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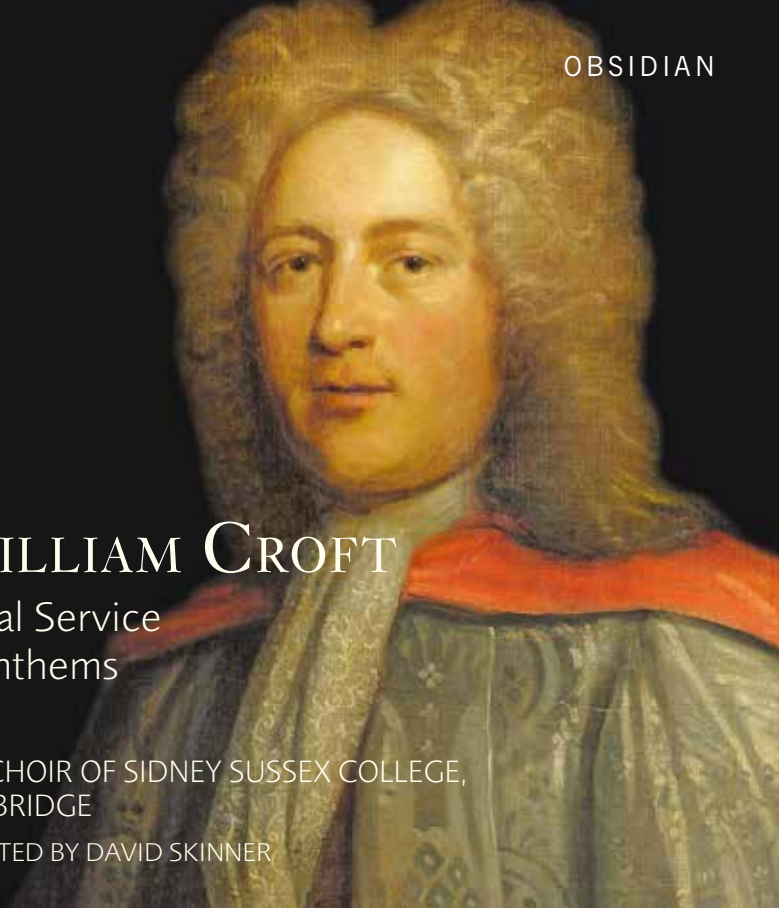


WILLIAM CROFT

Burial Service
& Anthems

THE CHOIR OF SIDNEY SUSSEX COLLEGE,
CAMBRIDGE

DIRECTED BY DAVID SKINNER



William Croft

Burial Service & Anthems

- | | | | | | |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|---------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|---------|
| 1 | Sing praises to the Lord | (04'15) | 10 | Voluntary No. 5 in C major | (02'19) |
| 2 | Voluntary No. 8 in C major | (01'52) | 11 | God is gone up with
a merry noise | (03'58) |
| 3 | Hear my prayer, O Lord | (05'40) | 12 | O Lord, rebuke me not | (07'23) |
| 4 | O Lord God of my salvation | (06'05) | 13 | Voluntary No. 4 in G minor | (02'22) |
| 5 | Voluntary No. 1 in D minor | (02'56) | 14 | O Lord, grant the
King a long life | (04'35) |
| Burial Service | | | | | |
| 6 | I am the resurrection | (02'54) | | | |
| 7 | Man that is born of a woman | (02'51) | Total time (47'28) | | |
| 8 | Thou knowest, Lord
(Henry Purcell) | (01'54) | | | |
| 9 | I heard a voice from heaven | (01'44) | | | |

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CD714

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THE CHOIR OF SIDNEY SUSSEX COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

DIRECTED BY DAVID SKINNER

Anita Datta & Rachel Haworth,
organ scholars

Recorded in The Chapel of Sidney Sussex
College, Cambridge, 28–30 June 2014, with
kind permission of the Master and Fellows.

Produced by Francis Knights.

Engineered and edited by Jim Gross.

Editions of choral works by David Skinner,
all from William Croft's *Musica Sacra*: or
Select Anthems in Score, 2 vols. (London,
1724). Consulted copy in Trinity College
Library, Cambridge, with special thanks to
the kindness and generosity of the Fellow
Librarian, Dr David McKitterick, FBA.

Chamber organ by Taylor & Boody
(Opus 66). Fifth-coma meantone after
Norden; pitch = 466.

*The Solemnity, Gravity, and Excellency
of Style, peculiarly proper to Church-
Musick, had been utterly lost: But so it
happened, That what was by Mr. Tallys
so happily begun, was with great Success
carried on, by other great Maisters, his
Contemporaries and Successors, every Age
having since produc'd one or more Persons
famous in their Generation for reviving
the Credit of that useful Art, who by their
excellent Performances from Time to Time,
have been able to lay a sure Foundation for
the perpetual Improvement thereof.*

Some words by William Croft in
the introduction of *Musica Sacra*,
an ambitious two-volume collection
of his church music published in
1724, which succinctly demonstrates
his passion for the preservation of
English church music in an age
rapidly becoming dominated by the
stage and grand oratorios.

William Croft was born in Nether Ettington, Warwickshire in December 1678, and was a chorister in the Chapel Royal under John Blow who was his teacher and mentor. His career swiftly advanced in his 20s. By the age of 22 he returned to the Chapel Royal as a Gentleman Extraordinary, and in 1704 became joint organist of the chapel with Jeremiah Clarke, taking on the position solely upon Clarke's death in 1707. John Blow died in the following year and Croft fully and immediately stepped into his shoes as composer and Master of the Children of the Chapel Royal as well as organist of Westminster Abbey. He was 30.

Croft took his DMus from Oxford in 1713, for which he submitted two odes for solo voices, chorus and orchestra, and by 1715 he was senior in the Chapel Royal with a generous increase in salary. This was all during the time when Handel came under

the patronage of Queen Anne, and, while there apparently is no evidence of any friction between the two composers, it must have been difficult for Croft to live and work under the shadow of the great foreigner. But while Handel famously excelled at genres, especially the oratorio and chamber music, Croft seems to have been content to continue in the footsteps of many of his earlier native composers focussing on the production of sacred liturgical music for the church. In 1724 he gathered his finest compositions in one great two-volume collection and published all under the title *Musica Sacra*. He died three years later in Bath, and was buried near Henry Purcell in Westminster Abbey. Though married in 1705, he died childless with only his music to serve as his memorial to the world.

In 1776 the music historian, John Hawkins described him as a 'grave

and decent man', and, if such a thing is possible, this seems to be reflected in his music. Many of the anthems in his *Musica Sacra* are charmingly honest, quite simple and extremely effective. The six represented on this recording offer a wide spectrum of his writing ability, which shows him to be an even, consistent composer who heralded an original voice in his works. Typical in all is the marked contrast between full choir and solo verse sections from anywhere between three and six or more voices. There are hints of Handelian influences, such as in the spritely *God is gone up and Sing praises to the Lord*, but he appears particularly to have excelled in more somber settings where he, like others before him from Tallis to Purcell, drew on traditional polyphonic methods. *Hear my prayer and O Lord God of my salvation* are typical examples of his ability slowly to build tension to

great effect. But his masterpiece in this genre must be *O Lord, rebuke me* not which displays particular sombre expressiveness from its initial petitions, which become more troubled throughout, to one of his finest settings of the 'Amen'. *O Lord, grant the King a long life* with its chromatic quirkiness is in a class of its own and displays his harmonic inventiveness.

Croft included as an appendage to *Musica Sacra* the setting of his now famous *Burial Service*, 'as it is now occasionally perform'd in Westminster-Abbey.' In his preface he explains that 'there is one verse composed by my predecessor, the famous Mr Henry Purcell, to which, in justice to his memory, his name is applied.' He is speaking of Purcell's iconic *Thou knowest Lord*, and goes further to offer an apology – '...the reason why I did not compose that verse a-new (so as to render the

whole service entirely of my own composition) is obvious to every artist'.

In the rest of that Service composed by me, I have endeavoured, as near as possibly

I could, to imitate that great Master and celebrated Composer, whose Name will for ever stand high in the Rank of Those, who have laboured to improve the English Style.

To this end, he succeeded admirably.



David Skinner
Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge

Texts

Sing praises to the Lord

Sing praises to the Lord, O ye saints of his: and give thanks unto him for a remembrance of his holiness. For his wrath endures but for a moment: and in his favour is life.

Heaviness may endure for a night: but joy cometh in the morning.

(Psalm 30, vv 3-4)

Hear my prayer, O Lord

Hear my prayer, O Lord: and let my crying come unto thee.

Hide not thy face from me in the time of my trouble: incline thine ear unto me when I call.

O hear me, and that right soon: incline thine ear unto me when I call.

O hear me, and that right soon.

(Psalm 102, vv. 1-2)

O Lord God of my salvation

O Lord God of my salvation: I have cried day and night before thee.

O let my prayer enter into thy presence: incline thine ear unto my calling.

For my soul is full of trouble: my life draweth nigh unto Hell.

Unto thee have I cried, O Lord: and early shall my prayer come before thee. Amen.

(Psalm 88, vv. 1-3)

Burial Service

I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another. We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord.

Man that is born of a women hath but a short time to live and is full of misery. He cometh up, and is cut down like a flower: he fleeth as it were a shadow, and never continueth in one stay. In the midst of life, we are in death: of whom may we seek for succour but of thee, O Lord, who for our sins art justly displeas'd? Yet, O Lord God most holy, O Lord most mighty, O holy and most merciful saviour, deliver us not into the bitter pains of eternal death.

Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts: shut not thy merciful ears unto our prayer; but spare us, Lord, spare us, Lord most holy, O God most mighty, O holy and most merciful saviour, thou most worthy judge eternal, suffer us not at our last hour for any pains of death, to fall from thee. Amen.

God is gone up with a merry noise

God is gone up with a merry noise, and the Lord with the sound of the trumpet. O sing praises unto our God; O sing praises unto our king. For God

is the king of all the earth: O sing ye praises with understanding. Amen.
(Psalm 47, vv. 5-7)

O Lord, rebuke me not

O Lord, rebuke me not in thine indignation: neither chasten me in thy displeasure.

Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak: O Lord, heal me, for my bones are vexed.

My soul also is sore troubled: but Lord, how long wilt thou punish me? Turn thee, O Lord, and deliver my soul: O save me for thy mercy's sake. Amen.

(Psalm 6, vv. 1-4)

O Lord, grant the King a long life

O Lord, grant the King a long life: he shall dwell before God for ever.

O prepare thy loving mercy and faithfulness: that they may preserve him. As for his enemies, clothe them with shame: but upon himself, let his crown flourish. Amen.

(Psalms 61, vv. 6-7 & 132, v. 18)

THE CHOIR OF SIDNEY SUSSEX COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

Directed by DAVID SKINNER

Anita Datta & Rachel Haworth, *organ scholars*

SOPRANOS

Jennifer Bates, Emma Boulding, Eleanor Cramer, Rosalind Dobson (a), Laura Harrison (b), Catherine Shaw, Joanna Markbreiter (c), Bryony Watson (d)

ALTOS

Harini Annadanam, Giverny McAndry (h), Henrietta Gullifer (i), Rosie Parker, Camilla Wehmeyer

Soloists in the anthems:

Sing praises to the Lord (a, d, h, j, o)

Hear my prayer, O Lord (a/d/i/h/j/n)

O Lord God of my salvation
(c, b, h, i, j, k, o, m)

TENORS

Oliver Clarke (j), Benedict Collins Rice, James Cormack, Joseph Howard (k), William Searle (l)

BASSES

Thomas Ainge, Ben Chapple (m), Philippe Franklin (n), Laurens Macklon, George Parris (o)

God is gone up with a merry noise
(a, b, i, j, l, m)

O Lord, rebuke me not in thine indignation (h, l, n)

O Lord, grant the King a long life
(d, b, h, i, j, k, o, m)

SIDNEY SUSSEX COLLEGE rose from the ruins of the Cambridge Greyfriars in 1596 and has long been a nest for professional musicians. Indeed the large chapel that stood on this site in pre-Reformation times was the regular venue for University ceremonies and was the venue where a number of early English composers took their degrees, including Robert Fayrfax (MusB, 1501; DMus 1504) and Christopher Tye (MusB, 1536). One of the earliest musicians in the College was the Royalist pamphleteer, author, and violist Roger L'Estrange (1616–1704), whose family were patrons of the composer John Jenkins. Earlier still, the great Elizabethan composer William Byrd would have been well-known to the foundress, Lady

Frances Sidney, and indeed two very fine elegies by Byrd survive for her nephew, the poet and courtier Sir Philip Sidney. Currently resident in the College is Dr Christopher Page (1991), founder and former director of the multi-award-winning Gothic Voices, and Dr David Skinner (2006) who is director of the early music ensemble Alamire, and Sidney's first Director of Music.

The Choir's first recording with Obsidian was Thomas Tomkins 'These Distracted Times' with Fretwork and Alamire, which was awarded Editor's Choice and CD of the Month in the Gramophone. Their most recent was music by Thomas Weelkes, also with Fretwork, which was nominated for a Gramophone Award in 2014. The

choir has since gone on to record and tour a number of innovative programmes, and frequently tours throughout Europe and the USA.

DAVID SKINNER is well known as a leading scholar and performer of early music, and director of the acclaimed vocal ensemble Alamire (www.alamire.co.uk). He has also worked with the main early music groups in the UK, including The Cardinal's Musick (as co-founder), The Tallis Scholars, The Sixteen, The Hilliard Ensemble and The King's Singers. David is Fellow, Tutor and Osborn Director of Music at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge University, where he teaches historical and practical topics from the Medieval and Renaissance periods. An engaging

presenter, he has worked extensively for BBC radio, appearing in and writing a variety of shows on Radio 3 and 4. He also acted as music advisor for the Music and Monarchy series on BBC 2 with historian David Starkey. He has published widely on music and musicians of early Tudor England, and recently published *The Tallis Psalter* and *The Gibbons Hymnal* for Novello. He is currently working on a volume of Tallis's early Latin works for publication in 2016.