



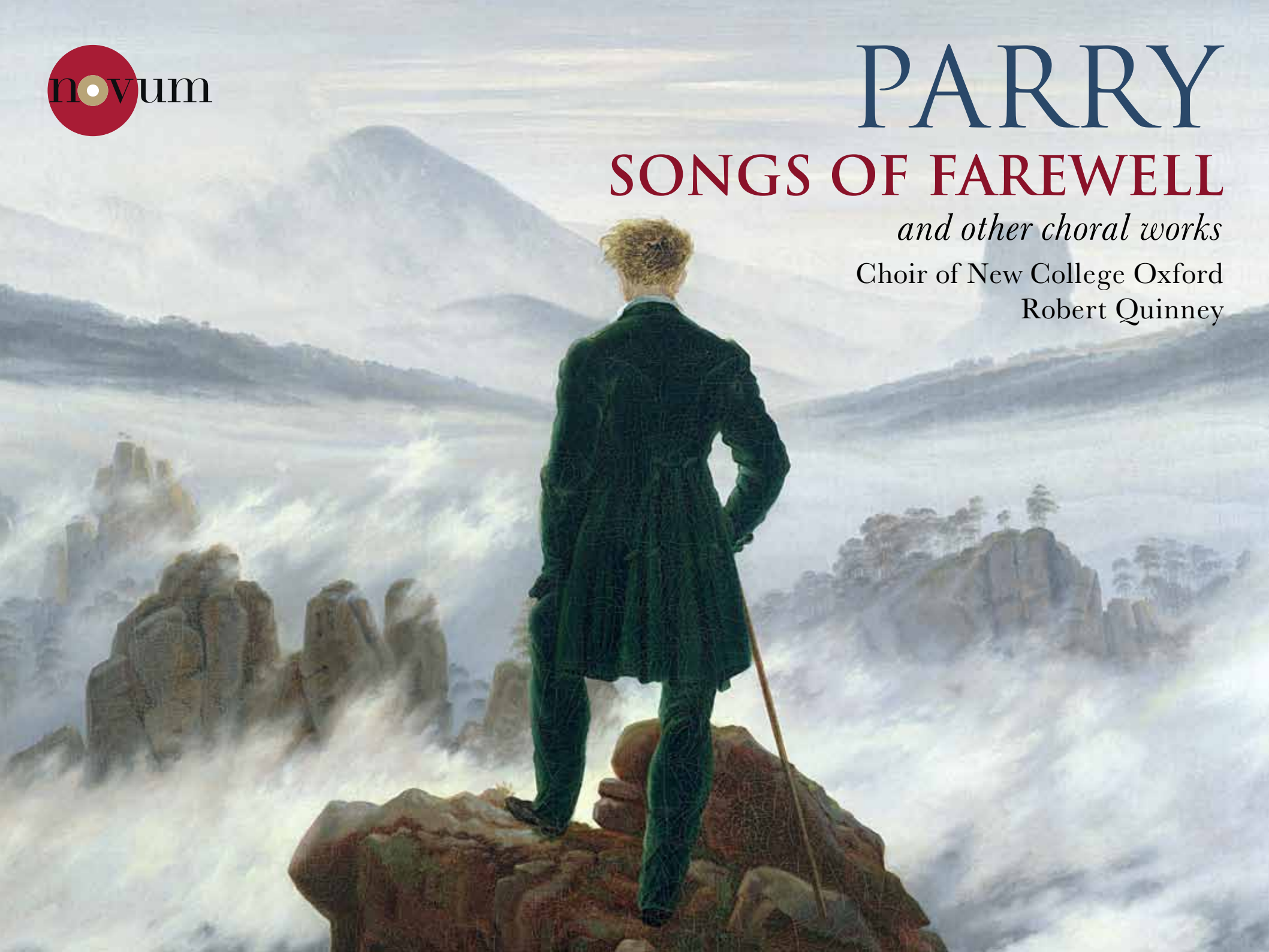
PARRY

SONGS OF FAREWELL

and other choral works

Choir of New College Oxford

Robert Quinney



Acknowledgements

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The edition of the Songs of Farewell used in the recording was edited by Robert Quinney from the autograph manuscripts in the Bodleian Library. It is published by Oxford University Press, ISBN: 9780193518469

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Images

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1.	Parry: <i>Hear my words, ye people</i>	14.27
	Solo quartet: Oscar Bennett (treble), Edward Beswick (alto), Andrew Bennett (tenor), George Robarts (bass) Baritone: Daniel Tate, Organ: Timothy Wakerell	
	Mendelssohn: <i>Sechs Sprüche</i>	
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3.	ii Am Neujahrstage	02.31
4.	iii Am Himmelfahrtstage	01.37
5.	iv In der Passionszeit	01.28
6.	v Im Advent	01.40
7.	vi Am Karfreitag	01.50
	Parry: <i>Songs of Farewell</i>	
8.	i My soul, there is a country	04.05
9.	ii I know my soul hath power	02.19
10.	iii Never weather-beaten sail	03.31
11.	iv There is an old belief	04.33
12.	v At the round earth's imagined corners	07.45
13.	vi Lord, let me know mine end	10.36
14.	Parry: There is an old belief (early version)	05.01
	Parry: Toccata and Fugue 'The Wanderer'	
15.	i Toccata	06.47
16.	ii Fugue	09.01
	Organ: Timothy Wakerell	
	Total	78.43

Introduction by Robert Quinney

Charles Hubert Hastings Parry (1848-1918) was a dominant force in British music-making in the four decades between the premiere of *Prometheus Unbound* in 1879 and his death in October 1918. His music, with that of his contemporary Charles Villiers Stanford, brought his native land into the European musical mainstream, through its assimilation of continental—specifically German—models. His activity as a pedagogue, principally as Director of the Royal College of Music from 1895, greatly influenced a generation of British musicians that included Vaughan Williams, Holst, Howells and Finzi.

Parry is now best known for his coronation anthem *I was glad when they said unto me* and unison setting of Blake's *Jerusalem*. The ceremonial-cum-nationalistic associations of these works encourage an image of the composer that is, at the least, incomplete. Parry was a social and political liberal, and crucially—like all the leading British musicians of his time—his horizons extended beyond the island of his birth. His late set of six motets, *Songs of Farewell*, are among his greatest achievements in any musical genre, demonstrating his capacity for deeply affecting introspection. In this recording they are prefaced by another sextet: the pithy *Sechs Sprüche* by Mendelssohn, which make clear the debt Parry owed to his continental forebears and contemporaries.

The recording begins with a work that predates the completion of the *Songs of Farewell* by two decades. *Hear my words, ye people* was composed for the Festival of the Salisbury Diocesan Choral Association in 1894, and is a large-scale, multi-sectional anthem, firmly rooted in the 'Cathedral' tradition typified by the works of Samuel Sebastian Wesley (1810-1876). But it also reveals Parry's cosmopolitan side, for the structure and flavour of the work owe much to the church cantatas of J.S. Bach, and to English sacred music of the Restoration period. It begins with an organ sinfonia, at the climax of which a solo quartet makes its first appearance, later answered by the full choir at the repetition of 'He is great, and we know him not'. (In employing a quartet or semichorus for much of the work, Parry was exercising a certain pragmatism, predicting that his ends would be better served if most of the c. 2,000 singers were deployed only at strategic points and in fairly straightforward music.) Solo 'arias' follow: the dramatic 'Clouds and darkness' for bass and delicately expressive 'He delivereth the poor in his affliction' for soprano. Finally, after a quasi-recitative for the quartet ('The Lord is full of compassion') and a superb passage setting them in antiphony with the full chorus, the organ introduces a final chorale: 'O praise ye the Lord', a paraphrase of Psalm 150 that is now inextricably associated with Parry's tune, and heard most often as a hymn, independent of its origin in the anthem.

The music of Felix Mendelssohn—its melodiousness, the formal and discreet manner in which it is expressed, and perhaps more than anything its creative reception of earlier styles, notably the counterpoint of Bach and Handel—is a touchstone for all the works by Parry on this recording. It seemed appropriate, then, to set a context for the *Songs of Farewell* by including Mendelssohn's *Sechs Sprüche*: six brief motets composed between 1843 and 1846 for use in Berlin, where Mendelssohn was *Generalmusikdirector* to the court. The revival of Prussian liturgy encompassed a drive to raise musical standards which, like the Roman Catholic 'Cecilian' movement with which Bruckner was to be associated, looked to the past for inspiration. While Mendelssohn's time as an employee of the court was unhappy and relatively short-lived, we can readily imagine that he responded to the brief for a *cappella* choral music after the manner of Palestrina with enthusiasm.

The contrapuntal, largely syllabic style of Mendelssohn's motets is echoed and developed throughout Parry's *Songs of Farewell*. These were not intended for use in the liturgy; indeed only one sets a piece of scripture (the final motet, the greater part of Psalm 39). But Parry's texts all meditate upon the transience of life, and the *Songs* have been adopted by cathedral and collegiate choirs—including the secular 'I know my soul hath power' and distinctly agnostic 'There is an old belief', with its ironic quotation of the plainchant 'Credo in unum Deum' at 'That creed I fain would keep'. Indeed, some of the motets received early performances in the chapel of New College, with the choir directed by Parry's friend (and successor as Director of the Royal College of Music), Hugh Percy Allen; and Parry's use of 'treble' instead of 'soprano' in the initial staves of some of the autograph manuscripts suggests he may have had a traditional ecclesiastical choir in mind, rather than a mixed chorus.

It is clear that Parry had not settled an order for the motets as he composed them, though manuscripts include superscriptions such as 'for the group called *Songs of Farewell*'. The first motet is labelled 'No 4' in the latest of the autographs, and the first to be composed was in fact the fourth, *There is an old belief*, which was performed in its original version at the Royal Mausoleum at Frogmore in January 1907. In 1913 it was revised, and at this point Parry began to assemble a set around it: first *Never weather-beaten sail*, then *I know my soul hath power*, and, in an apparently tortuous process of drafting and redrafting, *My soul, there is a country*. Toward the end of 1915 he completed the set with *At the round earth's imagined corners* and *Lord, let me know mine end*. This recording presents, for the first time, an early version of *There is an old belief*, edited from the autograph manuscripts and a printed proof copy. The compositional history of the motet is unclear, but the evidence suggests Parry vacillated between two strikingly different versions of the central stanza beginning 'Beyond the sphere of Time and Sin' until shortly before its publication in 1916.

The context provided by both the First World War and Parry's declining health (he was suffering from heart failure, sometimes sustaining several small 'heart attacks' in the course of a week by the mid-1910s) adds great poignancy to the motets. The slaughter of the war carried double significance for Parry. Firstly, it signalled a bitter end to the many decades of cultural cross-fertilisation between Britain and Germany; this had influenced not only Parry's own education (in Stuttgart, and in London with the German educated pianist Edward Dannreuther, which brought him into contact with Wagner among others), but also his professional life at the Royal College of Music, which had been founded in 1882 on the German *Hochschule* model. Secondly, it robbed the country of many talented young musicians known to Parry, including two alumni of the RCM: George Butterworth, who died on the Somme in 1916, and Ernest Farrar, whose death preceded Parry's own by less than a month. It is difficult to hear the passage 'and you whose eyes shall behold God' in *At the round earth's imagined corners* without thinking of the sacrifice of these young men—even though its composition predates the death of Butterworth and Farrar. Likewise, the closing section of *Lord, let me know mine end* seems inextricably linked to the composer's physical decline: 'O spare me a little, that I may recover my strength, before I go hence, and be no more seen'. Parry died on 7 October 1918, just over a month before the Armistice; he had heard all six motets performed separately, and the first five together in May 1916, but they were only given as a set on 23 February 1919, at a memorial concert in Exeter College Chapel, Oxford, sung by the choirs of New College and Christ Church together with members of the Oxford Bach Choir, under Hugh Allen.

Another work from the early part of Parry's final decade concludes the programme. The Toccata and Fugue for organ in G major and E minor was composed in November 1912 but published posthumously in 1921. Parry had heard a version of it performed at the Royal College of Music by Walter Parratt (his successor as Professor of Music at Oxford) and Douglas Fox, the brilliant young organist who was to lose his right arm in France in 1917 (on hearing the news, Hugh Allen played Evensong at New College with his right arm tied behind his back, presumably to demonstrate that all was not lost: Fox did indeed continue to play throughout his long career). The whimsical appellation 'Wanderer' – the name of Parry's beloved yacht – does not quite do justice to this intense, elliptical work. The advanced chromaticism and sometimes dense texture is reminiscent of the neo-Bachian form and harmony of Max Reger, and evokes another Wanderer—Caspar David Friedrich's *Wanderer über den Nebelmeer* ('Wanderer above the sea of fog'), the cover image for this recording.

Robert Quinney,
Organist



Texts and Translations

Hear my words, ye people

C. H. H. Parry (1848-1918)

Solo quartet: Oscar Bennett (treble), Edward Beswick (alto), Andrew Bennett (tenor), George Roberts (bass).

Baritone: Daniel Tate. Organ: Timothy Wakerell.

Hear my words, ye people, give ear unto me all ye that have knowledge.

Let us choose to us judgement, let us know among ourselves what is good.

Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any, he is mighty in strength and in wisdom.

Behold, he is great, and we know him not, neither can the number of his years be searched out.

The Lord's seat is in heaven.

Clouds and darkness are round about him, righteousness and judgement are the habitation of his seat.

He decketh himself with light as with a garment, and spreadeth out the heavens like a curtain.

He layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters, and maketh the clouds his chariots, and walketh upon the wings of the wind.

He bowed the heavens, and came down, and it was dark under his feet.

He rode on the Cherubim, and did fly, and came flying upon the wings of the wind.

The Lord's seat is in heaven, his kingdom ruleth over all.

Behold, the eye of the Lord is on them that fear him, and upon them that put their trust in his mercy; to deliver their soul from death, and to feed them in a time of dearth.

Our soul hath patiently tarried for the Lord, for he is our help and our shield.

He delivered the poor in his affliction, the fatherless and him that hath none to help him.

He shall bind up the broken hearted, and proclaim liberty to the captive, and comfort to those that mourn. He shall give them beauty for ashes; the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth things that are sown to spring forth, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and peace to spring forth before all nations.

The Lord is full of compassion and mercy: he hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our wickedness.

For look how high the heaven is in comparison of the earth: so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. Look how wide also the east is from the west, so far hath he set our sins from us.

O praise ye the Lord!
Praise him in the height;
rejoice in his word,
ye angels of light;
Ye heavens, adore him
by whom ye were made,
and worship before him
in brightness arrayed.

O praise ye the Lord!
Praise him upon earth,
in tuneful accord,
ye sons of new birth,
praise him who hath brought you
his grace from above,
praise him who hath taught you
to sing of his love.

O praise ye the Lord!
Thanksgiving and song
to him be outpoured
all ages along;
for love in creation,
for heaven restored,
for grace of salvation,
O praise ye the Lord! Amen.

Job 34.2, 4; 36. 5, 26;

Psalms 11.4; 97.2; 104.2-3; 33.18-20; 103.10, 11-12;

Isaiah 61. 1, 11;

Samuel 22.11;

metrical version of Psalm 150 by Henry Williams Baker (1821-1877)

Sechs Sprüche, Op. 79
Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

i. Weihnachten

Frohlocket, ihr Völker auf Erden, und preiset Gott! Der Heiland ist erschienen, den der Herr verheissen. Er hat seine Gerechtigkeit der Welt offenbaret. Halleluja!

Rejoice, O ye people on earth, and praise God! The saviour has appeared as the Lord had promised. He has revealed his justice to the world. Hallelujah!

ii. Am Neujahrstage

Herr Gott, du bist unsre Zuflucht für und für. Ehe denn die Berge worden, und die Erde und die Welt erschaffen worden, bist du Gott von Ewigkeit zu Ewigkeit. Halleluja!

Lord God, you are our refuge for evermore. From before the mountains were made, and the lands and the world were created, you are our God from age to age. Hallelujah!

Psalm 90: 1-2

iii. Am Himmelfahrtstage

Erhaben, o Herr, über alles Lob, über alle Herrlichkeit; herrschest du von Ewigkeit zu Ewigkeit. Halleluja!

O Lord, above all praise, all majesty, all glory, you reign forever and ever. Hallelujah!

iv. In der Passionszeit

Herr, gedenke nicht unsrer Übeltaten, und erbarme dich unseres Elends. Herr, der du unser Heiland bist, stehe uns bei, erlöse uns und vergib uns unsere Sünden um der Herrlichkeit deines Namens willen. Halleluja!

Lord, remember not our wrongdoings, and have mercy on us in our misery. Lord, you who are our saviour, stand by us, save us and forgive us our sins, for the glory of your name. Hallelujah!

v. Im Advent

Lasset uns frohlocken, es nahet der
Heiland, den Gott uns verheissen. Der
Name des Herrn sei gelobet in Ewigkeit.
Halleluja!

*Let us rejoice, the saviour is near, whom
God has promised us. The name of the
Lord be praised for ever. Hallelujah!*

vi. Am Karfreitag

Um unsrer Sünden willen hat sich
Christus erniedriget, und ist gehorsam
geworden bis zum Tode am Kreuze;
darum hat Gott ihn erhöht, und ihm
einen Namen gegeben, der über alle
Namen ist. Halleluja!

*For the sake of our sins Christ humbled
himself and became obedient to death
|on the cross.
Therefore God has exalted him, and given
him a name which is above all names.
Hallelujah!*

Philippians 2: 8-9

Songs of Farewell

C. H. H. Parry (1848-1918)

i. My soul, there is a country

My soul, there is a country,
Far beyond the stars,
Where stands a wingèd sentry,
All skillful in the wars.

If thou canst get but thither,
There grows the flower of peace,
The rose that cannot wither,
Thy fortress, and thy ease.

There, above noise and danger,
Sweet Peace sits crowned with smiles,
And One born in a manger
Commands the beauteous files.

Leave, then, thy foolish ranges;
For none can thee secure
But One, who never changes,
Thy God, thy Life, thy Cure.

He is thy gracious Friend
And (O my soul, awake!)
Did in pure love descend,
To die here for thy sake.

Henry Vaughan (1621-1695)

ii. I know my soul hath power

I know my soul hath power to know all things,
Yet she is blind and ignorant in all:
I know I'm one of Nature's little kings,
Yet to the least and vilest things am thrall.

I know my life's a pain and but a span;
I know my sense is mocked in every thing;
And, to conclude, I know myself a Man,
Which is a proud and yet a wretched thing.

John Davies (1569-1626)

iii. Never weather-beaten sail

Never weather-beaten sail more willing bent to shore,
Never tired pilgrim's limbs affected slumber more,
Than my wearied sprite now longs to fly out of my troubled breast:
O come quickly, sweetest Lord, and take my soul to rest!

Ever blooming are the joys of heav'n's high paradise,
Cold age deafs not there our ears nor vapour dims our eyes:
Glory there the sun outshines; whose beams the blessed only see:
O come quickly, glorious Lord, and raise my sprite to thee!

Thomas Campion (1567-1620)

iv. There is an old belief

There is an old belief,
That on some solemn shore,
Beyond the sphere of grief
Dear friends shall meet once more.

Beyond the sphere of Time and Sin
And Fate's control,
Serene in changeless prime
Of body and of soul.

That creed I fain would keep
That hope I'll ne'er forgo,
Eternal be the sleep,
If not to waken so.

John Gibson Lockhart (1794-1854)

v. At the round earth's imagined corners

At the round earth's imagined corners, blow
Your trumpets, angels, and arise, arise
From death, you numberless infinities
Of souls, and to your scattered bodies go;
All whom the flood did, and fire shall overthrow,
All whom war, dearth, age, agues, tyrannies,
Despair, law, chance hath slain, and you whose eyes
Shall behold God and never taste death's woe.
But let them sleep, Lord, and me mourn a space,
For if above all these my sins abound,
'Tis late to ask abundance of thy grace
When we are there; here on this lowly ground
Teach me how to repent; for that's as good
As if thou'dst sealed my pardon with thy blood.

John Donne (1572-1631)

vi. Lord, let me know mine end

Lord, let me know mine end and the number of my days: that I may be certified how long I have to live.

Thou hast made my days as it were a span long: and mine age is as nothing in respect of thee; and verily, every man living is altogether vanity.

For man walketh in a vain shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain: he heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them.

And now, Lord, what is my hope: truly my hope is even in thee.

Deliver me from all mine offences: and make me not a rebuke to the foolish.

I became dumb and opened not my mouth: for it was thy doing.

Take thy plague away from me: I am even consumed by means of thy heavy hand.

When thou with rebukes does chasten man for sin, thou makest his beauty to consume away, like as it were a moth fretting a garment: every man therefore is but vanity.

Hear my prayer, O Lord, and with thine ears consider my calling: hold not thy peace at my tears.

For I am a stranger with thee: and a sojourner as all my fathers were.

O spare me a little, that I may recover my strength: before I go hence and be no more seen.

Psalm 39: 5-15

There is an old belief

See p. 14.



The Performers

THE CHOIR OF NEW COLLEGE, OXFORD is one of the most celebrated and acclaimed choral ensembles of the UK. When William of Wykeham founded his ‘New’ College in 1379, a choral foundation was at its heart, and daily chapel services have been a central part of college life ever since. The choir comprises sixteen boy choristers and fourteen adult clerks; the latter a mixture of professional singers and undergraduate members of the college. The pattern set by New College Choir in the 1380s was later adopted by other foundations, and may be seen as the prototype for all choirs of its kind. The boy choristers benefit not only from the matchless education provided by daily contact with superb music, or the satisfaction of performing at a professional level, but also from generous bursaries at New College School.

New College Choir is often heard in concert around the world, as well as on broadcasts and recordings. A wide range of music is represented in its discography; it was the first choral foundation to establish its own recording label, Novum, and has also recorded for Decca, Erato, Hyperion and CRD. The choir has released four discs with director Robert Quinney. John Blow: *Symphony Anthems* won acclaim on BBC Radio 3 CD Review and was an Editor’s Choice in Gramophone. *Nowell sing we!* celebrates the choir’s renowned Christmas carol services alongside *The Gate of Heaven: Favourite Anthems from New College*, which features music with an Oxford connection, including two new commissions. *Like as the Hart: Music for the Templar’s Garden* brought together settings of Psalm 42 to accompany the novel *The Templar’s Garden* by Catherine Clover.

Touring is an important part of the choir’s profile, and recent highlights have included singing for Pope Francis in the Sistine Chapel, Rome, concerts in Hungary and Normandy, and visits to both the east and west coasts of the USA. Choral services reach a global audience via regular webcasts.

For full information about the choir, forthcoming concerts and recordings see www.newcollegechoir.com.

Trebles Tom Barry, Edward Bennett, Oscar Bennett (solo track 1), Christopher Brain, Lyndon Chen, Samuel Jarvis, Thomas Kelsey, Reuben McLusky, Alexander Quinney, James Robson (solo track 5), Julien Rohart, Idris Scrase, Thomas Simpson, Edward Talbot-Ponsonby

Altos Edward Beswick (solo track 1), Edward Button, Thomas Galea, Tom Hammond-Davies (solo track 5), Hal Phillips, Stephen Taylor

Tenors Andrew Bennett (solo tracks 1, 5), James Brown, Tim Coleman, Felix Leach, Peter Leigh, William Rowland

Basses Oliver Black, Alistair Clark, Alex Dance, William Ellis, Tom Lowen, George Robarts (solo tracks 1, 5), Daniel Tate (solo track 1), David Winter

Organ Timothy Wakerell



(c) Nick Rutter

ROBERT QUINNEY is Organist of New College, Oxford. In addition to the daily direction of New College's internationally acclaimed choir, his work comprises teaching, lecturing, and examining, as a Tutorial Fellow of the college and an Associate Professor at the University Faculty of Music. He also maintains a parallel career as a solo organist, and he is a prolific recording artist: his discs of organ music by J. S. Bach, Elgar, Dupré, Wagner and Brahms – and several CDs with the Choir of Westminster Abbey and The Sixteen – have been widely acclaimed. Robert Quinney read music at King's College, Cambridge, where he was Organ Scholar. After four years as Assistant Master of Music at Westminster Cathedral, he became Sub-Organist of Westminster Abbey in 2004. While at the Abbey he performed on concert tours to the United States, Australia and Russia, at several televised services – including the Marriage of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge

– and on the BBC TV documentary *Westminster Abbey*. In April 2013 he moved to Peterborough Cathedral, where he was Director of Music for sixteen months.

His role in Oxford enables a unique synergy between the latest scholarship and the venerable traditions of the college and university; performance and research illuminate each other in the work of New College Choir. His particular research interests have borne fruit in regular performances of J. S. Bach's church music in the context of reconstructed liturgies; and he is committed to refreshing the choral repertory by commissioning new works.

TIMOTHY WAKERELL is Assistant Organist of New College, Oxford, where he accompanies the renowned choir in services, concerts and recordings. Prior to this he was Sub-Organist of St Paul's Cathedral and he played at many national services such as the Funeral of Baroness Thatcher and the Diamond Jubilee Service. Timothy studied organ at the Royal College of Music, London, with Margaret Phillips and David Graham, graduating with distinction in both undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. He continued his studies with Dame Gillian Weir and won Second Prize at the 2011 Carl Nielsen International Organ Competition in Odense, Denmark. As a soloist he has performed throughout the UK as well as in France, Germany, Sweden and Switzerland - 'Timothy Wakerell proved himself a master of the instrument and its surroundings ... [Gaston Litaize's *Prélude et Danse Fuguée* was] fully brought out by the technical aplomb and unerring musicianship of this excellent organist' (*The Organ*). In May 2018 Timothy gave a performance of Barber's *Toccata Festiva* with the City of London Sinfonia in St Paul's Cathedral; other notable venues have included Marienkirche, Berlin, and St Augustin, Paris; at New College he has also given performances of Messiaen's *La Nativité du Seigneur* and the 'Eighteen' Chorales of J.S. Bach. In 2014 he completed the premiere recording of the William Drake Organ in St Paul's Cathedral - 'A stylish and crisply executed recital' (*Gramophone*).