

A
Cavalier
Christmas

The Ebor Singers
Chelys Consort of Viols
Paul Gameson conductor

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About The Ebor Singers:

'They are a perfectly balanced group [...] A beautiful disc in fine sound'
The Yorkshire Post

'The choir sing with unanimity and a good blend'
Early Music Review

Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625)
1. **See, see the Word is incarnate** [7:22]

William Byrd (c. 1539/40-1623)
2. **Behold I bring you glad tidings** [6:02]

Richard Dering (c. 1580-1630)
3. **Laetamini cum Maria** [2:44]
4. **Quem vidistis, pastores** [2:38]

Alessandro Grandi (1586-1630)
5. **O quam tu pulchra es** [3:26]

Martin Peerson (c. 1572-1651)
6. **Upon my lap my sovereign sits** [9:58]

William Lawes (1595-1662)
7. **Aire** [3:22]

Henry Lawes (1595-1662)
8. **Hark, shepherd swains** [3:48]

George Jeffreys (c. 1610-85)
9. **Hark, shepherd swains** [5:08]
for the Nativity of our most blessed Saviour
10. **Busy time this day** [3:59]
for the Blessed Innocents Day

11. **Brightest of days** [3:54]
for Epiphany

John Jenkins (1592-1678)
Newark Siege
12. Pavan [6:51]
13. Galliard [2:56]

William Byrd
14. **O God that guides the
cheerful sun** [4:13]

A Carol for New-year's Day

Total playing time [66:28]



A Cavalier Christmas

The English Civil War was one of the most turbulent periods of English history, as king and parliament wrestled for influence over the other: the consequences destabilised and eventually redefined the country's political, social and religious landscape. During the early days of the Civil War, the Puritan-influenced parliament sought to abolish holy days, and in particular Christmas Day, 'the Old heathen's Feasting Day in honour of Saturn their Idol-God, the Papist's Massing Day, the True Christian Man's Fasting Day'. By contrast, first in London and then at his war-torn court in Oxford, Charles I continued to celebrate Christmas in style, assembling the best musicians and poets to provide entertainment alongside other festivities. Royalist poets, including Richard Herrick, wrote Christmas odes that were performed before the King at Oxford.

We begin our own celebration looking back to music from the early part of Charles I's reign. Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625) was a musician in the Chapel Royal but died when the Chapel accompanied Charles to Canterbury to meet his queen, Henrietta-Maria, for the first time. Gibbons's verse anthem **See, see the Word is incarnate** explores a wide range of themes from

Jesus's life, setting an original text by Godfrey Goodman, a Catholic-leaning chaplain to James I and his queen. Gibbons's music was copied and published throughout the mid-seventeenth century, but was eclipsed in this regard by William Byrd (c. 1539/40-1623) – a Catholic who nevertheless worked at the Chapel Royal under Protestant monarchs Elizabeth I and James I. **Behold, I bring you glad tidings** is a contrafactum of the Latin motet *Ne irascaris*, which was widely disseminated throughout the century in Latin and English; while most English versions retained the penitential theme but failed to capture the inflexion of the original Latin in the music, the text of this setting matches the Latin underlay perfectly. However, the Christmas message could not be further removed from the original's sentiment of a Catholic recusant, and one is left unsure whether any thought went into this pairing of text and music, or if it were an intentional subversive re-working of the original. Either way, however, it was the performance of such anthems/motets that maintained the impression that Charles I had High Church or worse, Catholic sympathies. This version appears in the 'Caroline' part books from Peterhouse College, Cambridge, which reflects the elaborate style of worship there under the mastership of John Cosin (1594-1672), who was closely associated with Charles I and his queen Henrietta-Maria.

Charles had inherited Gibbons from the musical establishment of his father, but he was keen to encourage composers of his own generation – Richard Dering (c. 1580-1630), William (1602-1645) and Henry Lawes (1595-1662), and George Jeffreys (c. 1610-85). The works of Dering and Alessandro Grandi (1586-1630) reflect music at Henrietta-Maria's private chapel, at Somerset House while the court was still in London, and then at Merton College once the court had moved to Oxford. The Catholic liturgy which was displayed bare-faced confirmed for some that the Queen was intent on converting the King to Rome (indeed, French agents close to the Queen hoped she would). Dering had converted to Catholicism while travelling in Europe in the 1610s, and following an appointment in Brussels, he returned to England in 1625 as organist to Henrietta-Maria. It is likely that Dering's small scale motets such as **Laetamini cum Maria** were written for the Queen's chapel, and they show the influence of Italian composers such as Grandi and Antonio Cifra (1584-1629). Dering's small scale motets remained popular after his death – indeed, Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658) was quite taken by them – but were not published until after the Restoration. **Quem vidistis, pastores** was published in Antwerp in his *Cantica Sacra* of 1618 and demonstrates the Continental

homophonic motet style of Peter Philips (1560-1628, another English émigré in Brussels) and Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672) rather than the polyphonic Latin works of Byrd that Dering would have known when he left England. Publications of Italian small-scale *concertato* motets were available from London booksellers; for instance, Jeffreys purchased many such books for his employer Sir Christopher Hatton III (1605-1670) of Kirby Hall in Northamptonshire. Hatton joined Charles I's court at Oxford in 1643 when, according to Anthony Wood, Jeffreys became organist for the king. It is likely that his own *concertato* motets, alongside those of Dering and Italians such as Grandi – all copied by Jeffreys while in Oxford – enhanced the liturgy of Henrietta-Maria's Catholic chapel.

Martin Peerson (1571-1650) was Master of the Choristers of St Paul's Cathedral during the reign of Charles I and, more fortunate than some of his contemporaries, received a stipend once services were discontinued under the Protectorate. **Upon my lap my sovereign sits**, from *Private Musicke for Voyces and Viols* (1620) is a simple syllabic air, a lullaby sung by the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The anonymous text **Hark, shepherd swains** was set by Henry Lawes and George Jeffreys. Lawes, like Jeffreys, was closely associated

with Charles I's court, both in London and Oxford. Sources of cycles of texts for Christmas by 'Cavalier' poets such as William Cartwright (1611-1643), Robert Herrick (1591-1674) and Richard Crashaw (c. 1613-1649) written for Charles during this period survive, but the music does not. It is tempting to consider Lawes' piece and Jeffreys' Christmas sequence as part of this tradition, using the musical form of the verse anthem but more like odes, intended for the King's Chamber rather than his Chapel. The three Christmas feasts selected by Jeffreys – Nativity, Holy Innocents, Epiphany – were popular during Elizabeth's reign and are represented in the texts for Charles's Christmas odes. The works by Lawes and Jeffreys are scored for chamber ensemble, well suited to Charles's limited resources in Oxford, but equally to clandestine services both composers were writing for during the Commonwealth. Jeffreys, particularly, shows a familiarity with the Italian style demonstrated by abrupt harmonic shifts and expressive melodic writing.

Viol player and composer John Jenkins had been active at court before the English Civil War, but when hostilities broke out he, like many others, migrated to the rural countryside. He was close to musicians at the Oxford court, including the Lawes brothers and Anthony Wood. **Newark Siege** is an extraordinary

work that depicts the battle, mourning the dead and celebrating victory. There were several sieges of Newark, but it is possibly the second (February-March 1644, relieved by Prince Rupert before he marched north) or third (November 1645-May 1646, which only ended following the King's own surrender to Parliament) that Jenkins is responding to.

Described as 'A Carol for New-year's Day', William Byrd's six-part **O God that guides the cheerful sun** effectively combines the genres of solo song and consort anthem, with two separate verses given by a soprano solo and five viols, followed by a six-voice chorus. This structure of few voices for the verse and tutti for the chorus has been a consistent method adopted for arranging carols from medieval times, and it can also be seen in Lawes' and Jeffreys' pieces. *O God that guides* appears in Byrd's final published collection of music, *Psalmses, Songs, and Sonnets* of 1611.

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Texts & translations

Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625)

1. See, see the Word is incarnate

See, see the Word is incarnate;
God is made man in the womb of a Virgin.
Shepherds rejoice, wise men adore
and angels sing
'Glory be to God on high:
peace on earth, good will towards men.'

The law is cancelled, Jews and Gentiles
converted by the preaching of glad tidings
of salvation.

The blind have sight and cripples have their
motion; diseases cured, the dead are raised,
and miracles are wrought.

Let us welcome such a guest with Hosanna.

The Paschal Lamb is offered,
Christ Jesus made a sacrifice for sin.
The earth quakes, the sun is darkened,
the powers of hell are shaken;
and lo, he is risen up in victory.
Sing Alleluia.

See, O see the fresh wounds,
the gored blood, the prick of thorns,
the print of nails. And in the sight of
multitudes a glorious ascension.

When now he sits on God's right hand where
all the choir of heaven all jointly sing:
Glory be to the Lamb that sitteth on the throne.
Let us continue our wonted note with Hosanna:
Blessed be He that cometh in the Name of the

Lord; with Alleluia, we triumph in victory,
the serpent's head is bruised,
Christ's kingdom exalted,
and heaven laid open to sinners.
Amen.

Bishop Godfrey Goodman (1583-1656)

William Byrd (c. 1539/40-1623)

2. Behold I bring you glad tidings

Behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy,
which shall be to all people.
For unto you is born this day a saviour,
which is Christ the Lord. And there was
with the angels an host of heavenly soldiers,
praising God and saying:
Glory be to God on high,
and peace on earth, goodwill towards men.

Luke 2, vv. 10-11, 13-14 (King James Version)

Richard Dering (c. 1539/40-1623)

3. Laetamini cum Maria

Laetamini cum Maria, omnes qui diligitis eam,
quoniam in prole mater, in partu virgo.
Gaude et laetare, virgo mater Domini. Alleluia.

*Rejoice and be glad with Mary, all ye that love her.
Who, in offspring a mother, in birthgiving a virgin,
rejoice and be glad, virgin mother of the Lord. Alleluia.*

Antiphon, Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary

4. **Quem vidistis, pastores**

Quem vidistis, pastores?
Dicite, annuntiate nobis,
in terris quis apparuit.
Natum vidimus et choros angelorum
collaudantes Dominum, Alleluia.

*Whom did you see, shepherds?
Speak and tell us:
who has appeared on earth?
We saw the new-born and choirs of
angels praising the Lord. Alleluia.*

Responsory, Matins, Christmas Day

Alessandro Grandi (1586-1630)

5. **O quam tu pulchra es**

O quam tu pulchra es, amica mea,
columba mea, speciosa mea.
Favus distillans labia tua, sponsa,
mel et lac sub lingua tua,
et odor vestimentorum tuorum
sicut odor thyrus.
Vulnerasti cor meum, soror mea,
in uno osculorum tuorum,
et in uno crine colli tui.
Surge propera, amica mea, columba mea,
formosa mea, immaculata mea.

*How fair you are, my love,
my dove, my fair one.
Honeycomb drips from your lip, my bride,
honey and milk are under your tongue,
and the scent of your garments is like
the scent of incense.*

*You have ravished my heart with
one glance of your eyes,
and with one hair of your neck.
Arise, make haste my love, my dove,
my fair one, my immaculate one.*

Song of Songs 4, vv. 9 & 11

Martin Peerson (c. 1572-1651)

6. **Upon my lap my sovereign sits**

Upon my lap my sovereign sits
And sucks upon my breast;
Meantime his love maintains my life
And gives my sense her rest.
Sing lullaby, my little boy,
Sing lullaby, mine only joy!

When thou hast taken thy repast,
Repose, my babe, on me;
So may thy mother and thy nurse
Thy cradle also be.
Sing lullaby, my little boy,
Sing lullaby, mine only joy!

Richard Rowlands (1565-1630)

Henry Lawes (1595-1662)

8. **Hark, shepherd swains** &

George Jeffreys (c. 1610-85)

9. **Hark, shepherd swains**
for the Nativity of our most blessed Saviour

Hark, shepherd swains; awake, give ear and
banish fear. Behold, good news I bring to you,
which shall accrue great joy of heart to all that
dwell in Israel. To you in Bethlehem there is
born today a saviour Christ, the Lord, whom
heavens obey. To try the truth, haste on and
ye the babe shall see. Sweet babe, fair spark
of heavenly light, so poorly dight in clothing
mean, most like a wretch lodged in a catch.
But now in honour of this mean born king,
hark how my fellow soldiers sweetly sing:
All glory be to God above, whose gracious
love this Prince of Peace has sent, whose
birth rings peace on earth, in whom by faith
may all mankind God's favour find. Now then
both heaven and earth keep holy day,
and jointly sing we all, Alleluia.

Anonymous

George Jeffreys

10. **Busy time this day**

for the Blessed Innocents Day

Busy time this day, Thou may'st go sleep or
play, the groans of infants slain do count thy
moments for thee, and their pain procures thy
ease and gain. But blessed babes, all your
laments and woes Are but like cyph'ring O's.
Herod did miss the figure, and til he comes

to groan too you cannot signify; when his
precious death shall abide fixed by your side,
ye then shall sum into eternity.

Anonymous

11. **Brightest of days**

for Epiphany

Brightest of days, blessed with two lights more,
A sun and star, than any day before;
Show us this glorious babe for which the sky,
Besides its thousand old, gets a new eye.
The patriarch's hope is full, thus Abram's seed
Exceeds the stars, and makes the stars exceed.
Study the heavens all, and learn to know
The star above, the Jacob's staff below.
His glorious attendants move on high,
Although by ox and ass himself doth lie.
So Lord, thou drawers to thee souls of each size,
By the ass the simple, by the star the wise.

Anonymous

William Byrd

14. **O God that guides the cheerful sun**

A Carol for New-year's Day

O God that guides the cheerful Sun,
By motions strange the year to frame,
Which now returned whence it begun,
From heaven extols thy glorious name.
This new-year's season sanctify,
With double blessings of thy store,
That graces new may multiply,
And former follies reign no more.

Th'old year by course is past and gone,
Old Adam Lord from us expel:
New creatures make us every one,
New life becomes the New-year well.
As newborn babes from malice keep,
New wedding garments O Christ we crave:
That we thy face in heaven may see
With Angels bright our souls to save.

So shall our hearts with heaven agree,
And both give laud and praise to thee.

Amen.

Anonymous

Performing editions by Paul Gameson

With grateful thanks to Dr Jonathan Wainwright

Paul Gameson



The Ebor Singers

Acclaimed for performances and recordings that sparkle with fresh insight and vibrant musicality, The Ebor Singers has earned a reputation as one of the most exciting vocal ensembles in the north of England. The choir draws its members from professional and professionally-trained amateur singers in the region. The choir was founded in 1995 by their director, Dr Paul Gameson, as part of his ongoing research into French and English vocal music of the seventeenth century, and this repertoire remains a focus of the group. The choir is also committed to the promotion of new music, encouraging young composers to write for voices – notably through the NCEM Young Composers Award and their own St Cecilia Commissions – and maintaining strong links with composers, including Kerry Andrew, Philip Moore and Ambrose Field.

As well as their concert series held in York Minster, the choir has performed in festivals in the UK and abroad, and leads education and composition workshops, including the NCEM Young Composers Award. They are also an Associate choir at York Minster, and regularly sing services there. This is the group's second disc for Resonus Classics; the first, *Music for Troubled Times* (RES10194), explores music from another

period in the English Civil War, the Siege of York.

www.eborsingers.org

Chelys Consort Of Viols

Chelys take their name from the ancient Greek word which referred to a bowed lyre, said to have been invented by the god Hermes. The word was borrowed by renowned English violist Christopher Simpson on the title page of his treatise 'The Division Viol' when he translated the work into Latin. It is perhaps particularly apt then that the group's debut album was the world premiere recording of Simpson's *Airs for two trebles and two basses*, a disc enthusiastically reviewed by early music publications and wider classical reviewers alike, including four stars in *The Guardian*.

The members of Chelys are leading exponents of the viol, particularly as a consort instrument, and their consort viols are strung entirely in gut (not strings overwound with metal) as would have been the case historically, which lends a particularly distinctive sound to the group. They frequently collaborate with other period instrumentalists and singers, and have also had music written for them by award winning composer Jill Jarman.

The members of Chelys are active in the wider early music world, playing with ensembles such as the Rose Consort of Viols, the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, and Fretwork. They are keen teachers and can be found on courses around the UK and abroad, including the Benslow Trust, NORVIS, Dartington, the Irish Recorder and Viol Summer School, the Easter Early Music Course, and coaching school, university and music college viol consorts.

www.chelysconsort.co.uk

Paul Gameson (conductor)

Dr Paul Gameson is an Associate Lecturer at the University of York, where he completed his PhD on sacred music in seventeenth-century France. His continuing research includes the dissemination of French music from this period in English manuscripts, and the social, political and musical influences on English sacred music during the English Civil War.

His editions have been published by York Early Music Press and have been used by groups including the Gabrieli Consort and Corona Coloniensis.

Paul founded The Ebor Singers initially to develop his own research into English and French seventeenth-century repertoire, but in more recent years he has enjoyed collaborative projects with composers such as Kerry Andrew and Ambrose Field.

As a choral director he has given choral workshops in the UK and abroad.

The Ebor Singers

Sopranos

Emma Delaney
Katherine Harper
Moira Johnston
Charlotte Livesley
Anna Snow
Clare Steele-King
Helen Webb Jones

Altos

Laura Baldwin
James Cave
Louisa Dobson
Charlotte Nettleship-Philips
Adam Piplica
Sammi Tooze

Tenors

Jason Darnell
Pierre Dechant
Paul Gameson
Jonathan Hanley
Christopher Hughes
James Gereats
Christopher O'Gorman

Basses

Timothy Ferguson
Sam Hucklebridge
Ben Philips
Paul Tyack
Robert Webb

Soloists

Emma Delaney Track 1
Moira Johnston Tracks 8-9
Anna Snow Tracks 3 & 8-11
Laura Baldwin Track 14
James Cave Track 6
Jason Darnell Tracks 3, 5, 6 & 10-11
Pierre Dechant Tracks 1 & 6
Paul Gameson Tracks 8-11
Jonathan Hanley Track 1
Christopher O'Gorman Tracks 5 & 8-11
Sam Hucklebridge Tracks 1, 3, 5, 6 & 8-11

Chelys Consort of Viols

Ibrahim Aziz
Jenny Bullock
Alison Kinder
Susanna Pell
Sam Stadlen

Organ: David Pipe
Directed by Paul Gameson





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The Arts Desk

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