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The Sixteenth Century

Edited by Roger Bray

Music in Britain

THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

edited by
ROGER BRAY

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THE BLACKWELL HISTORY OF
MUSIC IN BRITAIN

General Editor Ian Spink

Volume 2

THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

The Blackwell History of Music in Britain

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ABBREVIATIONS

AECM	*An Anthology of English Church Music*, comp. David Wulstan (London, Chester, 1971)
AM	*Acta Musicologica* (1928–)
AMV	*Anthems for Men's Voices*, ed. Peter Le Huray *et al.*, 2 vols. (London, 1965)
BE	*The Byrd Edition* (1976–)
CKMB	Oliver Neighbour, *The Consort and Keyboard Music of William Byrd* (London, 1978)
CMM	*Corpus Mensurabilis Musicae* (1947–)
CMSR	Church Music Society Reprint Series (London/Oxford)
DLM	*The Collected Lute Music of John Dowland*, ed. Diana Poulton and Basil Lam (London, 1974)
DVM	*The Dublin Virginal Manuscript*, ed. John M. Ward (London, 1983)
EECM	*Early English Church Music* (1963–)
EL	*The English Lutesongs* (1968–71)
ELS1	*The English Lute Songs, 1st series* (1920–)
ELS2	*The English Lute Songs, 2nd series* (1925–)
EM	*Early Music* (1973–)
EMS	*The English Madrigal School* (1913–)
FTF	Peter Holman, *Four and Twenty Fiddlers: The Violin at the English Court 1540–1690* (Oxford, 1993)
FVB	*The Fitzwilliam Virginal Book*, ed. J. A. Fuller Maitland and W. Barclay Squire (Leipzig, 1899, R/New York, 1963)
Grove6	*The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie, 20 vols. (London, 1980)
H&C	Raymond Russell, *The Harpsichord and Clavichord* (London, 1959, 2/1979)
JAMS	*Journal of the American Musicological Society* (1948–)
JLSA	*Journal of the Lute Society of America* (1968–)
JRMA	*Journal of the Royal Musical Association* (continuation of *PRMA* from vol. 112, 1987)
LSJ	*Lute Society Journal* (1959–)
M&P	John Stevens, *Music and Poetry in the Early Tudor Court* (London, 1961, R/Cambridge, 1979)
MB	*Musica Britannica* (1951–)
MD	*Musica Disciplina* (1948–)
MEL	John M. Ward, *Music for Elizabethan Lutes*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1992)

MES	Walter L. Woodfill, *Musicians in English Society from Elizabeth to Charles I* (Princeton, N.J., 1953, R/1969)
ML	*Music and Letters* (1920–)
MMB	Frank Ll. Harrison, *Music in Medieval Britain* (London, 1958)
MQ	*The Musical Quarterly* (1915–)
MRE	Peter Le Huray, *Music and the Reformation in England, 1549–1660* (London, 1967, R/1978, 2/1982)
MT	*The Musical Times* (1844–)
OBTA	*The Oxford Book of Tudor Anthems*, comp. Christopher Morris (London, 1978)
OCS	Oxford Church Services Series (London/Oxford)
P&M	David C. Price, *Patrons and Musicians of the English Renaissance* (Cambridge, 1981)
P[R]MA	*Proceedings of the [Royal] Musical Association*, 111 vols. (1874–1985; see also *JRMA*)
RISM	*Répertoire International des Sources Musicales* [International Inventory of Musical Sources]
RMARC	*Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle* (1961–)
S&BCS	Church Services Series (London)
TCM	*Tudor Church Music*, 10 vols. (London, 1922–9)
TCMoc	Tudor Church Music octavo series (London/Oxford)
TECM	*The Treasury of English Church Music* (London, 1965, 2/Cambridge, 1982), i, 1300–1545; ii, 1545–1650
TEM	Joseph Kerman, *The Elizabethan Madrigal* (New York, 1962)

EDITOR'S NOTE

References to printed editions of music for which the reference identifies the work (such as a particular 'In nomine') are given with a colon and denote the order of the printed collection (thus: *MB* 44:22 refers to the 22nd work in *Musica Britannica*, vol. 44). References in which the volume number is followed by a comma denote the page number (thus: *MB* 15, 106 refers to page 106 of *Musica Britannica*, vol. 15).

Titles and texts of English songs, madrigals, etc., are for the most part given in modern styling to facilitate cross-reference to the relevant editions. Titles of English music prints are styled following Robert Steele, *The Earliest English Music Printing: A Description and Bibliography of English Printed Music to the Close of the Sixteenth Century*, 'Illustrated Monographs', 11 (London, 1903, R/Meisenheim, 1965); those of Continental prints as in the listings in the various series issued under the auspices of RISM (Répertoire International des Sources Musicales). Other titles follow the stylings normally adopted in the secondary literature. All primary sources are published in London unless otherwise stated.

Music examples are given in original note-values except where their layout in short score necessitates the presence of tails to show part-writing clearly, in which case the reduction is indicated.

PREFACE

The sixteenth is, for musical purposes, one of the longer centuries. Just as Volume 3 of this series went back to the Reformation in order to place in context the church music that needed discussion, so we have had to go back to *c.*1450 to set the context for our church music, and we have defined the end of our period equally flexibly, with the deaths of Byrd (1623), Gibbons (1625), Dowland (1626), Bull (1628) and Philips (1628) more or less providing our end, though the conservative Tomkins (d.1656), whose music was published in 1668, provides our final finishing-line. The sixteenth century is thus defined as *c.*1450–1668, but we have trespassed upon our neighbours only where necessary to establish or maintain the context of the sixteenth-century musicians.

Not only have we strayed beyond our century, but we have also found it impossible to remain within our genres, even the broad genres of our plan, because sixteenth-century musicians and music-lovers took their repertory from a variety of genres and adapted it in a variety of ways. So we have had to be flexible so as to cover a piece of music that might have started life as a work for instrumental ensemble, then had a Latin text added, then an English text substituted, then become the basis for a recomposition, to end up arranged for keyboard or lute. Demand for such flexible music is made clear by the homeliness of the sources, which cheerfully mix arrangements with extracts, church music with secular music (and recipes and medicines for good measure) in a personal selection that says more about the taste of the period than any printed collection and provides a telling picture of the informal atmosphere in which even the grandest of pieces were sometimes performed. We can be sure that these manuscripts, containing as they did a personally-selected repertory, were fully used. With a printed collection, the reason for publication was different – often self-gratification by patron or composer – and we cannot be so sure that the purchaser found the entire contents equally worthy of performance.

The Englishness that had been noted abroad in the early years of the fifteenth century was reclaimed by the Tudors and Jacobeans. The fuller texture and fuller-sounding chords, with their sixths and thirds,

are amply demonstrated in music ranging from the Eton Choirbook to Byrd's Great Service, but the Tudors added two important qualities: the music was now leisurely and massive. These qualities also stem from Dunstable, who is fond of holding a chord and repeating a pattern (as in his four-part *Veni Sancte Spiritus/Veni Creator* immediately after the first entry of the cantus firmus), and they become important features of the sixteenth century. The music can be leisurely even when ornate, as in the solo passages from the Eton Choirbook and Fayrfax's masses, when the arrival at the final syllable of a melisma (and therefore often the cadence) seems to be put off over and over again; or when a lengthy point of imitation gradually unfolds, as in works such as the Benedictus of Tye's Mass *Euge bone* or one of Byrd's great penitential motets such as *Infelix ego* or *Ad Dominum cum tribularer* (indeed it is sometimes the number of parts that have to have the point that causes this, as in Tallis's *Spem in alium*); or in the slow passages from the madrigals of Weelkes ('O care thou wilt despatch me'), Wilbye ('Draw on, sweet night') or Tomkins ('Too much I once lamented') and the lute songs of Dowland ('In darkness let me dwell'); or in the works based on a lengthy cantus firmus, especially the In nomine (the cantus firmus of which is always going to pursue its unhurried course, come what may). The massive quality arises partly from this leisureliness, partly from the anxiety of composers such as Sheppard to get his voices in as quickly as possible (thus maintaining the fullest possible sound), partly from the closeness of harmony possible in instrumental groups of five or six closely interwoven instruments or choirs of five equal voices (as in Byrd's *Defecit in dolore*), and partly from the sheer size of the choirs being deployed (six or seven parts used as a standard, rising to nine, thirteen or forty parts on occasion and permitting striking antiphonal effects between the sub-groups of the choir or instrumental ensemble).

Even in the sixteenth century, therefore, the English liked the noise that music made; nor (*pace* Beecham) need we accuse them of not understanding it, for our composers can be seen applying their intellect and musicianship to a variety of problems including the philosophical basis of *musica speculativa* in Chapters 1 and 2, the effects of the Reformation in Chapter 3, Continental developments in Chapter 4, and changing requirements from cantus-firmus-based music to dance- or variation-based music (together with changing instruments) in Chapters 5 and 6.

The music of the century has been rediscovered regularly since its composition; indeed, the features which musicians have found in

it to suit their own purposes deserve a study of their own. Aldrich in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century used the church music as the basis of adaptations and translations (and preserved many important manuscripts). Burney and Hawkins in the late eighteenth century applied to it the precepts of their period and gave it a remarkably clean bill of health. Ouseley published Gibbons's anthems (and preserved a substantial number of manuscripts), and towards the end of the nineteenth century what is still the only complete edition of the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book was published. In the early years of this century, partly as a result of the realization that many of the pieces in Fitzwilliam could be classed as folk tunes, the music of this period was instrumental in England's discovering it had a folk music after all, thus spurring Cecil Sharp and Vaughan Williams to seek more, and encouraging composers to use some of its idioms (and spawning the Phantasy Quartet genre for the Cobbett Composition Prize). Also in the first half of this century professionals and amateurs alike, ranging from R. R. Terry at Westminster Cathedral, H. B. Collins at Birmingham Oratory and of course E. H. Fellowes, to enthusiastic recorder players and madrigal choirs, rediscovered it again, and it has continued to exert a strong influence on British twentieth-century composers, some of whom acknowledge their debt to (especially) Dowland, others of whom, for example, deconstruct (decompose?) Taverner and put him back together again. Yet certain parts of the repertory (particularly the church music and favourite madrigals) had always been performed, and so the main reason for its frequent rediscovery is that it had never gone away.

Some of the century's English composers are rightly acknowledged as major contributors to our intellectual and aural pleasure: Fayrfax (though his work deserves much more performance), Taverner, Sheppard (recently given proper recognition), Tallis, Byrd, Gibbons, Bull, Morley and Tomkins. In this book we attempt to direct attention to some of those who deserve greater recognition: Ashwell, van Wilder, Whythorne, Parsons and White, to name but a few.

In this book there is a constant risk of overlapping and duplication between chapters, caused by the adaptable nature of the music and of the manuscripts in which it appears. I am grateful to my fellow-contributors for (amongst many other things) their understanding when I have interfered with their text, though I have done so only to a limited extent, with the result that several manuscripts and works are discussed more than once and in more than one context.

All the music examples have been newly conferred with the original sources; in some cases these new editions are barred in a different manner from modern editions, but references are given to the modern bar-numbers for the convenience of those who wish to examine the rest of the work. Because in several cases these new editions are from multiple manuscript sources, the list of libraries whose manuscripts have been used would be very long; they are identified in notes, etc., and I record here my own and my colleagues' gratitude to the librarians we have visited.

ROGER BRAY
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February 1994

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Chapter 1

MUSIC AND MUSICIANS IN TUDOR ENGLAND: SOURCES, COMPOSITION THEORY AND PERFORMANCE

ROGER BRAY

Introduction

Although there is plenty of evidence of flourishing musical activity in England during the sixteenth century, it is incomplete and random and requires careful consideration before it can be used as the basis of our judgements. Indeed, of all periods of English musical history, the sixteenth is the century whose records are proportionately the least complete; earlier centuries may offer us fewer sources, but activity was on a smaller scale, while later centuries offer a wealth of information of all kinds, descriptive and critical as well as musical. In the sixteenth century, however, we know that in sacred music the increase in activity which had begun towards the end of the fifteenth century was continuing apace, and yet we have very few music sources and we lack descriptions of the circumstances in which music was performed, the standard of performance and the life and lifestyle of musicians. In secular music the increase in activity is especially noticeable from the middle of the century and more sources survive, though there are still gaps in our knowledge. Therefore, if we are to connect the scraps of information, archival, literary and musical, to form a picture of the music of the period, we have to rely on musicological scholarship and imagination as well as straightforward observation of surviving material.

So, for example, we know something of the choir of Eton College Chapel as they settled down to sing in their magnificent new chapel in the 1490s; we know how many they were (or at least were supposed to be), we know in what circumstances some of their repertoire was