shyfte they make
For the good ale sake.
With, 'Hey' and with, 'Howe,
Syt we downe arowe
And drynke tyll we blowe,
And pype tyrly-tyrlowe!'

For my fyngers ytche.
I have wrytten so mytche
Of this mad mummynge
Of Elynour Rummynge!
Thus endeth the gest[44]
Of this worthy fest.

Quod Skelton Laureat.

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42. fence made of stakes driven into the ground. **43.** gimlet. **44.** a story or romance in verse.

My praty Besse *[Intermezzo: My pretty Bess]*[1]

My propir Besse,
My praty Besse,
Turne ons agayne to me;
For slepyste thou, Besse,
Or wakeste thow, Besse,
Myne herte hyt ys with the.

My deysy delectabyll,
My prymerose commendabyll,
My vyolet amyabyll,
My joye inexplicabill,
Nowe torne agayne to me.

[I wyl be ferme and stabyll,
And to yow servyceabyll,
And also prophytabyll,
Yf ye be agreabyll,
My propyr Besse
To turne agayne to me.]

Alas! I am dysdayned,
And as a man halfe-maymed,
My harte is so sore payned,
I pray the, Besse, unfayned,
Yet com agayne to me!

Be love I am constreyned
To be with yow retayned,
Hyt wyll not be refrayned:

1. The poem occurs in *Speke, Parott* (1521), an extraordinary piece which, among other things, criticizes the new learning, Wolsey's power politics and the modish extravagance in manners and dress. Skelton here adapts an amorous song that was widely known at the end of the fifteenth century.

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I pray yow be reclaymed,
My propyr Besse,
And torne agayne to me!

My propir Besse,
My praty Besse,
Turne ons agayne to me;
For slepyste thou, Besse,
Or wakeste thow, Besse,
Myne herte hyt ys with the.

(Dring)

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SIR WALTER RALEGH

(*c*.1552–1618)

> This *Captain Raleigh* coming out of *Ireland* to the *English Court* in good habit (his Cloaths being then a considerable part of his estate) found the Queen walking, till meeting with a *Plashy place*, she seemed to scruple going thereon. Presently Raleigh cast and spred his new Plush Cloak on the ground, whereon the Queen trod gently, rewarding him afterwards with many *Suits*, for his so free and seasonable tender of so fair a *foot Cloath*.
>
> THOMAS FULLER: *The History of the Worthies of England* (1662)

Born in Devon, the son of a prosperous squire, he 'spake broad Devonshire to his dying day' – something that could hardly be guessed from Nicholas Hilliard's brilliant miniature portrait of him in the National Portrait Gallery, in which he wears an abundance of pearls and lace, and stares at the observer with a wonderfully sultry gaze. A favourite of Queen Elizabeth I, the Virgin Queen after whom he named the American State of Virginia, Ralegh was one of the most versatile men of the Elizabethan Age: explorer, statesman, wit, historian, soldier and poet. He took part in the suppression of the rebels in Munster (1580), which gave him an entrée to Elizabeth's court. Knighted on 6 January 1585, he rose at a rapid pace through the courtly ranks, helped no doubt by his (possibly apocryphal) chivalrous behaviour described by Thomas Fuller above; but when in 1592 his clandestine marriage to Elizabeth Throckmorton was revealed, he was sent to the Tower. Released after a short period of imprisonment, he retired with his wife and child to his estate at Sherborne Castle in Dorset. The next year he began to convert a Tudor hunting lodge at Sherborne into the mansion that can still be visited today. He lived there for the next decade, interrupting his gentleman's life by taking part in the Guiana Voyage of 1595, and the Azores Expedition of 1597, accompanied by John Donne and Robert Devereux. He was arrested in 1603 on suspicion of conspiracy to dethrone James, sentenced to death on charges of treason, reprieved and imprisoned in the Tower, where he remained with

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his wife for over a decade, writing *The History of the World*. Though he only finished the first volume, which reached as far as 130 BC, he thanked his enemies for imprisoning him: 'For had it been otherwise, I should hardly have had this leisure to have made myself a fool in print.'

He was released from the Tower in 1616 in order to track down the gold mine he claimed to have discovered in Guiana during 1595; the expedition was a disaster, he was accused of treason and then executed on 29 October 1618, on the charge that he was an 'agent of Spain'. John Aubrey tells us that he 'tooke a pipe of Tobacco a little before he went to the scaffold, which some formall persons were scandalized at'. According to one Thomas Lorkin, who was present at the execution, Ralegh refused to be blindfolded, and forgave the hangman. When asked if he wished to place his head on the block facing east, he replied that it was of no significance which way the head lay, 'so the heart be right'. The poems, though a few survive in his own handwriting, are not always easy to date or authenticate. Prose works include his 'Report on the Truth of the Fight about the Isles of Açores' (1591), which inspired Tennyson's 'The Revenge' (1878), and *Discoverie of Guiana* (1596), with its celebrated description of 'Eldorado'.

ORLANDO GIBBONS: from *The First Set of Madrigals and Mottets* (1612)

On the life of man *[What is our life?]*

What is our life? a play of passion:
Our mirth the musicke of diuision,
Our mothers wombes the tyring houses[1] be,
Where we are drest for this short Comedy,
Heauen the Iudicious sharpe spectator is,
That sits and markes still who do act amisse,
Our graues that hide vs from the searching Sun,

1. the room where actors dressed for the stage.

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Are like drawne curtaynes when the play is done,
Thus march we playing to our latest rest;
Onley we dye in earnest; that's no Iest.

IVOR GURNEY

Euen such is tyme (1917/1959)[1]
[Even such is time]

Euen such is tyme, which takes in trust
Our yowth, our Ioyes, and all we haue,
And payes vs butt with age and dust,
Who in the darke and silent graue
When we haue wandred all our wayes
Shutts up the storye of our dayes.
And from which earth and graue and dust
The Lord shall rayse me up I trust.

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH: from *Six Romances on Verses by Raleigh, Burns and Shakespeare*, Op. 62 (1942)[1]

Sir Walter Ravleigh to his sonne
[To the son][2]
[translated by Boris Pasternak]

Three thinges there bee that prosper vp apace
And flourish, whilest they growe a sunder farr,
But on a day, they meet all in one place,
And when they meet, they one an other marr;
And they be theise, the wood, the weede, the wagg.

1. The first six lines of this poem are identical to the final verse, except for the first three words, which read 'Oh cruell Time', of Ralegh's poem 'Nature that washt her hands in milke', although in the seventeenth century it was thought to be the poem that he wrote the night before his execution.
1. Shostakovich rearranged the work for reduced orchestra (piccolo, bassoon, two horns, timpani, percussion, celesta and a small body of strings) in 1971, giving it the Opus number 140. **2.** The poem is probably addressed to Ralegh's elder son, Walter (born 1593), who was indeed 'a wilde wagg', and not to his second son, Carew, who only knew his father as a prisoner and an ageing man.

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The wood is that, which makes the Gallow tree,
The weed is that, which stringes the Hangmans bagg,
The wagg my pritty knave betokeneth thee.
Marke well deare boy whilest theise assemble not,
Green springs the tree, hempe growes, the wagg is wilde,
But when they meet, it makes the timber rott,
It fretts the halter, and it choakes the childe.
  Then bless thee, and beware, and lett vs praye,
  Wee part not with the at this meeting day.

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EDMUND SPENSER

(1552–99)

A silver trumpet Spenser blows,
      And, as its martial notes to silence flee,
From a virgin chorus flows
      A hymn in praise of spotless Chastity.
'Tis still! Wild warblings from the Æolian lyre
Enchantment softly breathe, and tremblingly expire.

JOHN KEATS: 'Ode to Apollo' (1815)

Spenser was educated at Merchant Taylors' School and Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, where he was a 'sizar', a student who undertook menial tasks in return for free 'sizes' or rations. He obtained a place in the Earl of Leicester's household, where he met Sir Philip Sidney, to whom he dedicated his *Shepheardes Calender* (1579), and with whom he founded a literary club, the Areopagus, one of the purposes of which was to naturalize classical metres in English verse. Having been appointed secretary to Lord Grey de Wilton, he went to Ireland and settled in Munster, where he acquired Kilcolman Castle in County Cork as a reward for crushing a rebellion. It was here that he lived and wrote his elegy *Astrophell* on the death of Sir Philip Sidney, and prepared *The Faerie Queene*, begun in 1579, for press. He visited London in 1589 to give three books of *The Faerie Queene* to the printer, and was introduced by Sir Walter Ralegh to Queen Elizabeth, who awarded him a pension of fifty pounds, despite his previously published attack on her match with the Duc d'Alençon. There was, however, to be no preferment, and he returned to his Irish 'exile'.

It was there in 1591 that he wrote *Colin Clovt's Come Home Againe*, dedicated to Sir Walter Ralegh: 'The which I humbly beseech you to accept in part of paiment of the infinite debt in which I acknowledge my selfe bounden unto you, for your singular fauours and sundrie good turnes shewed to me at my late being in England'. This charming and, at times, satirical allegory describes how Ralegh travelled to Ireland to persuade Spenser to come to England 'his *Cynthia* to see' – in other words Queen

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Elizabeth. Ralegh appears as the Shepheard of the Ocean, and the court comes in for a deal of criticism. The work was published in 1595 and contains lines that Wilhelm Müller – a celebrated translator who rendered Marlowe's *Dr Faustus* into memorable German – echoes in 'Ungeduld' from *Die schöne Müllerin*:

> Her name in euery tree I will endosse,
> That as the trees do grow, her name may grow:
> And in the ground each where will it engrosse,
> And fill with stones, that all men may it know.
> The speaking woods and murmuring waters fall,
> Her name Ile teach in knowen termes to frame:
> And eke my lambs when for their dams they call,
> Ile teach to call for *Cynthia* by name.

In 1594, Spenser married Elizabeth Boyle, some twenty years his junior. A year later, he published his *Amoretti* and *Epithalamion*, which celebrate the couple's courtship and marriage. Whereas Petrarch's sonnets deal with the poet's longing for an unattainable mistress, and spiritual torment, Spenser's are predominantly 'happy leaues' (Sonnet I) which, despite some frustration and doubt, chart the development of a relationship which ends in fulfilment, as the lover-poet is finally granted his beloved. One year after his *Epithalamion*, Spenser published the second part of *The Faerie Queene* – but only six of the planned twelve books were eventually printed. The resultant prosperity was short-lived. Kilcolman Castle was burnt in 1598 during an insurrection by the Irish, his youngest child died in the attack and Spenser fled to Cork with his family. The rest of his life was spent in penury; he died at lodgings in King Street, Westminster, and was buried near his beloved Chaucer in Westminster Abbey, apostrophized in a celebrated line from *Prothalamion*: 'Sweete Themmes runne softly, till I end my Song.' John Aubrey, quoting a Mr Beeston, tells us that Spenser was 'a little man, wore short haire, little band and little cuffs'.

Spenser gave his name to the Spenserian stanza, a verse pattern of nine lines, made up of eight iambic lines of ten syllables and one of twelve, with the rhyming scheme *ababbcbcc*. Several English poets paid him the compliment of writing works in Spenserian stanzas: Byron (*Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*), Keats ('The Eve of St Agnes') and Shelley ('Adonais').

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WILLIAM HENRY HARRIS[1]: from *An Hymne of Heavenly Beavtie* ['Faire is the heauen'], for unaccompanied double choir (1925)

[. . .]
Faire is the heauen, where happy soules haue place,
In full enioyment of felicitie,
Whence they doe still behold the glorious face
Of the diuine eternall Maiestie;
[. . .]
Yet farre more faire be those bright *Cherubins*,
Which all with golden wings are ouerdight,
And those eternall burning *Seraphins*,
Which from their faces dart out fierie light;
Yet fairer then they both, and much more bright
Be th'Angels and Archangels, which attend
On Gods owne person, without rest or end.

These thus in faire each other farre excelling,
As to the Highest they approch more neare,
Yet is that Highest farre beyond all telling,
Fairer then all the rest which there appeare,
Though all their beauties ioynd together were:
How then can mortall tongue hope to expresse,
The image of such endlesse perfectnesse?
[. . .]

1. William Henry Harris (1883–1973), composer, organist and choir-master, was Organist at New College and Christ Church, Oxford, before moving to St George's Chapel, Windsor, in 1933, where he composed many of his finest works. He wrote music for the Three Choirs Festival, conducted at the 1937 and 1953 coronations, and was appointed KCVO in 1954. He also composed the lovely hymn tune *Alberta*, for John Henry Newman's 'Lead, Kindly Light' – see p. 423.

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EDMUND RUBBRA: from *Five Sonnets*, Op. 42, for tenor and strings (1935/*1949*)

Sonnet VI

Be nought dismayd that her vnmoued mind
doth still persist in her rebellious pride:
such loue not lyke to lusts of baser kynd,
the harder wonne, the firmer will abide.
The durefull[1] Oake, whose sap is not yet dride,
is long ere it conceiue the kindling[2] fyre:
but when it once doth burne, it doth diuide[3]
great heat, and makes his flames to heauen aspire[4].
So hard it is to kindle new desire
in gentle brest that shall endure for euer:
deepe is the wound, that dints[5] the parts entire[6]
with chast affects[7], that naught but death can seuer.
Then thinke not long in taking litle paine
to knit the knot[8], that euer shall remaine.

EDMUND RUBBRA: from *Amoretti: Five Sonnets (Second Series)*, Op. 43, for tenor and string quartet (1935/*1942*)

Sonnet LXXVIII[1]

Lackyng my loue I go from place to place,
lyke a young fawne that late hath lost the hynd:
and seeke each where, where last I sawe her face,
whose ymage yet I carry fresh in mynd.
I seeke the fields with her late footing synd,

1. durable, enduring. 2. giving birth to (punning on 'conceiue'). 3. give out in various directions; share. 4. breathe desire towards. 5. makes an impression in. 6. intact organs. 7. tendencies. 8. of marriage.
1. The poem illustrates the teaching of Castiglione's *Cortegiano*, 4: 338: 'To escape the torment caused by absence and to enjoy beauty without suffering, with the help of reason the courtier should turn his desire completely away from the body to beauty alone [. . .], creating it in his imagination as an abstract distinct from any material form.'

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i seeke her bowre with her late presence deckt,
yet nor in field nor bowre I her can fynd:
yet field and bowre are full of her aspect[2].
But when myne eyes I thereunto direct,
they ydly back returne to me agayne,
and when I hope to see theyr trew obiect,
i fynd my selfe but fed with fancies vayne.
Cease then myne eyes, to seeke her selfe to see,
and let my thoughts behold her selfe in mee.

BENJAMIN BRITTEN: from *Spring Symphony*, Op. 44, for soprano, alto and tenor solos, chorus, boys' choir and orchestra (1949/*1949*)

Amoretti, *Sonnet XIX* *[The merry cuckoo]*

The merry Cuckow[1], messenger of Spring,
His trompet shrill hath thrise already sounded:
That warnes al louers wayt vpon their king[2],
Who now is comming forth with girland crouned.
With noyse whereof the quyre of Byrds resounded
Their anthemes[3] sweet devized of loues prayse;
That all the woods theyr ecchoes back rebounded,
As if they knew the meaning of their layes.
But mongst them all, which did Loues honor rayse,
No word was heard of her that most it ought[4]:
But she his precept[5] proudly disobayes,
And doth his ydle[6] message set at nought.
Therefore O loue, vnlesse she turne to thee
Ere Cuckow end, let her a rebell be.

2. presence.
1. emblem of Juno as goddess of marriage. 2. Cupid. 3. antiphonal song rather than songs of praise.
4. owed. 5. rule. 6. encouraging indolence.

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SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

(1554–86)

> Such his appetite to Learning, that he could never be fed fast enough therewith; and so quick and strong his digestion, that he soon turned it to wholesome nourishment, and thrived healthfully thereon. His homebred abilities travel perfected with forraign accomplishments, and a sweet Nature set a glosse on both. He was so essential to the English Court, that it seemed maimed without his company, being a compleat Master of Matter and Language, as his *Arcadia* doth evidence.
>
> THOMAS FULLER: *The History of the Worthies of England* (1662)

Born at Penshurst in Kent, he was educated at Shrewsbury School and Christ Church, Oxford. He left university without a degree, accompanied his uncle the Earl of Leicester from 1572 to 1575 throughout Europe and was made Gentleman of the Bedchamber to Charles IX in Paris. He became one of the most brilliant members of Elizabeth's court, represented her on diplomatic missions in Europe and in 1578 wrote a masque, *The Lady of May*, in her honour. Having quarrelled with the Earl of Oxford, he left the court and stayed with his sister, the Countess of Pembroke, in the country. The anonymous painting of him in the National Portrait Gallery depicts him as an elegant young man with a beautiful face – a misrepresentation, since Sidney was ill with smallpox as a child and was described by Ben Jonson as 'no pleasant man in countenance, his face being spoiled with pimples & of high blood & long'. Courtier, soldier and scholar, Sidney embodied the Renaissance ideal of a gentleman, who composed both music and songs. Born with a silver spoon in his mouth (his godparents included King Philip II of Spain), he was never short of influential friends. When Spenser wrote his *Faerie Queene*, he took Sidney as the model for Sir Calidore, the champion of Courtesy; and in Ben Jonson's *The Forrest* (see 'Drinke to me, onely, with thine eyes') it is the 'godlike Sidney' that embodies 'the virtuous life'. Hakluyt dedicated *Voyages* to him, Spenser the *Shepheardes Calender*. He became a Member of Parliament and was knighted in 1582. He had hoped to accompany Sir Francis Drake and Sir Walter Ralegh to the West Indies in 1585,

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but was instead sent to the Netherlands. It was there that he died at the age of thirty-two fighting in a religious war that culminated in the defeat of the Spanish Armada. 'Thy necessity is yet greater than mine,' he allegedly said, as on the battlefield he gave his water-bottle to another wounded soldier. He was mortally wounded at Zutphen in 1586, died some three weeks later and was buried with great pomp and circumstance in St Paul's Cathedral.

In the seventeenth century, Sidney's poems were prized more than those by Spenser, Shakespeare, Jonson or Donne: three editions of Spenser's collected works were published, four of Shakespeare's and nine of Sidney's. And in the early years of the seventeenth century his *Arcadia* was translated into French, German, Dutch and Italian, at a time when no other Elizabethan literature was printed in a European vernacular. Sidney's influence on the development of the English language was huge. The *OED* lists more than 2,000 quotes from his works, and attributes to him many first usages, such as 'bug-bear', 'far-fetched' and 'miniature' (for a small picture). He was convinced that English, not Latin, should be the language for important matters of state, and wrote in *The Defense of Poesy* (1579–80): 'But for the uttering sweetly and properly the conceite of the minde, which is the ende of thought, [English] hath it equally with any other tongue in the world'. Though he became a living legend (he was painted by Veronese and apostrophized by Nashe and Spenser), it was not until after his death that his works were published: *Arcadia* in 1590 and *Astrophil and Stella* in 1591.

Astrophil and Stella is a sequence of 108 sonnets and eleven songs, which were written around 1582 and describe the unhappy love of Astrophil ('Lover of a star' which also puns on Sidney's Christian name) for 'Stella' ('star'). A narrative thread weaves its way through the sonnets, charting the development of Astrophil's courtship – thus providing a structure to the work that is absent in many Renaissance collections of sonnets. It is very probable that Stella refers to Lady Penelope Devereux, the woman that Sidney hoped to wed but who married Lord Rich in 1581 – there is much punning on the word 'rich', as in Sonnet 37, which refers to one who 'Hath no misfortune, but that Rich she is'. Sidney did not allow the sonnets to be printed during his lifetime, though five of them (none of them revealing the identity of Stella) did circulate in manuscript form. In 1583 Sidney married Frances Walsingham, who bore him a daughter, Elizabeth, he was never to see: she was born during the Dutch campaign in which he died.

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WILLIAM BYRD: from *Psalmes, Sonets, & Songs* (1587)

Sixt song
[O you that heare this voice][1]

O you that heare this voice,
O you that see this face,
Say whether of the choice
Deserves the former place:
Feare not to judge this bate[2],
For it is void of hate.

This side doth beauty take,
For that doth Musike speake,
Fit oratours[3] to make
The strongest judgements weake:
The barre[4] to plead their right,
Is only true delight.

Thus doth the voice and face,
These gentle Lawyers wage[5],
Like loving brothers' case
For father's heritage,
That each, while each contends,
It selfe to other lends.

For beautie beautifies,
With heavenly hew and grace,
The heavenly harmonies;
And in this faultlesse face,
The perfect beauties be
A perfect harmony.

1. The poem, which appears in *Astrophil and Stella*, attempts to solve a dispute concerning Stella's Voice and Face. They both appear before Common Sence, the Judge, in the court of True Delight. They hire Music and Beauty as lawyers who will plead their causes; and they bring Wonder and Love as character witnesses, and the Ear and Eye as technical witnesses. The Judge, unable to decide, appeals to Reason. 2. debate. 3. the lawyers of line 14. 4. The court. 5. hire.

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Musicke more loftly swels
In speeches nobly placed:
Beauty as farre excels,
In action aptly graced:
A friend each party drawes,
To countenance his cause:

Love more affected seemes
To beautie's lovely light,
And wonder more esteemes
Of Musick's wondrous might:
But both to both so bent,
As both in both are spent.

Musike doth witnesse call
The eare, his truth to trie:
Beauty brings to the hall,
The judgement of the eye,
Both in their objects such,
As no exceptions[6] tutch.

The common sence, which might
Be Arbiter[7] of this,
To be forsooth upright,
To both sides partiall is:
He layes on this chiefe praise,
Chiefe praise on that he laies.

The reason, Princesse hy,
Whose throne is in the mind,
Which Musicke can in sky
And hidden beauties find,
Say whether thou wilt crowne,
With limitlesse renowne.

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6. legal objections. **7.** arbitrator.

ROBERT DOWLAND: from *A Musicall Banquet* (1610)

Ninth song
[Goe my Flocke, goe get you hence]

Goe my Flocke, goe get you hence,
Seeke some other place of feeding,
Where you may haue some defence
Fro the stormes in my breast breeding,
And showers from mine eyes proceeding.

Leaue a wretch, in whom all woe
Can abide to keepe no measure,
Merry flocke such one forgoe,
Vnto whom Myrth is displeasure,
Onely rich in measures treasure.

Yet alas before you goe,
Heare your wofull Maisters story,
Which to stones I else would shew,
Sorrow onely then hath glory
When tis excellently sorry.

Stella, fayrest Shepherdesse,
Fayrest but yet cruelst euer.
Stella whom the heau'ns still blesse,
Though against me she perseuer,
Though I blisse inherit neuer.

Stella hath refused mee:
Stella, who more Loue hath proued,
In this Catiffe hart to be,
Then can in good to vs be moued
Towards Lambe-kins best beloued.

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Stella hath refused mee,
Astrophel, that so wel serued,
In this pleasant spring must see
While in pride Flowers be preseru'd
Himselfe onely Winter-starued.

Why alas then doth she sweare
That she loueth mee so deerely,
Seeing me so long to beare
Coales of Loue that burn so cleerely,
And yet leaue me hopelesse merely.

Is that Loue? forsooth I trow
If I saw my good Dogge grieued
And a help for him did know,
My Loue should not be belieued
But hee were by mee relieued.

No, she hates mee (*well away*)
Fayning Loue, somewhat to please mee,
Knowing, if she should display
All her hate, Death soone would seize me,
And of hideous torments ease me.

Then my flocke now adew,
But alas, if in your straying
Heauenly *Stella* meet with you,
Tell her in your pittious blaying,
Her poore slaues iust decaying.

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JOHN IRELAND: from *Two Songs* (1920/1921)

Charita
[My true love hath my heart][1]

My true love hath my hart, and I have his,
By just exchange one for the other giv'ne.
I holde his deare, and myne he cannot misse[2]:
There never was a better bargaine driv'ne.

His hart in me, keepes me and him in one,
My hart in him, his thoughtes and senses guides:
He loves my hart, for once it was his owne;
I cherish his because in me it bides.

[His hart his wound[3] receaved from my sight[4]:
My hart was wounded, with his wounded hart,
For as from me, on him his hurt did light,
So still me thought in me his hurt did smart:
  Both equall hurt, in this change[5] sought our blisse:
  My true love hath my hart and I have his.]

(Dring, Holst, Hurlstone, Panufnik, Parry, Somervell, Ward)

1. 'My true love hath my hart' forms part of Sidney's *Arcadia*, a pastoral-chivalric romance that exists in three versions. The earliest was written before 1580 in five prose books that are punctuated, like Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, with lyrical poems. Sidney later revised and extended the work, weaving a web of stories into the new structure; his revision had reached Book III when he died, leaving the work unfinished. It was published posthumously in quarto in 1590; and in 1593 the Countess of Pembroke completed the work and published it in folio. 'My true love hath my hart', though one of the most exquisite lyrics from Sidney's *Arcadia*, has a decidedly comic context within the work: Dorus, in an attempt to get Damaetas' wife, Miso, out of the way, invents an imaginary scenario, claiming to have seen her husband lying with his head in the lap of the shepherdess Charita. It is she who sings the song. 2. do without. 3. its wound. 4. the sight of me. 5. exchange.

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ROBERT GREENE

(1558–92)

O that a yeare were graunted me to liue,
And for that yeare my former wits restored:
What rules of life, what counsell would I giue?
How should my sinne with sorrow be deplorde!
But I must die of euery man abhorred.
Time loosely spent will not againe be wonne;
My time is loosely spent, and I undone.

ROBERT GREENE: *Greenes Groats-Worth of Witte, Bought with a Million of Repentance* (1592)

Born in Norwich, Greene studied at St John's College, Cambridge, received a degree from Oxford five years later, and spent some time in France and Italy at the insistence (if we are to believe him) of the 'lewd wags' (such as Nashe and Peele) who were his university friends. He married in 1585 but soon abandoned his wife for a dissolute life in London, where he eked out a precarious living, writing plays and pamphlets. He was a prolific writer and produced many pastoral romances modelled on Sidney's *Arcadia*, the most important of which were, perhaps, *Pandosto* (1588), the direct source of Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*, and *Menaphon* (1589), which contains the lovely poem 'Weepe not, my wanton', set by Benjamin Britten in *A Charm of Lullabies*. His eight plays, all published posthumously, include *Orlando Furioso* (1594), *Frier Bacon, and Frier Bungay* (1594) and *James the Fourth* (1598). Among his many pamphlets are *Greenes Mourning Garment* and *Greenes Never Too Late* (1590). *Greenes Groats-Worth of Witte* (1592) contains the first reliable reference to Shakespeare, whom he describes as 'an vpstart Crow, beautified with our feathers that with his *Tygers hart wrapt in a Players hyde* supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blanke verse as the best of you: and being an absolute *Iohannes fac totum*, is in his owne conceit the onely Shake-scene in a countrey'. This outburst was probably due to the fact that Shakespeare, who had not gone to university like Greene, Nashe, Peele and Marlowe, was considered by Greene to be an outsider. Greene

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dressed as a Bohemian, lived a life of excess and relished low company. He repented at the end of his life, and his decline and death were described in detail by himself and his contemporaries. His death was allegedly caused by 'a fatal banquet of Rhenish wine and pickled herring' – but he probably died of the plague, which was rife in London in 1592.

BENJAMIN BRITTEN: from *A Charm of Lullabies*, Op. 41 (1947/1949)[1]

Sephestias song to her childe [Sephestia's lullaby]

Weepe not, my wanton, smile vpon my knee;
When thou arte old ther's griefe inough for thee.
  Mothers wagge, pretie boy,
  Fathers sorrow, fathers ioy;
  When thy father first did see
  Such a boy by him and mee,
  He was glad, I was woe;
  Fortune changde made him so,
  When he left his pretie boy,
  Last his sorrowe, first his joy.
Weepe not, my wanton, smile vpon my knee;
When thou arte old ther's griefe inough for thee.
  [Streaming teares that neuer stint,
  Like pearle drops from a flint
  Fell by course from his eyes,
  That one anothers place supplies:
  Thus he grieud in euerie part,
  Teares of bloud fell from his hart,
  When he left his pretie boy,
  Fathers sorrow, fathers joy.]

1. Britten composed *A Charm of Lullabies* for the voice of Nancy Evans, who created the role of Nancy (a name chosen deliberately by the librettist, Eric Crozier) in *Albert Herring*. The songs are 'A cradle song' (William Blake), 'The Highland balou' (Robert Burns), 'Sephestia's lullaby' (Robert Greene), 'A charm' (Thomas Randolph) and 'The nurse's song' (John Phillip). The title of the cycle puns on the word 'charm', which also means 'to put to sleep'. It derives from the Latin 'carmen' = 'song'.

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Weepe not, my wanton, smile vpon my knee;
When thou arte old ther's griefe inough for thee.
The wanton smilde, father wept:
Mother cride, babie lept:
More he crowde, more we cride,
Nature could not sorowe hide:
He must goe, he must kisse
Childe and mother, babie blisse:
For he left his pretie boy,
Fathers sorowe, fathers ioy.
Weepe not, my wanton, smile vpon my knee;
When thou arte old ther's griefe inough for thee.

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ST ROBERT SOUTHWELL

(?1561–95)

> Music, even domestic music, was policed by officialdom with an intensity that shifted from year to year. The 'Waldegrave' manuscript [the main source of Southwell's English poems] comes out of this confused, anxiety-ridden situation, and Southwell's lyrics embody the same doubled or occluded messages as the public music of William Byrd. Both witness to the difficulties of balancing faith and obedience in late Elizabethan England.
>
> ANNE SWEENEY: Introduction to St Robert Southwell, *Collected Poems* (Carcanet Press, 2007)

A member of an old Norfolk family, Southwell was brought up abroad. After a Jesuit education in Douai, Paris and Rome, where he took Roman orders, he came to England in 1586 as part of the Jesuit mission with Father Henry Garnet, who was later executed for complicity in the Gunpowder Plot. He was welcomed by Catholic families and for six years pursued his priestly task at great personal risk, publishing illegal devotional works from his secret printing press and moving about London by night. He had no pulpit and his scattered congregation had no church, but Southwell was aware that his manuscript poems would be copied and readily passed from Catholic community to Catholic community, avoiding the scrutiny of those officials whose duty it was to monitor the presses. He was arrested in 1592 for celebrating mass, repeatedly racked and tortured and finally executed at Tyburn after three years' imprisonment. Most of his poems were written in prison, including *St Peters Complaint* (1595), in which the penitent Peter, narrating the last events in the life of Christ, continually contrasts the spiritual with the material. His shorter poems, mostly devotional, were also published in 1595, in *Moeoniae*. He was beatified in 1929 and canonized in 1970. Though his poems were destined for the persecuted Catholic minority, they exercised a quiet influence on the development of English poetry and were already popular at the time of his death. His last words on the scaffold were 'In manus tuas, Domine', which William Byrd, a fellow Catholic, later set to music.

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BENJAMIN BRITTEN: from *A Ceremony of Carols*, Op. 28, for trebles and harp (1942/*1943*)

from New heaven, new warre *[This little babe]*

[Come to your heaven yowe heavenly quires
Earth hath the heaven of your desires
Remove your dwellinge to your god
A stall is nowe his best aboade
Sith men their homage doe denye
Come Angells all their fault supply

His chilling could[1] doth heate require
Come Seraphins in liew of fire
This little ark no cover hath
Let Cherubs winges his body swath
Come Raphiell this babe must eate
Provide our little Tobie meate.[2]

Let Gabriell be nowe his groome
That first tooke upp his earthly roome
Let Michell stande in his defence
Whom love hath link'd to feeble sence
Let graces rocke when he doth crye
And Angells sing his Lullybye

The same you saw in heavenly seate
Is he that now suckes Maryes teate
Agnize[3] your kinge a mortall wighte
His borrowed weede[4] letts not your sight
Come kysse the maunger where he lies
That is your blisse above the Skyes]

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1. cold. 2. The young traveller Tobias is guided and protected by the archangel Raphael (*Book of Tobit*). 3. recognize, honour. 4. clothing.

This little Babe, so fewe daies olde
Is come to ryfle Satan's folde
All hell doth at his presence quake
Though he himselfe for cold doe shake
For in this weake unarmed wise
The gates of hell he will surprise.

With tears he fightes and wynnes the feild
His naked breste stands for a Sheilde
His battering shot are babishe cryes,
His Arrowes lookes of weepinge eyes
His Martiall ensignes cold and neede
And feeble fleshe his warriers steede.

His Campe is pitched in a stall
Be His Bulwarke but a broken wall
The Cribbe his trench, hay stalks his staks[5]
Of Shepeherds he his muster[6] makes
And thus as sure his foe to Wounde,
The Angells Trumpes alarum sounde.

My soule with Christ joyn thou in fighte
Sticke to the tents that he hath pight[7]
Within his Cribb is surest warde
This little Babe will be thy garde.
If thou wilt foyle thy foes with joye
Then flit not from this heavenly boy.

New Prince, new pompe
[In freezing winter night][1]

Behold a sely[2] tender babe
In freesing Winter nighte
In homely manger trembling lyes
Alas a pitteous sighte

5. stakes that are sharpened to defend a fortification. 6. forces. 7. pitched.
1. Britten set the same poem – but with a different choice of verses – as part of *Thy King's Birthday* (1931). 2. simple.

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The Inns are full no man will yeld
    This little Pilgrime Bedd
But forc'd he is with sely beasts
    In Crib to shroude his headd.
[Despise not him for lyinge there
    First what he is enquire
An orient[3] pearle is often founde
    In depth of dirty mire
Waye not his Crib, his wooden dishe
    Nor beasts that by him feede
Way not his mothers poore attire
    Nor Josephs simple weede]
This stable is a Princes Courte
    The Cribb his chaire of state
The beastes are parcell of his pompe
    The wooden dishe his plate.
The persons in that poore attire
    His royall livories weare
The prince himselfe is come from heaven
    This pompe is prized there.
With joy approach O Christian wighte
    Do homage to thy Kinge
And highly prise this humble pompe
    Which he from heaven doth bringe.

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3. precious/eastern.

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE

(1564–93)

> But of course Marlowe's greatest poetical achievement is the two sestiads of his unfinished *Hero and Leander*. This is a more perfect work than any of his plays, not because their poetry is always inferior to it, but because in it the poetry and the theme are at one. Here, and here only, he found matter to which his genius was entirely adequate. For Marlowe is our great master of the material imagination; he writes best about flesh, gold, gems, stone, fire, clothes, water, snow and air. It is only in such concretes that his imagination can fix itself.
>
> C. S. LEWIS: *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century Excluding Drama* (1954)

Son of a Canterbury cobbler, Marlowe worked his way up the social ladder, attending Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, where he took his BA in 1584 and MA in 1587. While at university he translated parts of Ovid's *Amores* and wrote the celebrated poem printed below, and also perhaps *Tamburlaine the Great*. After Cambridge he moved to London, where he lived off his literary earnings: *The Jew of Malta* (*c*.1590), *Edward II* (1592) and his final, and greatest, play, *Dr Faustus* (1604). His non-dramatic poetry is best represented by the unfinished *Hero and Leander*, written in the Italianate tradition of erotic narrative. He lived a short and charmed life. He was deported to the Netherlands for attempting to forge gold coins, seems to have been involved in government service, perhaps as a spy, and was summoned before the Privy Council for alleged sedition and blasphemy. He was stabbed to death, aged twenty-nine, in a tavern brawl in London by one Ingram Frizer over a dispute about the bill – 'le recknynge', as the depositions have it. Touchstone refers perhaps to the skirmish when he says in *As You Like It* (Act III, sc. iii, 9–12): 'When a mans verses cannot be vnderstood, nor a mans good wit seconded with the forward childe, understanding, it strikes a man more dead then a great reckoning in a little roome.'

The way in which Marlowe made blank verse a vehicle for serious dramatic expression has assured him an important place in the history of

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English literature. Had Shakespeare died at the age of twenty-nine, he would be little more than a footnote in literary history: *Henry VI, Parts 1, 2* and *3*, *Richard III*, *Titus Andronicus*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Comedy of Errors* among his plays; and the narrative poems *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece* – and all these, though probably written before Shakespeare turned thirty, were not published until 1594 at the earliest. Marlowe's reputation rests on works that he wrote in his twenties, including 'The passionate Sheepheard to his love'. This famous poem owes much to Polyphemus' love song to Galatea in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 13. Like Polyphemus, Marlowe's shepherd offers the nymph material rather than spiritual wealth, and in the final stanza even hints at the benefits to be enjoyed from social advancement.

PETER WARLOCK: from *Seven Songs of Summer* (1928/1929)

The passionate Sheepheard to his love[1] *[The passionate shepherd]*

Come live with mee and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove,
That Vallies, groves, hills and fieldes,
Woods, or steepie mountaine yeeldes.

And wee will sit upon the Rocks,
Seeing the Sheepheards feede theyr flocks,
By shallow Rivers, to whose falls
Melodious byrds sing Madrigalls.

1. Though Marlowe's words were not published till 1599, after his death, they probably became popular in song form during his lifetime. The poem spawned several others, including Ralegh's 'The Nimphs reply to the Sheepheard' and Donne's parody 'The bait'. It first appeared in *The Passionate Pilgrim*, an unauthorized anthology of verse by various authors published by William Jaggard in 1599 and attributed on the title-page to Shakespeare. It was then published in a slightly longer version in *England's Helicon* (1600), which we print here. Marlowe quotes the poem in *The Jew of Malta*, and Sir Hugh Evans sings a garbled version of one verse in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Act III, sc. i, 17–26 – possibly to the tune (by Corkine himself?) that appears in William Corkine's *Second Booke of Ayres* (1612). George Chapman also quotes a variation of the poem in *The Blind Beggar of Alexandria* (1596). Another version, with an extra stanza, appears in the second edition of Walton's *The Compleat Angler* (1655).

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And I will make thee beds of Roses
And a thousand fragrant poesies,
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle[2],
Imbroydered all with leaves of Mirtle.

A gowne made of the finest wooll,
Which from our pretty Lambes we pull,
Fayre lined slippers for the cold:
With buckles of the purest gold.

A belt of straw and Ivie buds
With Corall clasps and Amber studs,
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with mee, and be my love.

The Sheepheards Swaines shall daunce & sing,
For thy delight each May-morning,
If these delights thy minde may move,
Then live with mee, and be my love.

(Corkine, Moeran, O'Neill, Walton)

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2. smock worn by a shepherd.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

(1564–1616)

> Many were the *wit-combates* betwixt him [Shakespeare] and *Ben Johnson* [*sic*], which two I behold like a *Spanish great Gallion*, and an *English man of War*; Master *Johnson* (like the former) was built far higher in Learning; *Solid*, but *Slow* in his performances. *Shake-spear* with the *English-man of War*, lesser in *bulk*, but lighter in *sailing*, could turn with all tides, tack about and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his Wit and Invention.
>
> THOMAS FULLER: *The History of the Worthies of England* (1662)

We know very little about Shakespeare. There is a rather formal portrait of him by Martin Droeshout printed in the First Folio; a much more revealing one, attributed to John Taylor, depicting him with an earring; and a plaster cast after Gerard Johnson's marble effigy in Holy Trinity Church at Stratford-on-Avon, showing the playwright as a plump bourgeois. The son of a glover, he married, aged eighteen, a local woman called Anne Hathwey or Hathaway, eight years his senior, who bore him three children: Susanna in 1583, and the twins Hamnet and Judith in 1585. His first published works were poems, not plays; from 1594 he was an actor and shareholder in the Lord Chamberlain's Men, a troupe which in 1603 became the King's Men – a sign of their increasing success. Their headquarters was the Globe in Southwark, built in 1599. They also performed at a private theatre in Blackfriars that was leased by Richard Burbage, a leading Shakespearian actor. In 1604 Shakespeare was living with a Huguenot family in London, but he was also active in Stratford, where he had bought New Place, an impressive house, in 1597. He began writing for the stage in the late 1580s, and half of his plays appeared in print during his lifetime. He probably retired to Stratford in about 1612. Tradition has it that he died in the company of Ben Jonson and Michael Drayton, and according to the Revd John Ward, Vicar of Stratford (*c*.1662), 'Drayton and Ben Jonson had a merry meeting, and, it seems, drank too hard, for Shakespeare died of a fever there contracted.' Shakespeare, however, was usually abstemious, and it seems more likely that

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he died of typhoid fever, which was prevalent in the area during 1616. The First Folio (*Mr. William Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies*) appeared in 1623, seven years after his death.

W. H. Auden, in an essay titled 'Music in Shakespeare' from *The Dyer's Hand* (Faber and Faber, 1948), distinguishes two kinds of songs in Shakespeare's plays, the 'called-for' and the 'impromptu', which, he writes, serve different dramatic purposes:

> A called-for song is a song which is sung by one character at the request of another who wishes to hear music, so that action and speech are halted until the song is over. Nobody is asked to sing unless it is believed that he can sing well and, little as we may know about the music which was actually used in performances of Shakespeare, we may safely assume from the contemporary songs that we do possess that they must have made demands which only a good voice and a good musician could satisfy. [. . .]
>
> The impromptu singer stops speaking and breaks into song, not because anyone else has asked him to sing or is listening, but to relieve his feelings in a way that speech cannot do or to help him in some action. An impromptu song is not art but a form of personal behaviour. It reveals, as the called-for song cannot, something about the singer. On the stage, therefore, it is generally desirable that a character who breaks into impromptu song should not have a good voice. No producer, for example, would seek to engage Madame Callas for the part of Ophelia, because the beauty of her voice would distract the audience's attention from the real dramatic point which is that Ophelia's songs are to the highest degree *not* called-for. We are meant to be horrified both by what she sings and by the fact that she sings at all. The other characters are affected but not in the way that people are affected by music.

The play texts printed here are those of the First Folio (1623), compiled by John Heminges and Henry Condell. They explain in their Introduction that they got rid of all the bad versions (the 'diuerse stolne, and surreptitious copies, maimed, and deformed by the frauds and stealthes of iniurious impostors') and restored the plays to their 'True Originall' condition, using prompt books, foul papers (the term used for rough drafts) in Shakespeare's hand and fair copies. Although posterity owes Heminges and Condell a huge debt, the First Folio has a number of misprints and typographical idiosyncrasies – which have been retained in *The Penguin Book of English Song*. The titles of the poems were supplied by the composers.

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THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA (?1592–3)
ACT IV, SC. II

GERALD FINZI: from *Let Us Garlands Bring*, Op. 18, for baritone and piano or strings (*1942*)

Who is Silvia?

Who is Siluia? what is she?
That all our Swaines commend her?
Holy, faire, and wise is she,
The heauen such grace did lend her,
    that she might admired be.
Is she kinde as she is faire?
For beauty liues with kindnesse:[1]
Loue doth to her eyes repaire,
To helpe him of his blindnesse:
    And being help'd, inhabits there.
Then to Siluia, let vs sing,
That Siluia is excelling;
She excels each mortall thing
Vpon the dull earth dwelling.
    To her let vs Garlands bring.

(Castelnuovo-Tedesco, German, Horder, Lehmann, Quilter, Rubbra, Schubert)

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1. beauty without kindness cannot be enjoyed.

LOVES LABOUR'S LOST (*c.*1595)
ACT V, SC. II

E. J. MOERAN: from *Four Shakespeare Songs* (*1940*)

When daisies pied (1940)

Spring
When Dasies pied, and Violets blew,
And Cuckow-buds[1] of yellow hew:
And Ladie-smockes[2] all siluer white,
Do paint the Medowes with delight
The Cuckow then on euerie tree,
Mockes married men, for thus sings he,
Cuckow.
Cuckow, Cuckow: O word of feare,
Vnpleasing to a married eare.

When Shepheards pipe on Oaten strawes,
And merrie Larkes are Ploughmens clockes:[3]
When Turtles tread[4], and Rookes and Dawes,
And Maidens bleach their summer smockes:
The Cuckow then on euerie tree
Mockes married men; for thus sings he,
Cuckow.
Cuckow, Cuckow: O word of feare,
Vnpleasing to a married eare.

(Arne, Bush, Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Dring, Finzi, Fortner, Füßl, Gurney, Horder, Jeffreys, Rawsthorne, Stravinsky, Taubert, Vaughan Williams, Warlock)

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1. *Cardamine pratensis*, or Cuckoo-flower. The name implies cuckoldry. 2. *Ranunculus bulbosus*, or Crowfoot. 3. Cf. 'up with the lark'. 4. copulate.

When icicles hang by the wall (1940)

Winter
When Isicles hang by the wall,
And Dicke the Sphepheard blowes his naile;[1]
And Tom beares Logges into the hall,
And Milke comes frozen home in paile:
When blood is nipt, and waies be fowle,
Then nightly sings the staring Owle
Tu-whit to-who.
    A merrie note,
    While greasie Ione doth keele[2] the pot.

When all aloud the winde doth blow,
And coffing drownes the Parsons saw:[3]
And birds sit brooding in the snow,
And Marrians nose lookes red and raw:
When roasted Crabs[4] hisse in the bowle,
Then nightly sings the staring Owle,
Tu-whit to who:
    A merrie note,
    While greasie Ione doth keele the pot.

(Argento, Arne, Blake, Brian, Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Dankworth, Finzi, Fortner, Füßl, Gardiner, Gibbs, Gurney, Keel, Lehmann, Marzials, Parry, Quilter, Rutter, Sviridov, Taubert, Vaughan Williams)

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1. to warm his hands. 2. cool. 3. sententious saying 4. crab-apples.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE (1596–8)
ACT III, SC. II

FRANCIS POULENC

Fancy (1959)[1]

Tell me where is fancie[2] bred,
Or in the heart, or in the head:
How begot, how nourished. Replie, replie.
It is engendred in the eyes,
With gazing fed, and Fancie dies,
In the cradle where it lies:
Let vs all ring Fancies knell.
Ile begin it.
Ding dong, bell.
All. Ding, dong, bell.

(Arne, Brian, Britten, Bush, Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Coates, Gardner, Heise, Kodály, Lehmann, O'Neill, Quilter, Rutter, Taubert, Walton, Warlock, Weber)

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING (?1598–9)
ACT II, SC. III

PETER WARLOCK

Sigh no more, ladies *(1927/1928)*

Balthasar
Sigh no more Ladies, sigh no more,
Men were deceiuers euer,
One foote in Sea, and one on shore,

1. 'Fancy' is probably Poulenc's last song. In a letter to Bernac dated 4 August 1959, he writes: 'Marion Harewood has asked me, so sweetly, to participate in a little collection of choruses for children, with Ben, Kodály, etc. . . . that I cannot refuse, but please guide me regarding accents and the exact meaning of the text, which I get the gist of. "Where is" must be sung on two notes, mustn't it? Of course I will show you the thing before I send it.' Poulenc dedicated the song to Miles and Flora, the children from Britten's opera *The Turn of the Screw*. The three versions by Britten, Kodály and Poulenc were published in *Classical Songs for Children*, edited by Marion Harewood and Ronald Duncan. 2. Love.

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To one thing constant neuer,
Then sigh not so, but let them goe,
And be you blithe and bonnie,
Conuerting all your sounds of woe,
Into hey nony nony.

Sing no more ditties, sing no moe,
Of dumps so dull and heauy,
The fraud of men were euer so,
Since summer first was leauy,
Then sigh not so, but let them goe,
And be you blithe and bonnie,
Conuerting all your sounds of woe,
Into hey nony nony.

(Arne, Bush, Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Coates, Heise, Jeffreys, Keel, Korngold, Lehmann, Mathias, Moeran, Quilter, Plumstead, C. Scott, Vaughan Williams)

AS YOU LIKE IT (?1599)
ACT II, SC. V

IVOR GURNEY: from *Five Elizabethan Songs* (*1920*)

Under the greenwood tree (1913–14)

Vnder the greene wood tree,
who loues to lye with mee,
And turne[1] his merrie Note,
vnto the sweet Birds throte:
Come hither, come hither, come hither:
Heere shall he see no enemie,
But Winter and rough Weather.

(Arne, Horder, Howells, Parry, Quilter, C. Scott, Walton)

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1. adapt, copy the bird's song.

ACT II, SC. VII

ROGER QUILTER: from *Three Shakespeare Songs*, Op. 6 (1905/1905)

Blow, blow, thou winter wind

Amiens

Blow, blow, thou winter winde,
Thou art not so vnkinde[1], as mans ingratitude
Thy tooth is not so keene, because thou art not seene,
although thy breath be rude.
Heigh ho, sing heigh ho, vnto the greene holly[2],
Most frendship, is fayning; most Louing, meere folly:
The heigh ho, the holly,
This Life is most iolly.

Freize, freize, thou bitter skie that dost not bight so nigh
as benefitts forgot:
Though thou the waters warpe[3], thy sting is not so sharpe,
as freind remembred not.
Heigh ho, sing heigh ho, vnto the greene holly,
Most frendship is fayning; most Louing, meere folly:
The heigh ho, the holly,
This Life is most iolly.

(Arne, Blake, Brian, Bridge, Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Dring, Finzi, Fortner, Gibbs, Gurney, Heise, Horder, Killmayer, Korngold, Marzials, Mathias, Nicolai, Parry, Rawsthorne, Rutter, Somervell, Stenhammar, Sullivan, Sviridov)

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1. cruel and contrary to nature. 2. Evergreen holly was venerated and considered to have some connection with the word 'holy'. 3. turn to ice.

ACT V. SC. III

PETER WARLOCK

Pretty ring time (1925/1926)

It was a Louer, and his lasse,
　　With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
That o're the greene corne feild did passe,
　　In the spring time, the onely pretty rang time[1],
When Birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding.
Sweet Louers loue the spring.

Betweene the acres[2] of the Rie,
With a hey, and a ho, & a hey nonino:
These prettie Country folks would lie,
　　In spring time, the onely pretty rang time,
When Birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding.
Sweet Louers loue the spring.

And therefore take the present time,
With a hey, & a ho, and a hey nonino,
For loue is crowned with the prime[3],
　　In spring time, the onely pretty rang time,
When Birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding.
Sweet Louers loue the spring.

(Bax, Berger, Brian, Bush, Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Coates, Delius, Dring, Dunhill, Finzi, German, Heise, Jeffreys, Korngold, Lehmann, Marzials, Moeran, Morley, O'Neill, Parry, Quilter, Rubbra, Rutter, Schulz, Taubert, Vaughan Williams)

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1. Refers to the exchanging of wedding rings and the ringing of the wedding bells. 2. unploughed ridges in an open field. 3. spring-time at its prime.

HAMLET (?1599–1601)
ACT IV, SC. V

RICHARD STRAUSS: *Drei Lieder der Ophelia aus 'Hamlet'* Op. 67, 1–3, translated by Karl Simrock (1918)

Ophelia's madness is triggered by the death of her father, Polonius (accidentally killed by Hamlet), and by Hamlet's brutal behaviour towards her. When his mother, Queen Gertrude, marries Claudius a mere two months after the latter's murder of her husband (his own brother and Hamlet's father), Hamlet is torn between his love for Ophelia and the repugnance he now feels for all women. Whenever he encounters Ophelia, he uses language that is drenched in sexual innuendo. Disinhibited in her grief, which slowly turns to madness, Ophelia begins to echo this lewd language.

Strauss's *Drei Lieder der Ophelia* have an intriguing history. When the publishing house of Bote & Bock agreed to publish his Op. 56, they inserted a clause in his contract which stipulated that they would hold the rights to his next group of songs. Such a clause was now anathema to Strauss, whose ambitions to protect the rights of German composers in matters of fees and royalties had led to the founding of a Society of German Composers and – subsequently – the founding of a rival society by Bote & Bock to protect *their* interests. Strauss's refusal to write a group of songs for them meant that for twelve years after the publication of Op. 56 he composed no further Lieder – until in 1918 the Berlin publishers threatened him with legal action. Strauss's response was to compose the scurrilous *Krämerspiegel*, a vitriolic attack on music publishers, which Bote & Bock refused to accept. To break the deadlock, Strauss dashed off his Op. 67, which comprised three mad-Ophelia songs and three bad-tempered songs from the 'Book of Ill-Humour' from Goethe's *West-östlicher Divan*. Unlike Brahms's *Ophelia-Lieder*, which were intended to be sung unaccompanied, Strauss's are set to piano accompaniments that stress Ophelia's insanity: the little wandering motif and dissonances of 'Wie erkenn' ich mein Treulieb', the bizarre flapping syncopations of 'Guten Morgen, 's ist Sankt Valentinstag', and in 'Sie trugen ihn auf der Bahre bloß' the abrupt shifts in tempi.

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1

How should I your true loue know from another one?
By his Cockle hat and staffe,[1] and his Sandal shoone.

He is dead and gone Lady, he is dead and gone,
At his head a grasse-greene Turfe, at his heeles a stone.

White his Shrow'd as the Mountaine Snow.
Larded[2] with sweet flowers:
Which bewept to the graue did not go,
With true-loue showres.

(Borg, Brahms, Bush, Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Chausson, Lassen, Maconchy, Quilter, Reutter, White)

2

Tomorrow is S. Valentines day, all in the morning betime,
And I a Maid at your Window, to be your Valentine.
Then vp he rose, & don'd his clothes, & dupt[1] the chamber dore,
Let in the Maid, that out a Maid, neuer departed more.

By gis[2], and by S. Charity,
Alacke, and fie for shame:
Yong men wil doo't, if they come too't,
By Cocke[3] they are too blame.
Quoth she before you tumbled me,
You promis'd me to Wed:
So would I ha done by yonder Sunne,
And thou hadst not come to my bed.

(Borg, Brahms, Reutter)

1. i.e. pilgrim's dress. 2. decked.
1. opened. 2. Jesus. 3. A common corruption of 'God', but also a telling sexual double entendre. Victor Hugo translated: 'Par Priape! ils sont à blâmer.'

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3

They bore him bare fac'd on the Beer,
Hey non nony, nony, hey nony:
And on his graue raines many a teare,
Fare you well my Doue.

For bonny sweet Robin is all my ioy.

And will he not come againe,
And will he not come againe:
No, no, he is dead, go to thy Death-bed,
He neuer wil come againe.
His Beard as white as Snow,
All Flaxen was his Pole[1]:
He is gone, he is gone, and we cast away mone,
Gramercy on his Soule.

(Borg, Brahms, Lassen, Rawsthorne, Reutter)

TWELFTH NIGHT (?1601)
ACT II, SC. IV

JOSEPH HAYDN: from *VI Original Canzonettas – Second Set* (1795)

She never told her love

Duke
[And what's her history?]
Viola
[A blanke my Lord:] she neuer told her loue,
But let concealment like a worme i'th budde
Feede on her damaske cheeke: [she pin'd in thought,
And with a greene and yellow melancholly,]
She sate like Patience[1] on a Monument,
Smiling at greefe.

(Borg)

1. head. The reference is to Ophelia's father, Polonius.
1. An allegorical figure in *Iconologia* (1593), where Patience is shown seated on a stone with a yoke on her shoulders and her feet on thorns.

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ACT II, SC. III

GERALD FINZI: from *Let Us Garlands Bring* (1942)

O mistress mine (1942)[1]

Feste
O Mistris mine where are you roming?
O stay and heare, your true loues coming,
That can sing both high and low.
Trip no further prettie sweeting.
Iourneys end in louers meeting,
Euery wise mans sonne doth know.

What is loue, tis not heereafter,
Present mirth, hath present laughter:
What's to come, is still unsure.
In delay there lies no plentie,
Then come kisse me sweet and twentie:
Youths a stuffe will not endure.

(Bantock, Bax, Bush, Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Chanler, Coates, Coleridge-Taylor, Dankworth, Davies, Dring, Dunhill, Fortner, Fricker, Gibbs, Hoiby, Horder, Howells, Jeffreys, Korngold, Lehmann, MacCunn, MacDowell, Morley, Parry, Quilter, Somervell, Sullivan, Taubert, Vaughan Williams, Warlock)

1. The song dates from 1942, when Finzi was working in the Ministry of War Transport, a job that he, as a humanist, detested, as this extract from a letter to Toty de Navarro (15 May 1942) makes clear: 'I have managed to do a pleasant light, troubadorish setting of "O mistress mine" [. . .] But it has taken me more than 3 months to do its four pages. So you'll know that I'm still baulked, thwarted, fretted, tired, good for nothing and utterly wasting my time in this dismal occupation.'

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ACT II, SC. IV

ROGER QUILTER: from *Three Shakespeare Songs*, Op. 6 (1905)

Come away, death (1905)

Feste
Come away, come away death,
And in sad cypresse let me be laide.
Fye away, fie away[1] breath,
I am slaine by a faire cruell maide:
    My shrowd of white, stuck all with Ew, O prepare it.
    My part of death no one so true did share it.

Not a flower, not a flower sweete
On my blacke coffin, let there be strewne:
Not a friend, not a friend greet[2]
My poore corpes[3], where my bones shall be throwne:
    A thousand thousand sighes to saue, lay me ô where
    Sad true louer neuer find my graue, to weepe there.

(Argento, Arne, Bantock, Blake, Borg, Brahms, Brian, Bush, Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Chausson, Cornelius, Dankworth, Davies, Dring, Dunhill, Finzi, Fortner, Gurney, Heise, Henschel, Hoiby, Holst, Killmayer, Korngold, Leguerney, Loewe, Maconchy, Moeran, Sibelius, Stanford, Vaughan Williams)

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1. be gone! 2. bewail. 3. corpse.

ACT V, SC. I

ROGER QUILTER: from *Five Shakespeare Songs*, Op. 23 (*1921*)

Hey, ho, the wind and the rain (1919)

Feste
When that I was and a little tine boy,
with hey, ho, the winde and the raine:
A foolish thing was but a toy[1],
for the raine it raineth euery day.

But when I came to mans estate,
with hey ho, the winde and the raine:
Gainst Knaues and Theeues men shut their gate,
for the raine it raineth euery day.

But when I came alas to wiue,
with hey ho, the winde and the raine:
By swaggering could I neuer thriue,
for the raine it raineth euery day.

[But when I came vnto my beds,
with hey ho, the winde and the raine:
With tospottes[2] still had drunken heades,
for the raine it raineth euery day.]

A great while ago the world begon,
hey ho, the winde and the raine:
But that's all one, our Play is done,
and wee'l striue to please you euery day.

(Blake, Bush, Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Dankworth, Davies, Dunhill, Gibbs, Gurney, Heise, Hoiby, Horder, Jeffreys, Killmayer, Korngold, Maconchy, Schumann, Sibelius, Stanford, Sviridov)

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1. trifle. 2. sots.

MACBETH (1603–6)
ACT I, SC. V; ACT II, SC. II; ACT V, SC. I

JOSEPH HOROVITZ: *Lady Macbeth – A Scena for mezzo-soprano and piano (1970)*

Horovitz writes in the Composer's Note that accompanies the score: 'The composer has selected the words from the speeches of Lady Macbeth. This selection is intended to portray the development of this character, from early aspirations to grandeur, to later power and finally to guilt and madness. The implication is that the *scena* begins after Lady Macbeth has read the report of Macbeth's victory at the start of the play.'

Glamys thou art, and Cawdor, and shalt be
What thou art promis'd: yet doe I feare thy Nature,
It is too full o'th' Milke of humane kindnesse,
To catch the neerest way. Thou would'st be great,
Art not without Ambition, but without
The illnesse[1] should attend it. What thou would'st highly,
That would'st thou holily: would'st not play false,
And yet would'st wrongly winne. [. . .]
High thee hither,
That I may powre my Spirits in thine Eare,
And chastise with the valour of my Tongue
All that impeides thee from the Golden Round,
Which Fate and Metaphysicall[2] ayde doth seeme
To haue thee crown'd withall. [. . .]

Great Glamys, worthy Cawdor,
Greater then both, by the all-haile hereafter,
Thy Letters haue transported me beyond
This ignorant present, and I feele now
The future in the instant.

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1. wickedness, evil. 2. supernatural.

He is about it, the Doores are open:
And the surfeted Groomes doe mock their charge
With Snores. I haue drugg'd their Possets[3],
That Death and Nature doe contend about them,
Whether they liue, or dye. [. . .]

I lay'd their Daggers ready,
He could not misse 'em. Had he not resembled
My Father as he slept, I had don't. [. . .]

Why did you bring these Daggers from the place?
They must lye there: goe carry them, and smeare
The sleepie Groomes with blood. [. . .]

Infirme of purpose:
Giue me the Daggers: the sleeping, and the dead,
Are but as Pictures: 'tis the Eye of Child-hood,
That feares a painted Deuill. If he doe bleed,
Ile guild the Faces of the Groomes withall,
For it must seeme their Guilt. [. . .]

Out damned spot: out I say. One: Two:[4] Why then 'tis time to doo't: Hell is murky. Fye, my Lord, fie, a Souldier, and affear'd? what need we feare? who knowes it, when none can call our powre to accompt: [. . .] No more o'that my Lord, no more o'that: you marre all with this starting. [. . .]

Heere's the smell of the blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh, oh, oh [. . .]

Wash your hands, put on your Night-Gowne: looke not so pale, I tell you yet againe *Banquo*'s buried; he cannot come out on's graue. [. . .]

To bed, to bed: there's knocking at the gate: Come, come, [. . .] giue me your hand: What's done, cannot be vndone. To bed, to bed, to bed.

3. 'Posset is hot milk poured on ale or sack, having sugar, grated bisket, eggs, with other ingredients boiled in it, which goes all to a curd' (Randle Holmes, *Academy of Armourie*, 1688). **4.** Lady Macbeth hears the clock striking.

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