

THE
WHOLE BOOKE OF
PSALMES:

WITH
THE HYMNES
EVANGELICALL, AND
Songs SPIRITUALL.

Composed into 4 parts by sundry Authors,
to such several Tunes, as have been,
and are usually sung in England, Scotland, Wales,
Germany, Italy, France, and the Netherlands:
Never as yet before in one volume
published.

ALSO:

1. A brief Abstract of the Praise, Efficacie and Virtue of the Psalmes,
2. That all Clarkes of Churches, and the Auditory, may know what Tune each proper Psalmes may be sung unto.

Newly corrected and enlarged by
Tho: Ravenscroft, Bachelor of Musicke.

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Printed at London
for the *Company of Stationers*,
1621.

From the actual editor

It 's been quite a while since I stumbled upon the internet version of “**The Whole Booke of Psalms**”, which I found on the site www.pbm.com/~lindahl/ravenscroft/psalter/ of Greg Lindahl. Browsing through it, I fell upon a particular score (“The Lord’s Prayer” by G. Kirbye), marked ‘1. Dutch tune’. Being a ‘Dutchman’ myself (actually Flemish, but one must very well consider that Flanders, in those days, was much more stretched out as it is nowadays, but it was Flanders that had – in the train of the Empire of Charles V – a major cultural influence on the rest of Europe, with Bruges and Ghent as cultural metropolises), I was especially intrigued by it and took a closer look, only to find out I knew the tune indeed, although in another setting. So I went on to transcribe the whole score in 4 parts, and I liked it very much. Once the work was done, I decided to give it a try to post it on the site of Christian Mondrup (<http://icking-music-archive.org>), who had already ‘re-mastered’ some scores of *The Whole Booke of Psalmes*. If he was pleased by it, could not be made up from his reaction: a lot of remarks, corrections, reproofs and others. After several mails to and fro, suddenly ‘my’ score was on the site. The rest is (a) history (of over 2 years), and now we can present you a complete version of *The Whole Booke of Psalmes*, completely checked and revised by Christian Mondrup, Danish musicologist, transcribed into modern music notation.

Of course we owe many thanks to Christian Mondrup for his immensely patient guidance in the harmonic revision of the scores and his endeavour to explain to me the what’s and the why’s, and to Greg Lindahl for his crucial hints in times of impasses. I (try no to) pride myself that this book – meant as it is to **be sung** - would disappear into oblivion without their indispensable contribution. It is up to you to judge if the result is worth our considerable efforts.

Because every transcription implies some compromises and we want to be very clear on them, here are some prefatory remarks.

1. The Titles

In the original *The Whole Booke of Psalmes*, the psalm numbers and possibly the Latin names of the scores are used as titles, which is quite logical. On the other hand, these give little or no idea of the content or the meaning of the piece. We did therefore choose to use the first line as the title, and to ‘degrade’ the original title into the subtitle. To cure the possible inconvenience of this decision, a new index, by alphabetical order, has been added, and all (new) indexes do mention both titles and subtitles. The order of succession of the original book has been maintained, except for a few psalms, where we had to keep the score- and the text page together and wanted to avoid blank pages anyway.

2. The Clefs

The original keys are very meticulously repeated in the incipit of each score, although the form of the old *Ut*-clefs is not available in the computer aided music notation program we used.

In some other similar revisions, these clefs are considered as guidelines to appoint a part to a certain voice part. We would not go that far. It is quite remarkable though, that the ambitus of the different parts is not very wide, and the *Cantus* part fits very well into the voice range of our actual *Soprano*, the *Medius* in the one of our actual *Alto*, and so on. That only confirms very well the purpose of the original book, as stated on the title page, to be sung “**usually** in England,..”, i.e. meant for common practice by (our?) usual, non-professional parish choirs. That is the reason why we kept the indication of the abbreviated

voice parts S(oprano), A(lto), T(enor) and B(ass), although these are not to be considered obligatory.

3. The Tunes

Most of the scores also have a ‘tune-name’, mostly the name of a town, a region, or other. Such tune-names are quite common in the English church music: the English have a whole system of psalm texts ‘in metre’ (a kind of counted syllables) on the one hand, and an abundance of tunes on the other hand, which they can fit together as they like. Probably since the edition of the Psalter of Thomas Este (1592), they started to give these tunes names, to make the puzzle easier. And since – even within the reach of this book - we find the same tune, arranged by different composers, we must assume that these tunes – at least the named ones – are not written by the composer involved; only the setting is. The unnamed tunes may very well be the work of the composer as a whole.

4. Bar lines

Other transcriptions (especially the ones from the early 19th century) ‘re-organise’ very often the original scores into an actual metric or measured system (4/4, 3/4, ...). We very conscientiously did not go for that option. As a (very local) conductor myself, we are aware of the comfort such a measured system gives in conducting our choir, but it also inspires our choir to ‘sing in bars’, rather than ‘in lines’, and the latter must be the main rule in the eventual performance, for the goal of this music is the transmitting of the spiritual contents, rather than the music itself.

The use and the interpretation (validity) of the accidentals is therefore not the same as in our actual measured systems; see further about that in 6. *Accidentals*.

5. The Text

5a. The place of the text under the notes in the original is not always very clear. You must imagine that in those days, one had to work with little ‘note-blocs’ and ‘character-blocs’, I suppose, which were not always just as ‘thick’ as the typesetter would have wished. Also, paper and ink were rather expensive and economical to be of, and so the scores are rather ‘compressed’. We praise ourselves lucky already that the texts are fully written out in all the parts, which was not always so (but here again: ‘meant for common use’). In doubtful or unclear cases, we tried to restore the word-setting as well as possible, considering mostly the concurrence of textual and musical emphases, and the ‘singability’ as a whole.

5b. The orthography

We took the liberty to ‘modernise’ the text somewhat, mostly the orthography, as far as it does not change the pronunciation of the words. However, to keep the ‘antique smell’ of the work, we maintained the original orthography in all the titles of the scores, and of the textual parts as well.

Type-setting problems: in those days the ‘s’, except at the end of a word, was written as an ‘*f*’, the ‘w’ with two ‘v’s, the ‘v’ with a ‘u’, and others. These differences we have modernised without questions of conscience, only to make the text more readable and understandable.

Spelling problems: some of the questions of conscience came up with words as ‘*workes*’ where we write ‘*works*’, ‘*neare*’ instead of ‘*near*’, but also ‘*exprest*’ instead of ‘*expressed*’ or ‘*tride*’ for ‘*tried*’ and so on. In such cases we took the liberty to modernise the words as far as the **pronunciation** does not change (except in the titles, where we maintained the original spelling, not the aforementioned orthography). We could also have banned unknown or out-of-use words and replaced them with their actual equivalent, but that we

did not do: we respected the words as they were then, and – more importantly – to which the music is composed.

The punctuation marks: also the use of the common punctuation marks (points, comma's, and more particularly the colon and the semicolon) is quite different from nowadays. And although the addition of a comma here and the occasional replacement of a colon by a point elsewhere, would certainly have enhanced the meaning and the comprehension of the text and the sentences, we have chosen to mainly respect the original punctuation.

For the latter two points, the spelling (and the occasional replacement with more modern words) and the actualised punctuation, we gladly refer to the 'modernised' version of the *Sternhold & Hopkins Psalter* on www.cgmusic.org.

5c. The completeness (uneven verses with double meters)

Not as in other publications of that time, but indeed as it was meant 'for common use', the texts are – as far as we can see (as by comparing with the earlier mentioned *Sternhold & Hopkins Psalter*) – are very complete; i.e. not only are all the texts fully written out in all the voice parts, but also all the verses or stanzas our printed out in full, after the music score.

This is very handy, but creates a problem occasionally. Some psalms are set in a 'double metre' (f.i. *twice* 6.8.6.8 syllables), while the complete psalm text consists of an odd number of verses or stanzas. We did not touch nor handle the problem in the critical notes of the concerning scores. For the eventual performance, there are some solutions: one can omit a less interesting stanza (or more, as a performance of all the eventual 19 or more stanzas is not so common anymore nowadays, I suppose), or sing the last odd numbered stanza on the repeat of the second half of the music score.

6. Accidentals and (harmonic) errors

6a. Interpretation of accidentals in long bars.

In the long bar notation, which we see in this original, the validity of the accidentals must not be supposed to reach to the end of the bar, but only until the next change of tone. Therefore one sees often more than one # or *b* within one 'bar'. In other words: if a note is sharpened or flattened, the sharp counts also for the **same subsequent** notes, but not any further. This rule does not work at the end of a bar (in the transition to the next) where the validity expires, unless the whole ending chord with the other voice parts is picked up as the new starting chord. Anyhow, these questions have been conscientiously looked at and treated by Christian Mondrup, musicologist and webmaster of <http://icking-music-archive.org>, and cured with the so-called 'editorial' accidentals. So these certainly do not mean: 'to apply if you like', but 'although not in the original, and perhaps not the final truth, yet to be taken into serious consideration', or 'strongly advised'.

The sign for restoring a note to natural is non existing in 1621 and the # (or its predecessor) is used instead to restore an initial (with the clef) *b* to a *natural*, and the *b* to restore a #. These accidentals have been 'translated' into our *natural*-sign without further notice.

Can we go any step further? Surprisingly perhaps, but: yes. Sometimes a *b* or a # is used to restore (as just explained) a note, which even is *not* sharpened or flattened previously (with the clef). This phenomenon is very particular, and prevents the usual applications of some singing rules, which were very common at that time, but disappeared in our 'absolute' manner of note reading. So, for instance, it was a rule that in an ascending sequence of a 3rd, the last note was to be flattened, and so a # was inserted by the composer to indicate that this 3rd note eventually had to be sung '*natural*'. The case can clearly be recognised where, for instance, the *Si* (who had not name yet, in the time of 'relative' note reading) or

the *Mi* is sharpened, but is more difficult to discern in other cases. Corrections of that kind are omitted (or ‘surpassed’, as we read those notes ‘absolutely’, i.e. unchanged, anyhow), or sometimes confirmed with a ‘cautional editorial’ (a *natural* within parentheses above the note).

6b. Musical Typesetting errors.

And there are a lot of them in this book. Or as Christian Mondrup stated in the beginning of our ‘cooperation’, Ravenscroft didn’t do much proof-reading. Some errors give reason for an understanding smile (such as the reverse of a 6 into a 9, the numeric confusion of a page number, the poor numbering of the verses, and so on), presumably the result of a tired Monday morning head of the typesetter and obviously also the proof-reader. Those problems have not been corrected, and, for instance, the eventual poor numbering of the verses has been maintained (sometimes mentioned in the critical notes).

More serious are some problems which result in a complete disharmony. There also, the problem is possibly or occasionally caused by the reverse of a ‘note-bloc’, and in one piece, a whole music line (even with his own clef) of the Tenor is confused and repeated in the Medius part. As a result, some lines or notes had to be corrected (or completely restored), following the harmonic and composition rules of that time. There again Christian Mondrup was the indispensable and supervising authority. All errors of that kind are corrected within the score (not editorial), and mentioned in the critical notes.

A further kind of errors are the offences against the harmonic rules, even those of those times. Among the most frequent ones are the forbidden *parallel 5th’s and parallel 8th’s*, the *hidden 5th’s and 8th’s*, but there are others, too. These are errors which are not caused by the typesetter, but by the composer (in many cases T. Ravenscroft) himself. That kind of mistakes pops up the question if they should be rectified or not, since they are part of the work (and the will) of the composer, and the eventual (lack of) proof of the (minor?) quality of his work.

We decided to rectify that kind of mistakes anyhow, in the conviction that “if the composer should have been (made) aware of the fault, he certainly would have corrected it”, and so ‘we’ made the correction as we suppose he would have done it. Mistakes of that kind have been corrected in the score (not editorial) and mentioned in the critical notes (sometimes with the argumentation) in the appendix of this book.

This, with all the corrections described above, has very conscientiously been done to present you a very nice and exceptionally complete collection of Psalms, at least as good – and in some cases, perhaps better – as they were meant to be (sung).

Martin Quartier, 2010

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with endless thanks – once more, but never enough – to Christian Mondrup

The Preface

TO ALL THAT HAVE
Skill, or Will unto Sacred Musicke,
I wish CONCORD among *themselves,*
with GOD, and with their owne Conciences.

Harmonical Brethren, *I have here undertaken with no small labour, and charge, to bring the Tunes of the Psalms, Hymns Evangelical, and Songs Spiritual, (as they are usually sung throughout Great Britain) into one entire volume; which are so Composed, for the most part, that the unskilful may with little practice, be enabled to sing them in parts, after a plausible manner.*

In my opinion, it is too Laborious a task for any Man to study the attainment of the Hebrew Musical Accents, for the Tunes used in David's Time are too far removed from our understanding. For albeit the Hebrew Musical Characters are placed sometimes above the Letter, sometimes beneath, yet the knowledge of what was signified by those Notes and Characters, was only continued by Tradition, and is now utterly lost, though many at sundry times (as appeared by their writings) have gone about to revive it: But having no better subject to work upon, than their own weak conjectures, they have but a little prevailed. I find yet that the Characters now used in the Russian Church, (who had their skill in Music from the Greek) though they differ in the placing, (because those of the Hebrews are both above and beneath the Letter, these only above) yet they partly resemble one another in the form.

Again, I find by sundry Manuscripts, that the Latin Church, as well as in the form of their Characters, as likewise in the placing of them, did participate of both. For first, according to the manner of the Hebrews, they placed their Notes both above and beneath the Letter. Afterwards they used one line above the Letter, and placed their Notes both above and beneath the line, and that with a Geometrical distance, as the ascent and descent of the sounds did require.

In process of time (as all things are brought to their perfection by degrees) they came to two lines, then to three. And Guido Aretinus, a learned man (whom Histories report to have lived in the time of Henry the 2. Emperour, in the year of our LORD, 1018) was the first that invented the uniform of the Scale, (which we term Gam-ut) and brought in the four lines, which was and only is now used in the Church for Phonaskes, distinguished by the Gregorian, Ambrosian, and Peregrine Tones, comprehended in the distance of a Diatessaron or a Diapente, resp. a fourth or a fifth, or the Harmonical proportions of sesqui tertia and sesqui altera: and by degrees it came to the distance of a Diapason, which is an eighth, and a Duple proportion; in which three proportions all Simple and Compound Harmony consisted, by the Plagal and Authentic division of the Tones and Tropes. The which Phonaskes are explained by the Tenor part being the Faburden or Plainsong of the Psalms, Anthems, and Responses usually sung in the Church in Prose, and Hymns that were Composed in Verse and Meter.

The five lines are used for Symphonaskes or Parts Compounded of 2.3.4.5.6. voices etc.

The six lines are used for Instrumental Music, as Organs, Harps, Lutes, etc.

But whatsoever the Tunes were in David's time, there is no question but they were concordant and Harmonious, which could not be, had they not been divided in parts. For if you look into 1 Chro. chap. 15. 16. verse, you shall see how the Prophet David at the Reduction of the Ark, as likewise Salomon his Son at the Dedication of the Temple, 2 Chro, chap. 6.31 verse, distinguished all their Music in parts, and appointed such to be Masters and Overseers of it, as were most eminent for their knowledge in that kind, as Chenaniah the chief Levite, to have the chief place, which was to be Master of the Song.

An office, which consisted not only in the direction of the Choir, but likewise in the training of others to sing, that there might be still a supply of able persons for that service: Asaph the next, and so Hernan his Brother, likewise Ieduthun and Ethan, all of them the most renowned chanters of those Times, and such as successively in one another's absence, were to direct the due performance of that charge, so that not only the voice of the Singers, but likewise the sound of the Instruments agreed so well together, that they seemed to be but one Sound, and one Voice.

Neither was this method confined only to the Old Testament, but sanctified to the Church of Christ by the prescription of the holy Apostle St. Paul, (Col. 3, verse 16): Let the word of God dwell plenteously in you, in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing your own selves, in Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs, singing with a Grace to the Lord in your hearts.

I have therefore endeavoured for the fitting of every Heart to that Psalm, which it most affect, to place special Tunes, proper to the nature of each Psalm, (not imitating Art so much, as the natural inclination, but joining one with another,) and am bold to admonish the Singers that they observe three Rules.

- 1. That Psalms of Tribulation be sung with a low voice and long measure: Psal. 9, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 142, etc.*
- 2. That Psalms of Thanksgiving be sung with a voice indifferent, neither too loud, nor too soft, and with a measure neither too swift nor too slow: Psal. 18, 23, 27, 30, 31, 46, 48, 66, 81, 104, 105, 111, 118, 122, 124, 126, 138, 144, 145, 146.*
- 3. That Psalms of Rejoicing be sung with a loud voice, a swift and jocund measure, Psal. 33, 34, 47, 84, 95, 96, 98, 99, 108, 113, 117, 135, 136, 145, 147, 148, 150.*

In all which, the observing of Time, Tune and Ear, will produce a perfect Harmony.

Accept kindly, what I have laboured earnestly, and use it to thy comfort. Thus I end, humbly wishing to all true Christian hearts, that sweet consolation, in singing praises unto God here upon Earth, as may bring us hereafter, to bear a part with the Choir of Angels in the Heavens.

Your well according, and
best wishing Brother,
Tho: Ravenscroft.