



Sketch of the Port Sunlight painting above.
Lady Lever Art Gallery Port Sunlight



Sketch of the Birmingham painting left.
Birmingham Art Gallery

Main differences

- a. Conductor's hand in front of boy 21 in Port Sunlight canvass and over the head of boy 25 on the Birmingham painting.
- b. Mr Garland, bass lay clerk, 10 in Port Sunlight is replced by an unkown boy in Birmingham.

MAY MORNING ON MAGDALEN TOWER
by William Holman Hunt

Key to portraits

1. Sir Walter Parratt, *an Hon. Fellow of Magdalen, and organist from 1872 to 1882 - before moving to Windsor.*
2. Mr. Cama, *an Indian parsee added for symbolic effect - not actually present.*
3. Sir Thomas Herbert Warren 1853 - 1930 *President of Magdalen*
4. Dr. John Rouse Bloxham DD *Vicar of Upper Beeding 1807 - 1891 (Formerly Chaplain and Librarian of Magdalen - historian of the college) a nephew of Sir Thomas Lawrence, he was responsible for the revival of the ancient custom.*
5. Canon Henry Ramsden Bramley 1833 - 1917 *born June 4, 1833, at Addingham (near Otley), Yorkshire, England. He studied at Oriel College, Oxford, 1852; was a Scholar of University College, 1853; and Fellow of Magdalen, 1857 (BA 1856, MA 1859). He was ordained deacon in 1856, and priest in 1858. He served as Vicar of Horspath, Oxon (1861-1889) and Canon and Precentor of Lincoln Cathedral (1895-1905). He collaborated with Stainer on "Christmas Carols Old and New"*
6. Sir John Stainer, *Fellow of Magdalen and Organist of St Paul's*
7. Dr. John Scott Burden-Sanderson (later Sir John) *Professor of Medicine 1828 - 1905*
8. Hilary Lushington [Holman Hunt] *younger son of the artist.*
9. Henry Bernard Parsons *Magdalen chorister - joined choir same day as Ferguson - 21 - and helped with identifications in 1951.*
10. Mr. Garland, *bass lay clerk, appears in the Port Sunlight painting but not the earlier Birmingham study where the position was occupied by an unknown boy.*
11. William Edgar Stainer, *a son of Sir John, was at school in Oxford but not a chorister.*
12. Harold Alexander, *Magdalen chorister believed to be the nephew of General Gordon.*
13. Raymond Etherington Smith. *However in 1931 a Mr and Mrs Lawman of Vinolia (a luxury bath soap used on the Titanic) identified him as David Steele, a friend in whose company they viewed the painting.*
14. T S B Williams, *reidentified in 1944 as Mr Richard De La Mare of Faber and Faber, when a boy, though Williams is still preferred.*
15. Philip Wiggins, *Magdalen chorister . Parsons (9) says it is he, and that Phil was chosen for his large head and later teased about it.*
16. Claude Napier *non-chorister grandson of Lord Napier and Ettrick. Killed 1914-18.*
17. ?
18. Robert Collier, *Magdalen chorister.*
19. ?
20. Paul Haas, *non chorister who eventually was on the staff of University College, London Died 1914-18*
21. William Harold Ferguson, *Magdalen chorister - joined choir same day as Parsons - 9. Holy orders and headships - Precentor of Salisbury - died 1950*
22. Dr Sherwood, *pupil, master then Headmaster, 1888, at Magdalen School.*
23. Dr Varley Roberts, *choir master, appointed 1882 - in Birmingham his hand seems to be about to smack the head of James Rye whereas in Port Sunlight it is about to be eaten by William Ferguson.*
24. Basil Napier, *non-chorister grandson of Lord Napier and Ettrick.*
25. James Rye, *non chorister who became a barrister.*
26. F Barton, *Magdalen senior chorister who served in both World Wars and died in 1950*
27. ?

Sundry

Morn of the year, of day and May the prime!
How fitly do we scale the deep dark stair!
Into the brightness of the morning air,
To praise with chanted hymn and echoing chime
Dear Lord of Light, The lowlihood sublime
That stoop'd erstwhile our life's frail weed to wear!
Sun, cloud and hill, all things thou frimest fair,
With us are glad and gay, greeting the time.

The college of the lily leaves her sleep,
The grey tower rocks and trembles into sound -
Dawn-smitten Memnon of a happier hour -
Through faint-hued fields the silver waters creep,
Day grows, birds pipe and robed anew and crown'd
Green spring sets forth to set the world aflower.

Herbert Warren (number 3 in the painting)

College motto - Sicut Lilium

Money for the "festal entertainment" is supposed to be furnished from the produce of two separate acres of land, one in the parish of Slymbridge, in Gloucestershire and the other in the parish of Fyndon in Sussex. Henry VII presented to the college the edvowsons of both parishes in 1501, and it is probable that the custom, at any rate in its present form, originated as the singing of a Latin hymn to the Trinity by way of a requiem to his memory.

Flowers - at one time only fritillaries from certain meadows were used, flowers said to have been brought to Oxford by the crusaders - are strewn on the roof and some are in a William and Mary silver rose bowl owned by the college.

Paintings: Birmingham study (15¼" x 19¾") was begun first 1888 (completed 1891) on the tower at the ceremony but was completed after the Port Sunlight version of 1890 (60¼ x 78¾). Both paintings are studio compositions based on many sketches made on Magdalen tower on the day of and in the weeks after the 1888 ceremony

Hymnus Eucharisticus

Melody by Dr Benjamin Rogers organist 1664 - 1685 dismissed for, among other things, making a "scandalous noise" in the organ loft. It seems he talked too much.

Words by Dr Thomas, Fellow 1665 - 92.

The choir takes its pitch from the bell (E) and the key-note of the music is A.

May Morning on Magdalen Tower

a poem by

The Very Revd. John W. Burgan BD Late Dean of Chichester (formerly Fellow of Oriel and Vicar of St Mary the Virgin)

WHAT do we up so early this May morn?
Hath Health the huntress from some neighbouring hill
Blown such a blast of her enchanted horn,
That Youth forgets his slumber? . . . Gathering still,
Quick eager forms the solemn pathway fill:
Pass Magdalen's portal, scale her endless stair,
Still spiring upward, like the lark, until
Bursts on the sense the fresh cool matin air,
And cheerful speech of friends already gathering there.

And O! the rapturous beauty of the scene!
Silent and calm as some far fabulous shore
Where never barque of mariner hath been!
Yet full of ancient life, and mapped all o'er
With holy memories of the days of yore.
Dear home of towers, and spires, and musical chimes,
And groves, and gardens!—lovely evermore,
Yet far, far lovelier than at other times,
When first the bright-eyed Sun his orient pathway climbs.

But turn!—while we are dreaming there hath grown
A crowd about us. Lo, a tuneful choir,
White-robed, bare-headed, all eyes one way thrown:
As erst men waited till the eastern fire
Kindled the tremulous chords of Memnon's lyre.
And hark! that well-known plaintive prelude o'er—
Five pulses of the clock!—which scarce expire
Ere soft as dew amid the silence soar
Seraphic sounds aloft, and this the strain they pour:—

O Thee, O GOD the FATHER—Thee,
All worship, praise, and glory be!
Thy hand bestows our daily bread,
And that wherewith our souls are fed.

To Thee, O JESU—Thee, the SON—
To Thee, alone-begotten One,
Who for our sakes didst not abhor
The Virgin's womb—our hearts we pour.

When Thou upon Thy Cross wast laid,
To GOD a willing offering made,
The hope of life first dawned below—
Our joy, our only Saviour, Thou!

To Thee, O HOLY GHOST—by whom
The Babe was born of Mary's womb,
Both GOD and Man—to Thee we raise
The hymn of everlasting praise.

O THREE IN ONE, Who didst devise
Such pathway back to Paradise;
This mystery of Love be sung
In every age by every tongue!

Ah, you should hear it chanted!—for the strain
Grows weak and powerless fettered down to song—
Like a swift eagle prisoned with a chain,
Which else had soared the rolling clouds among.
Trust me, once heard, 'twould haunt thy memory long,
That calm sweet strain! And oft, when sundered far,
Brought low by sorrow, or oppressed by wrong,
'Twould soothe thy spirit—like the evening-star—
Foretaste of what sweet things the songs of Angels are.

Now ring out all the bells a merry chime;
While the hoarse horn croaks forth, a league below,
The note which doubtless seems the true sublime
To urchins straining might and main to blow.
Ring out, glad bells! and let the sleepers know
That, while they slept, we watched the month of May
Twine the first garland for her virgin brow.
Then bid them rise, for 'tis the prime of day:
And lo, the young Month comes, all smiling, up this way!

John Burgan

Hymnus Eucharisticus

TE DEUM PATREM colimus,
Te laudibus prosequimur,
Qui corpus cibo reficis,
Coelesti mentem gratia.

Te adoramus, O JESU!
Te, FILI Unigenite,
Te, Qui non dedignatus es
Subire claustra Virginis.

Actus in Crucem, factus es
Irato DEO Victima:
Per Te, Salvator unice,
Vitae spes nobis rediit.

Tibi, AETERNE SPIRITUS,
Cujus afflatu peperit
Infantem DEUM Maria,
AETernum benedicimus.

TRIUNE DELIS, hominum.
Salutis Auctor optime:
Immensum hoc mysterium
Ovante lingua canimus.

A translation is in the poem above

The musical score is presented in four systems, each consisting of a treble and bass staff. The music is written in a 3/2 time signature with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notation is primarily homophonic, using chords and simple melodic lines. The first system corresponds to the first stanza of text, the second to the second, the third to the third, and the fourth to the fourth. Each system concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.