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DAVID FRANCIS URROWS

THE CHORAL MUSIC OF CHRISTOPHER LE FLEMING

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THE CHORAL MUSIC OF CHRISTOPHER LE FLEMING

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Christopher le Fleming
1908–1985

Portrait by Rupert Shephard

> We are apt to look on art and on music especially as a commodity . . . but music is something more—it is a spiritual necessity. The art of music . . . is the expression of the soul of a nation, and by a nation I mean not necessarily aggregations of people, artificially divided from each other by political frontiers or economic barriers. What I mean is any community of people who are spiritually bound together by language, environment, history, and common ideals and, above all, a continuity with the past.[1]

Five years before Ralph Vaughan Williams penned this wonderfully unequivocable statement for the Mary Flexner Lectures on the Humanities given at Bryn Mawr College in the fall of 1932, a young English composer sought him out at Worcester, England, and asked him to sign a photograph. The friendship, thus begun and "kept in repair" for thirty years until Vaughan Williams's death, gave the young Christopher le Fleming a close connection, not only with the man, but with the fomenting sentiments that so charged his generation. Perhaps even more than some of the illustrious British composers of his years—Walton, Lambert, Rubbra, Britten, Tippett, and Berkeley—he, in the scope and direction of his work, and particularly in his choral music, kept those ideals of a healthy nationalism and maintained a continuity with the past. His achievement in this respect, which involved overcoming a not inconsiderable handicap and lack of fortuitous guidance in his youth, deserves attention and some critical appraisal as his career comes to a close.

Christopher (Kaye) le Fleming was born at Wimborne Minster, Dorset, on the 26th of February, 1908, or "towards the end of Edward VII's reign" as he puts it in the delightfully fluent narrative of his autobiography.[2] His father was a country doctor and his mother was a fair amateur pianist who had some Chopin, Schumann, Grieg, and the easier Beethoven and Schubert within her technique. But Sullivan was then considered a paradigm of "fine" music, and this is what the young le Fleming set out to master by ear on his parents' Broadwood grand. In a (then) largely pre-mechanized farming country he grew up amidst the sound of the anvil at the forge, horses, and the Minster chimes which at Wimborne date to at least the beginning of the thirteenth century. For le Fleming, the aural recollections took on a particular importance since he was born with defective eyesight which for many years precluded his receiving a fully professional musical education.

As a boy, he sang in the Minster choir, and was on hand when Canon Edmund Fellowes, in preparing his monumental edition of Tudor Church

[1]Vaughan Williams, R., *National Music* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 68.

[2]Le Fleming, C., *Journey into Music (By the Slow Train)* (Bristol: Redcliffe Press, 1982).

music, discovered missing parts to works of Byrd and other Renaissance masters in a chest in the Minster's Chained Library. Many years later it was le Fleming who was instrumental in having Fellowes elected, though belatedly and at the end of his life, to the Incorporated Society of Musicians.

He first studied violin and cello, but had to abandon these as he was unable to read music at a distance. Thus at school he turned to the piano, with a view to a concert career. He also studied at the Brighton School of Music (piano and organ), hoping later to enter the Royal College of Music. He was forbidden, however, to apply for admission by the eye specialist in whose care his parents had placed him. Having become friendly with Sir Dan Godfrey, he played the Schumann A-Minor Concerto under him with the Bournemouth Orchestra. He turned his energies shortly after this to writing songs, and in 1929 his first published work, *Cradle Song for Christmas,* was issued by Oxford University Press. He recalls: "I was offered either £ 5 [$25.00] or a 5% royalty on a copy costing about fourpence [or two-fifths of a cent per copy]. Perennially hard up, I chose the £ 5."[3]

Le Fleming had met Vaughan Williams two years earlier and had avidly attended the English choir festivals, then perhaps a little past their heyday. He studied with Vaughan Williams on an informal basis, introduced him to a remarkable Dorset folk singer, William Miles, from who were obtained some uncollected verses for "The Dark-eyed Sailor," among other folksongs; and when, in 1945, le Fleming became Assistant Director of the Rural Music Schools Association, he was the moving force in getting Vaughan Williams to write a work for string players of all abilities—the *Concerto Grosso.*

He studied at the Royal School of Church Music, under Sir Sydney Nicholson, in its first years of existence. He also studied piano with George Reeves and played recitals in London (Wigmore Hall) and Bournemouth. In 1932 he married and moved to Southbourne and afterwards to Fisherton de la Mere. In the winter of 1938–39 he went to Zürich to see Dr. Vogt, the renowned eye specialist who counted Eamon de Valera and Mussolini among his patients. Vogt was of little help, but in the mid-1940's another eye specialist, Anthony Palin, of Bristol, was able to effect some substantial and long-term improvements in le Fleming's eyesight. During the Second World War he served with the Observer Corps and was later drafted into the Royal Army Medical Corps. After some period in boot camp, he was discharged—after an eye examination! Soon afterwards, in 1943, he was appointed Director of St. Mary's School, Calne, and later, Director of the Wiltshire Rural Music School. In 1946, a year after becoming Assistant Director of the Rural Music Schools Association, he became editor of

[3]*Ibid.,* p. 42.

Making Music, a journal published by the Association, 1946–76. When the Carnegie Foundation grant that had supported the London offices of the Association ran out, he worked briefly for J. and W. Chesters Ltd., developing their interest in educational music. In 1955 he taught at Sutton Valence School, and later at various others schools in Kent. After the death of his first wife, he remarried and lived in a small village near Exeter, in Devon.

It should be clear from the foregoing biographical sketch that, although le Fleming had spent most of his professional life as an educator and administrator, he was hardly what could be termed in any sense an academic. Rather, he had dedicated himself to the propagation of music not only as an activity, but as a study and a "spiritual necessity" for all, but especially for young people—something that teaches what it is that binds "by language, environment, history, common ideals, and a continuity with the past." It is this transcendent concept of nationalism and not what he has called "sublimated Englishry" that I think is clearly reflected in the form and content of le Fleming's *oeuvre.*[4] He made a significant and original contribution to music for children's voices, as well as to works for smaller choral ensembles, with and without orchestra, including an elegantly crafted group of works for the church; and his concern with the mere practicality of music—a concern not always fashionable today—is particularly obvious in his choral writing. Generally, this body of works can be divided into two periods: an early group written between 1929 and 1939, and a second group written between 1961 and 1977. Some of the latter, however, were reworkings of earlier pieces, as noted below. Between 1939 and 1961 only one of his choral works (*Evening Service in D,* Op. 22) appeared in print. (Another, *The Progress of Love,* Op. 20a, was never published and was subsequently withdrawn by the composer.)

Le Fleming made his entrance into the world of choral composition with a work that in many ways can be seen as a prime expression of his interests and abilities. In 1933 he wrote *The Echoing Green,* Op. 5, which was quickly published by J. W. Chester.

> Olive Boult, sister of the eminent conductor . . . persuaded me to write a cantata for equal voices, suitable both for the young as well as for the many village choirs containing only women's voices. There was a dearth of suitable music of this calibre, particularly in the matter of presentable words.
>
> As a basis for this cantata I chose some of the *Songs of Innocence* by William Blake. To those I added some . . . unpublished poems . . . written by a friend from school days ["R.H.B."]. Interspersed between these are two

[4]*Ibid.,* p. 24.

settings of single poems by Thomas Hardy, Monk Gibbon [a friend of the composer] and others.[5]

The Echoing Green, "a children's cantata in two parts," is what might be termed a "modular" work. The seventeen individual movements are scored for a variety of vocal combinations with piano or strings *ad libitum,* and each half of the cantata may be performed separately or in an abridged version. In each half there are three movements for unison voices, four for young (children's) voices, four solo songs, and six two-part (SA) choruses. (Provision is even made for dance music for the *very* young.) Since the forces employed could only in a minimal sense be termed choral—a somewhat involved texture occurs only in the finale (No. 17: "Cradle Song," set for soprano solo, two-part chorus, and children's voices doubling the solo)—I will limit further comment to the observation that it contains much beautiful, sensitive, pastoral music, several fine solo songs—notably an exquisite setting of Hardy's "The Colour"—and is indeed, as the composer would have it described, a "forerunner" of contemporary music for the young.

In deference to Handel, British composers engendered over the course of the nineteenth century a rather vague entity—the dramatic (or choral) oratorio—which has come in for much "loose, critical scorn" in the past seventy-five years.[6] Part of the glory of English music is that the best of British composers have found ways to inject new life into the oratorio tradition at critical moments by borrowing from contemporary streams of thought. Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast* is, I think, more closely related to works on the order of *The Dream of Gerontius* and *Caractacus,*[7] for all its twentieth-century tendencies, that commentators would have liked to acknowledge. The idioms travel worlds apart, but the same shaping forces cast and broke the mold of musical thought. Into this repertoire le Fleming did not advance; but one work, *The Singing Friar* (Songs of the Greenwood), Op. 9 (1937), a cantata in five movements for tenor (or light baritone), SATB chorus, and small orchestra (oboe or solo violin, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, timpani, piano, and strings) comes close to being an extended narrative work, doubtless influenced by the "woodland" settings of Elgar and others. The text is drawn from Thomas Love Peacock's *Maid Marian*—or rather, is a setting of five poems from that novel, which appeared in 1822. Le Fleming wrote that he "selected five out of the many 'songs' which, in the narrative, arise out of various 'situations' in the

[5]*Ibid.,* p. 89.

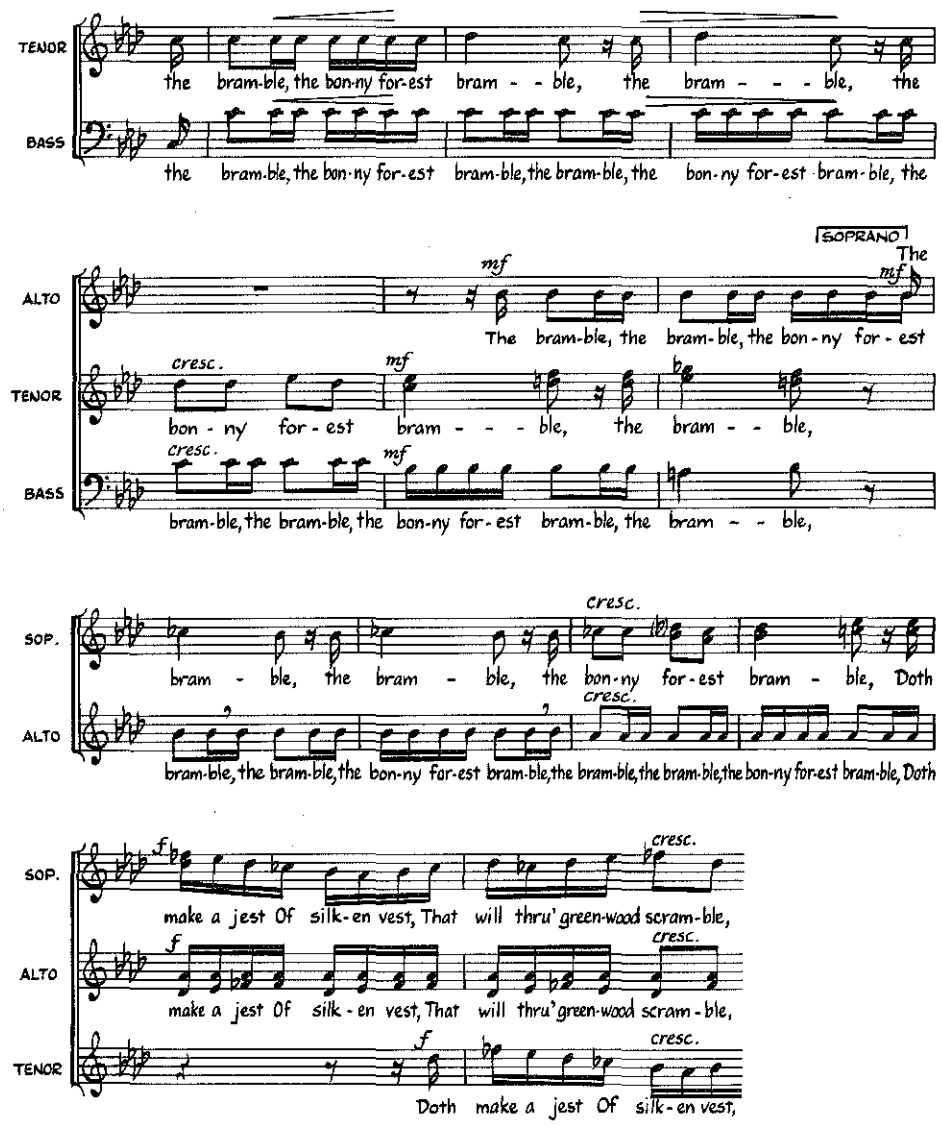
[6]This comment is borrowed from the late Sir Herbert Howells, who made it in referring to negative comments about Parry's orchestration.

[7]Composed by Edward Elgar as Op. 35 (1897).

plot . . . . They are strung together in an attempt to form a more or less poetic sequence . . . in which Brother Michael becomes 'The Singing Friar' and the 'good greenwood' the background and connecting link of the whole."[8] The first performance was given by the South African Broadcasting Service in 1940, the war having scotched a London performance in 1939.

Le Fleming's words form an apt description of both the literary and musical form of the work. The English obsession with the "woodland," so

EXAMPLE 1



[8]Commentary in the published score.

well known from Elgar, is evident here, as the outer movements are dominated by an ethereal *Waldmusik,* and the inner movements present a three-panelled vision of temporal events. The best music—certainly the most colorful—is reserved for these "events." First, an unaccompanied scherzo for the chorus, "The Bonny Forest Bramble," follows the opening movement which is mostly concerned with exploiting the open notes of the French horn in a well-known manner. "The Bonny Forest Bramble" depends upon the percussive quality of the sung word for its effect (Ex. 1).

The "bramble" is represented by the snagging minor second, and the charging rhythm illustrates the scrambling of courtiers through the wood. A slightly more tranquil passage comes at the second stanza where the tenors sing accompanied by a wordless chorus. There is a richness here in the choral texture, perfectly calculated to get the words across, yet with no letup of the rhythmic motif or the effect of rapid choral singing in unison.

The third movement, "Though I be now a grey, grey friar," is the emotional crux of the work—a long and touching solo in which Brother Michael sings of "his vanished youth and the glories of the chase." From the quiet opening the movement builds through sinuous chromaticism as the friar remembers the days of his youth and the hunt, to end in a blaze of fanfares in G major. The fourth movement, "All on the fallen leaves so brown," is another unaccompanied chorus (men's voices), this time a narrative ballad in which Robin Hood, the outlawed Earl, is involved in an escapade "more reminiscent of Till Eulenspiegel." Le Fleming wrote: "The setting stresses the shadowy unreality of an escapade of long years ago (and probably imaginary as well), so that the 'ghostly' figures seem no more than twilight shadows in the dusk of an autumn evening."[9] The sparseness of the choral texture seems to heighten the "shadowy" aspect of the poem. For a long ballad (nine verses) set in the Dorian mode, there is little sense of stasis. The interpolation of "Hey, ho, down, derry down" and the refrain "All on the fallen leaves" are never repeated exactly, and the key scheme of the work is interesting in that it combines a sequence of modulations in a deftly handled tonal idiom while preserving a basically modal character.

The last movement, "The slender beech and the sapling oak," returns us to the still woodland and the quiet, static G-major tonality that underlies the whole work. The text obliquely refers to the death of of Robin Hood and Maid Marian.

> For the slender beech and the sapling oak
> That grow by the shadowy rill
> You may cut down both at a single stroke,
> You may cut down which you will

[9] *Ibid.*

But this you must know, that as long as they grow
Whatever change may be,
You can never teach either oak or beech
To be aught but a greenwood tree.

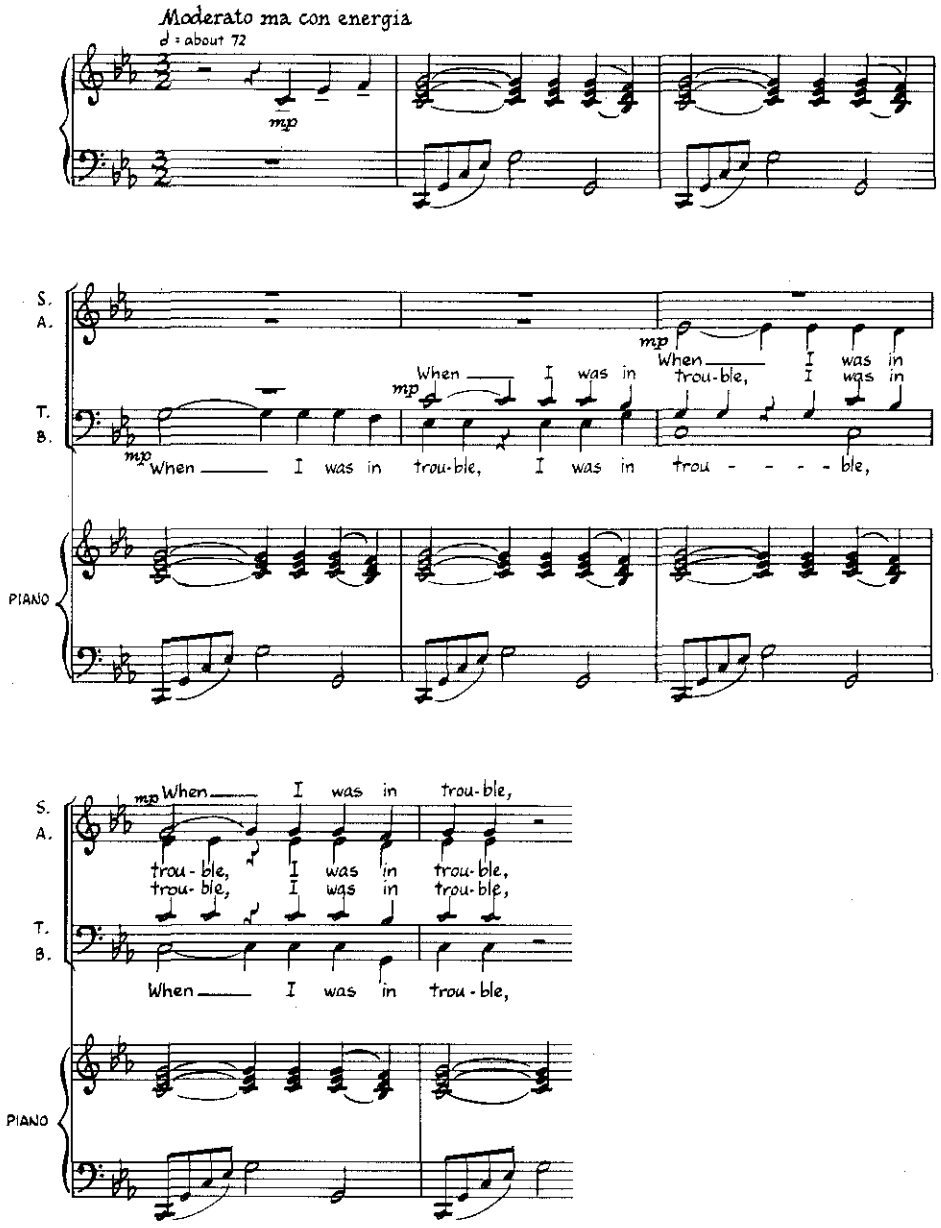
The chorus, often extensively divided, humming, provides a sound-wall, a backdrop for the tenor soloist, as in the opening movement.

Unaccompanied music, especially forming entire movements in the midst of an otherwise accompanied work, is unusual coming from British composers, who perhaps avoided it in more or less conscious reaction to modern German practice. That le Fleming chose to incorporate *a cappella* movements in this work points to a concern of his with simplicity of texture, and probably to his awareness as well that these movements might be performed separately. His attention to *a cappella* works turns up again in his church music—also unconventional in light of the preponderance of accompanied anthems and services that continue to be *de rigueur* in the Anglican rite. The limitations posed by the use of unaccompanied choir thus freed le Fleming from convention.

In 1939 le Fleming completed another work for soloist, chorus, and orchestra, his *Five Psalms,* Op. 10, which was the first mature expression of his musical personality and continues to be his most acknowledged work. It underwent a long period of gestation. Originally planned as a solo song cycle, it was expanded in its scoring by chorus and orchestral accompaniment. Yet various aspects of the work point to the original conception; for instance, the semi-chorus antiphony of the second movement, "I will lift up mine eyes" (Psalm 121), is akin in its chant-like simplicity to le Fleming's collect setting, *Lighten our darkness* (1939–42) for two solo voices and piano. Again in reference to the earlier form of the work, it is interesting to know that the third movement, "The Lord is my shepherd" (Psalm 23), a solo song, was occasionally performed with harp accompaniment. The three truly choral movements are the first, "When I was in trouble" (Psalm 120), the fourth, "They that go down to the sea in ships" (Psalm 107, verses 23–24), and the fifth, "O praise God in His Holiness" (Psalm 150).

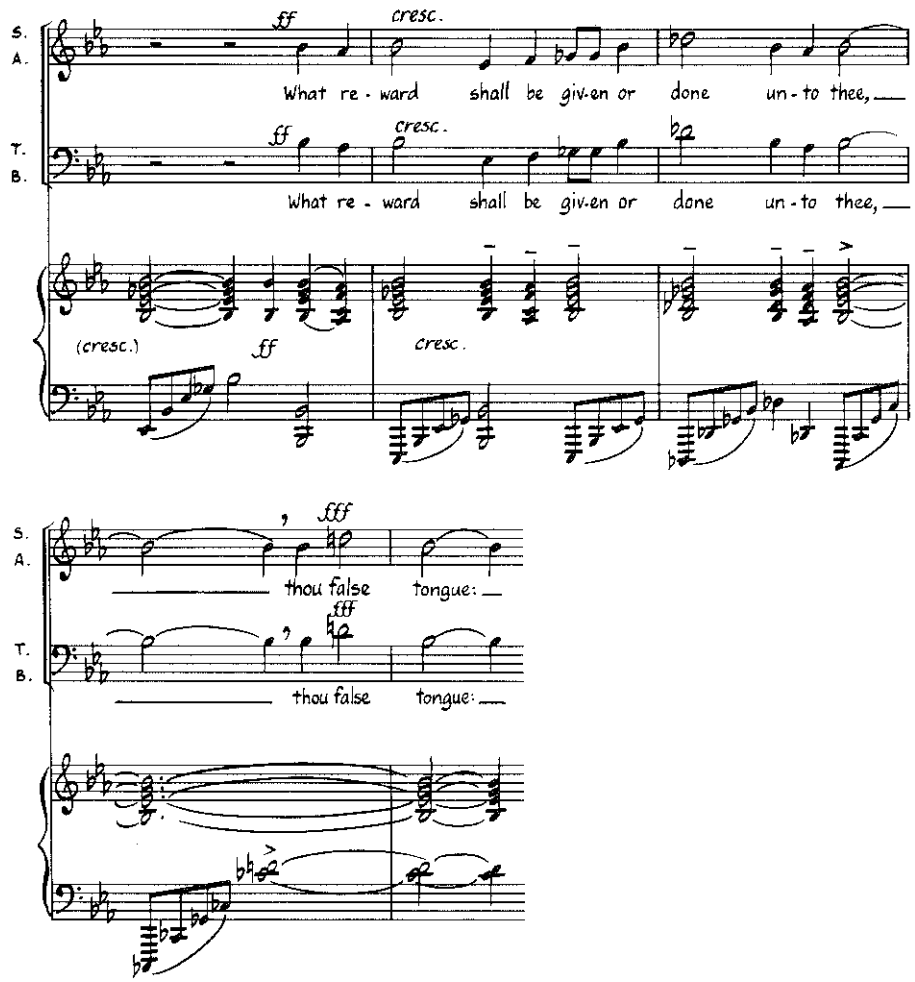
Le Fleming has set the work in a large tonal scheme that centers on C minor and C major, with subsidiary interest on the third-related keys of E-flat major and minor, and with a special emphasis on the lowered second degree, on D-flat or C-sharp. Whether such a structural scheme was in le Fleming's consciousness when the work was begun may seem unimportant because of the neat resolution of the various tensions that are set up in the course of the five movements. The general "sound" of this music is very close to Vaughan Williams, but the simplicity of texture does not allow the slow shifting of tonal centers in the background to be obscured.

EXAMPLE 2



The first psalm opens with a plaintive passage that forms the principal germ of the movement (Ex. 2). Later it is changed into a passage of parallel minor triads that seem to come from the world of *Belshazzar's Feast* and adds a strident poignancy to the word "false" (Ex. 3).

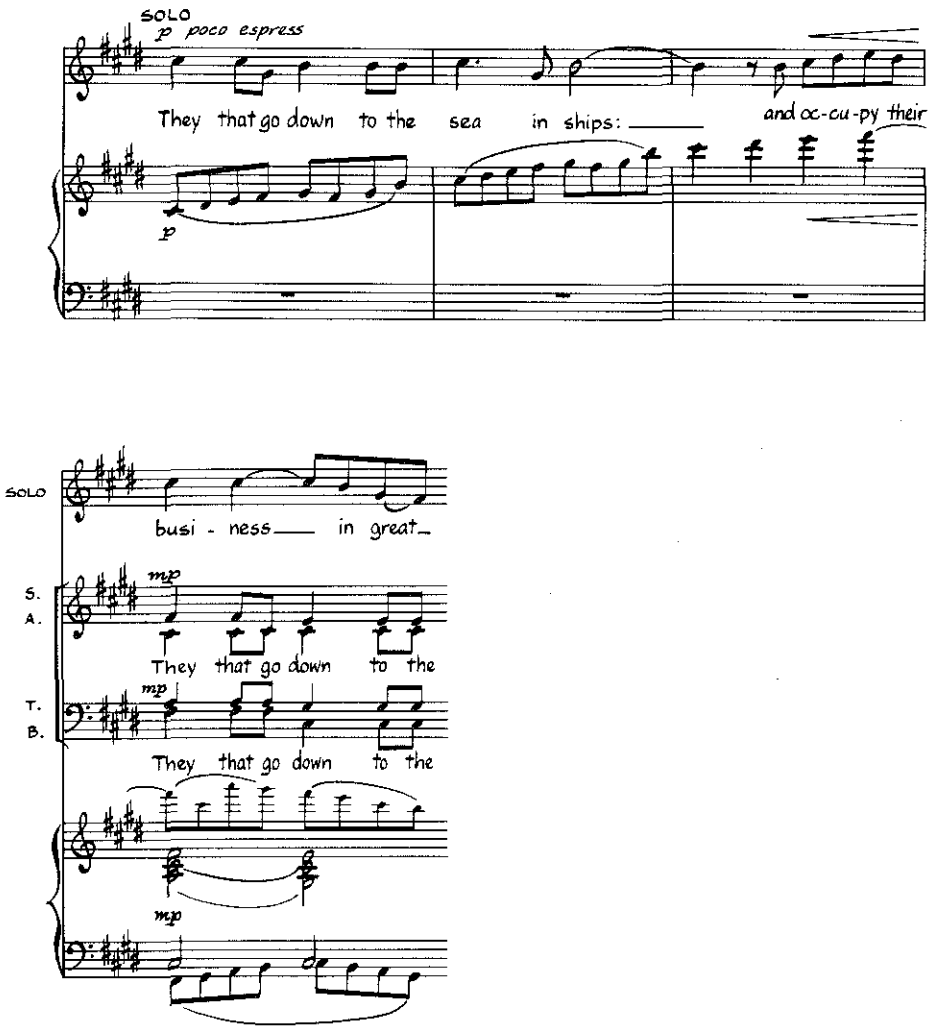
EXAMPLE 3



In contrast, the second psalm, "I will lift up mine eyes," is fresh and translucent, hardly more than an extended chant setting in which women's voices sing alternate verses with men's voices, joining in unison near the end. The third psalm, "The Lord is my shepherd," is a classic in itself, but being a solo work (this is the first appearance of the soprano soloist in the work) will be given only brief mention below.

The fourth movement turns the placid C-major scheme of the work upside down: the setting of the well-known verse from Psalm 107, "They that go down to the sea in ships," is based throughout on a sea chanty, "Haul away, Joe," first treated fugally, sounding in a distant C-sharp minor (Ex. 4).

EXAMPLE 4



To this the composer has provided a key:

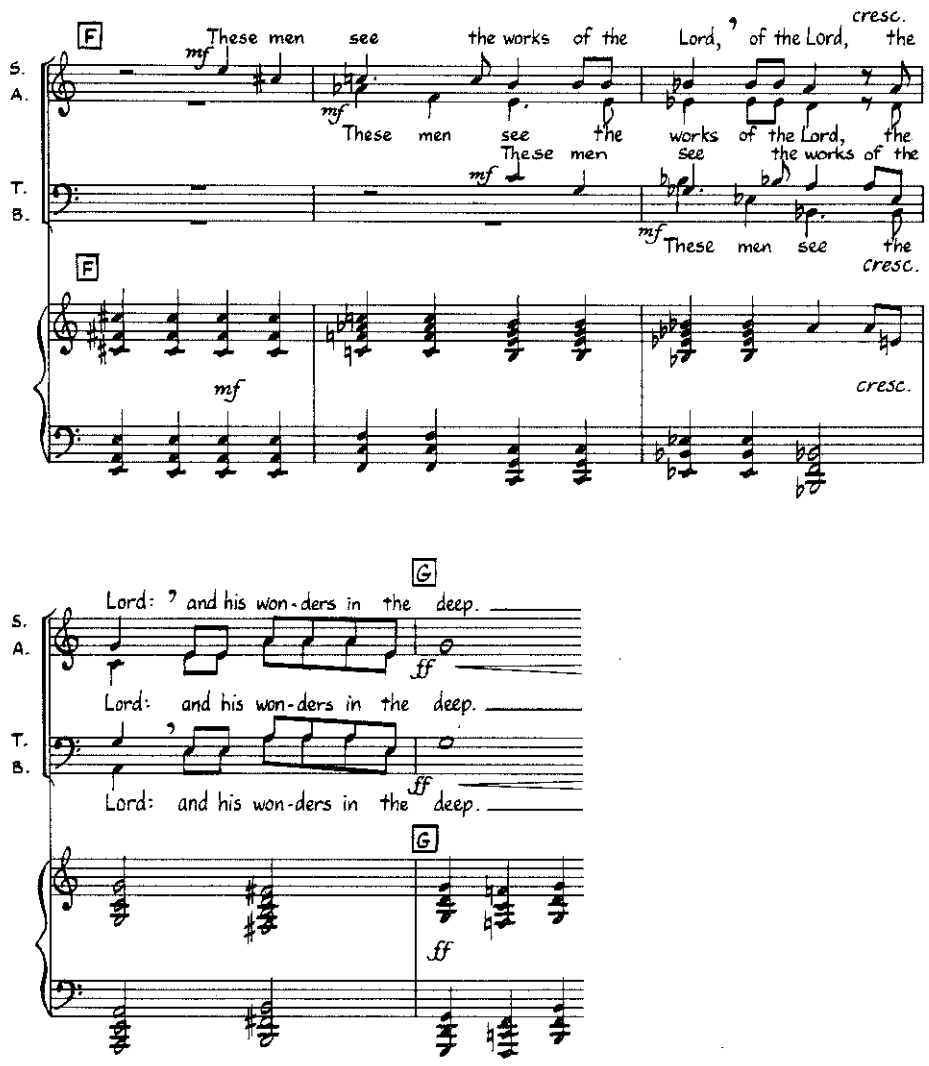
> The setting . . . is based on that marvellous description in Thomas Hardy's *The Trumpet Major,* of *HMS Victory* sailing down the Solent on a still, glowing September afternoon in 1805 to the Battle of Trafalgar, where Nelson was killed . . . . Nelson's admiral, Hardy, was a Dorset man who came from a village called Portesham, near the coast.[10]

And so the meaning of this movement to the composer, himself a Dorset

[10]Letters to the author, May 25, 1976; November 28, 1983.

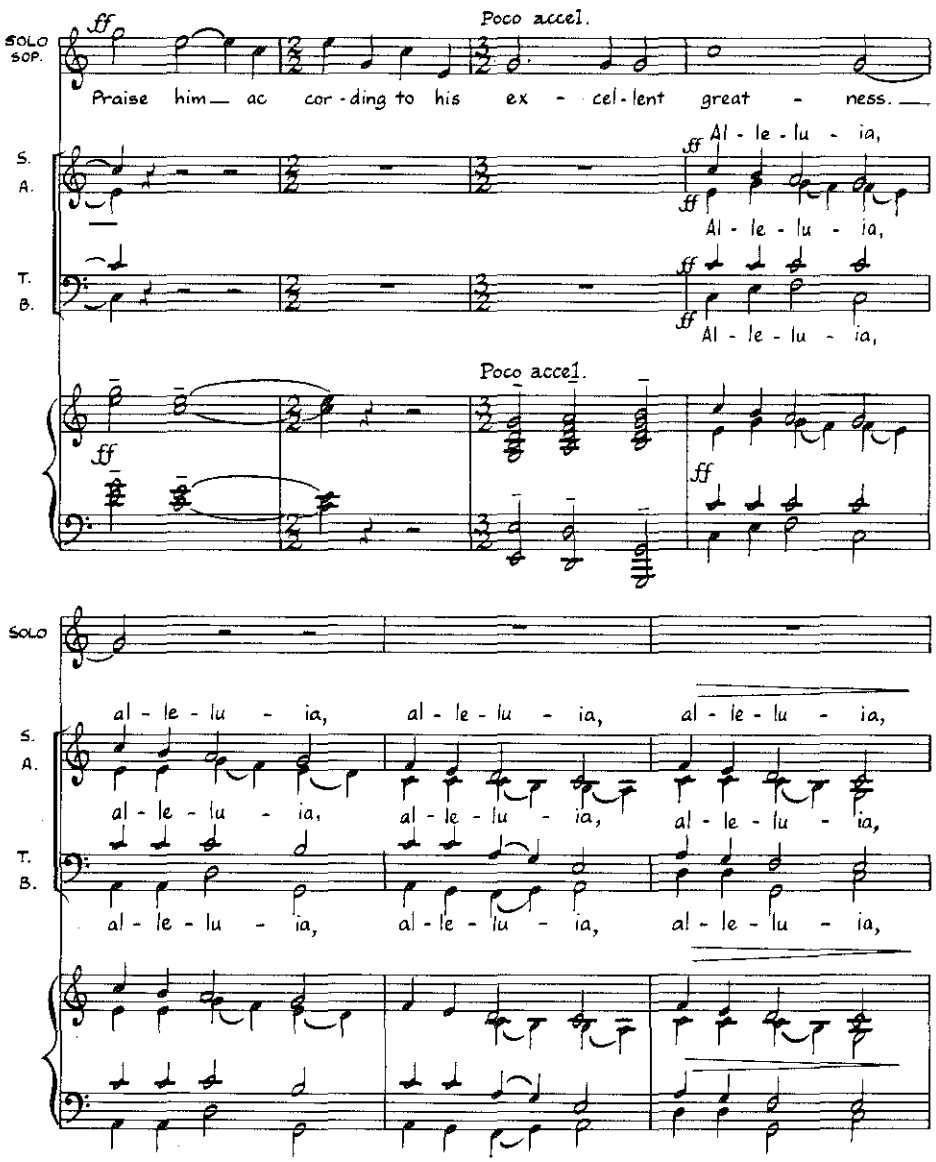
man, is amplified. I think it not too farfetched to suggest that the shift to the C-sharp-minor tonality mirrors the sense of unrest implied in the story; history tells us of the victorious yet tragic end of Nelson's endeavor, which contrasts with the placid scene described in Hardy's narrative. The counterpoint of this music is seamless; the chorus sings in a rocking, even motion, often in canon, giving an impression of surface tranquillity with a malevolent undertone. Hints of Debussy and Vaughan Williams are present, but what follows is striking and much closer to Bartók and Kodály than to the English tradition (Ex. 5).

EXAMPLE 5



The final psalm also casts the soprano in the role of "leader," with the chorus answering each exhortation "Praise him . . . . " Le Fleming here makes use of a quotation from a familiar hymn[11] (Ex. 6).

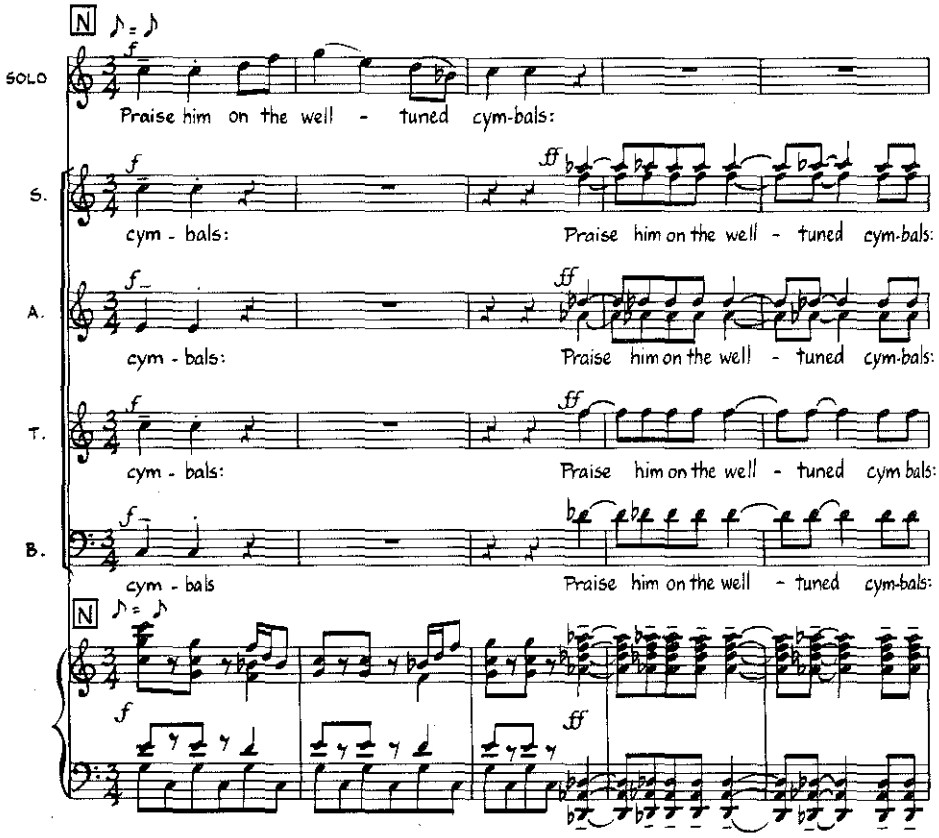
EXAMPLE 6



The great "Alleluia" invocation leads directly to an *Allegro con spirito* in triple meter over an ostinato bass. As the meter moves to 3/4, le Fleming returns to the unresolved conflict of tonalities (Ex. 7).

[11]*Geistliche Kirchengesänge*, Cologne, 1623.

EXAMPLE 7



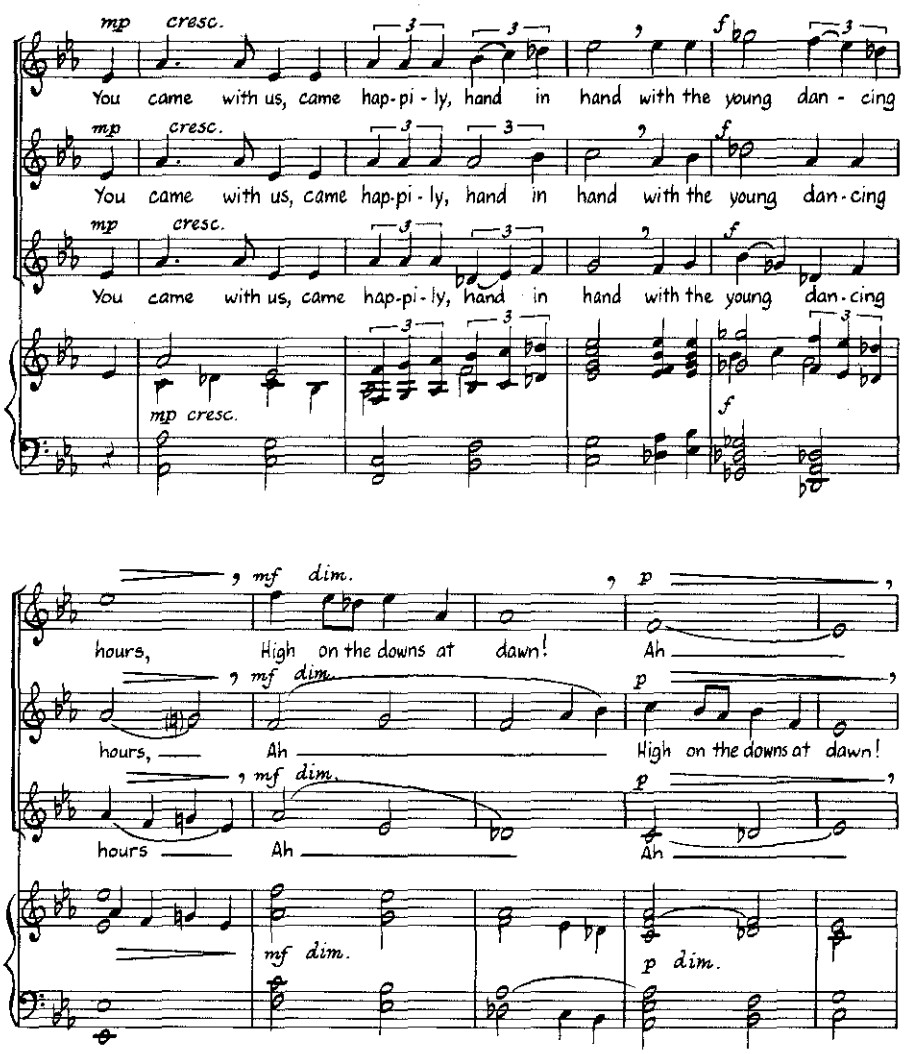
Only with a grand pause and a return to the triadic writing of the opening is the C-major tonality asserted with a sense of finality.

Almost contemporary with *Five Psalms* is *Day that I have loved,* Op. 11 (1939), a long and haunting setting of an early poem of Rupert Brooke, for women's voices (SSA) and two pianos (or piano and strings). Le Fleming's control of his material here is superb, and there is an ecstatic tenderness that is strongly reminiscent of the works of Gerald Finzi[12] (Ex. 8).

Between the appearance of *Day that I have loved* (first performed over the Bristol BBC in 1945) and *Evening Service in D,* Op. 22 (1953), there were no choral works except for a song cycle,. *Earth and Air,* Op. 13 (1937), to poems by Walter de la Mare, arranged for SA chorus in 1943, and the choral suite extracted from incidental music to the play *Your trumpets,*

[12]I am thinking especially of *Dies Natalis* (1939) and the Bridges part-songs.

EXAMPLE 8



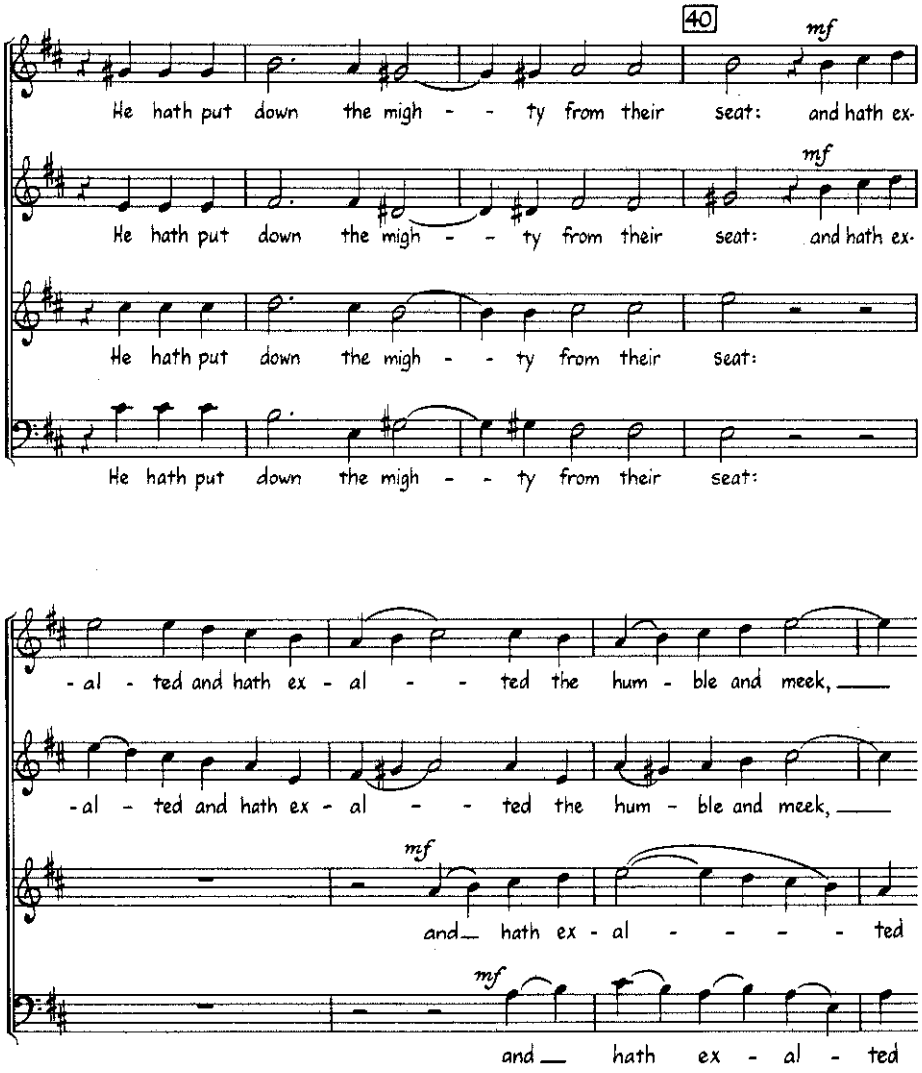
angels (by K.M. Baxter), *The progress of love,* Op. 20a (1952), which was never published and subsequently withdrawn.[13]

The *Evening Service in D* (Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis), written for the Liverpool Cathedral Choristers Guild, is le Fleming's great contribution to the English Cathedral tradition. Yet even here there is something unusual because it is an *a cappella* setting (SATB), which makes it more akin to the Tudor settings of the rite than the usual choral settings with organ that even recent composers such as Britten, Walton, and Mathias, following the

[13]A song cycle to poems by Hillaire Belloc, Op. 19 (1947), was subsequently rewritten as the choral cantata *Valley of Arun* (see below).

nineteenth-century tradition, have contributed to the Cathedral repertoire.[14] With a minimum of means much is achieved (Ex. 9).

EXAMPLE 9



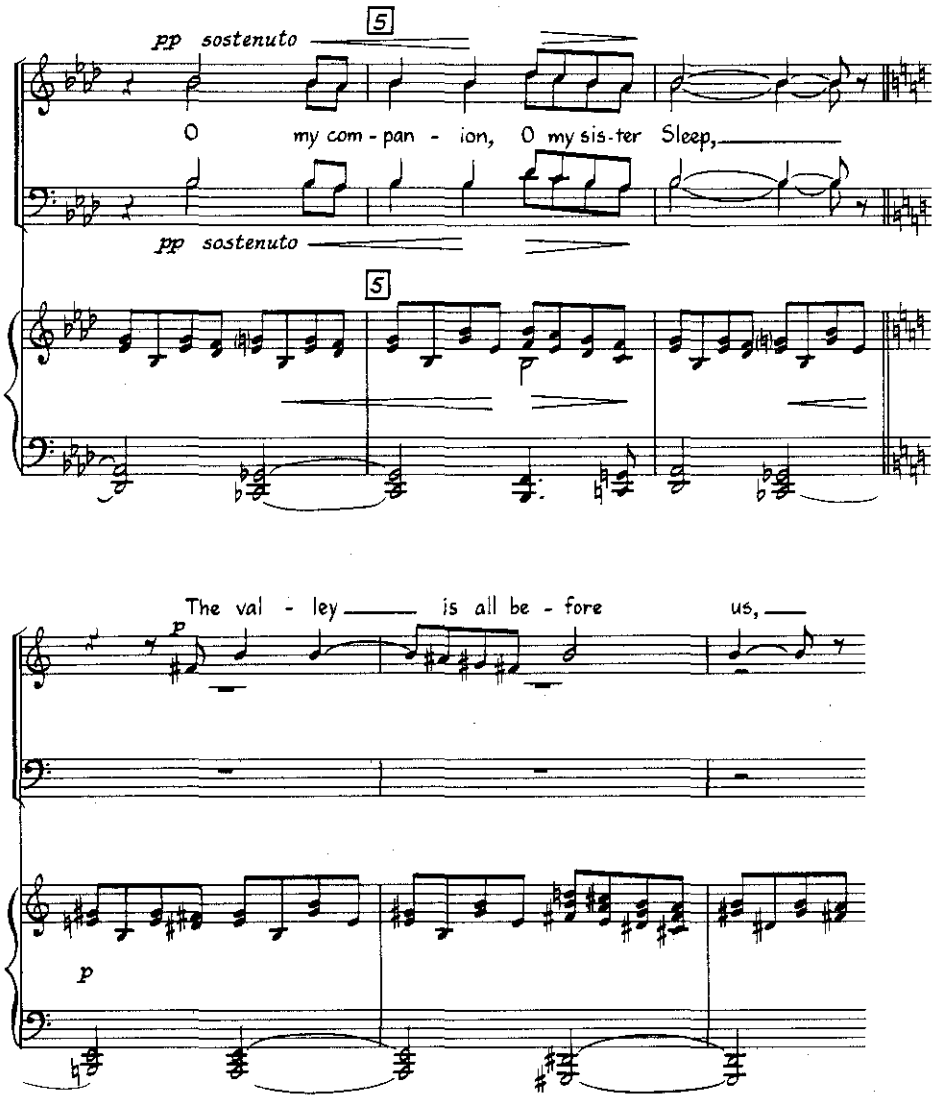
There is a fine sense of motivic generation throughout the work, and one senses the clear hand of an experienced composer. Perhaps the fourteen-year hiatus had deeper reasons: the composer was occupied in writing songs and instrumental music for schools during the 40's, not to mention war-related work, but the première (in 1947) of *Five Psalms*

[14]Le Fleming has also written a *Morning Service in C,* Op. 27 (1958) for SATB and organ; a *Communion Service in D,* Op. 36 (1965) is unpublished.

(which occasioned a negative review in *The Times*) may have caused extended reflection.

In 1958 le Fleming composed a *Morning Service in C,* Op. 27, for Liverpool, which is on a larger and more elaborate scale with organ accompaniment, and in 1961 he wrote *Valley of Arun,* Op. 33, a cantata for baritone solo, chorus, and orchestra to poems by Hillaire Belloc. This was a revision of a song cycle (Op. 19) written in 1947, with the addition of a new opening movement. The song cycle was performed in 1960 by Gordon Clinton and the composer at the Royal Festival Hall, and a commission

EXAMPLE 10

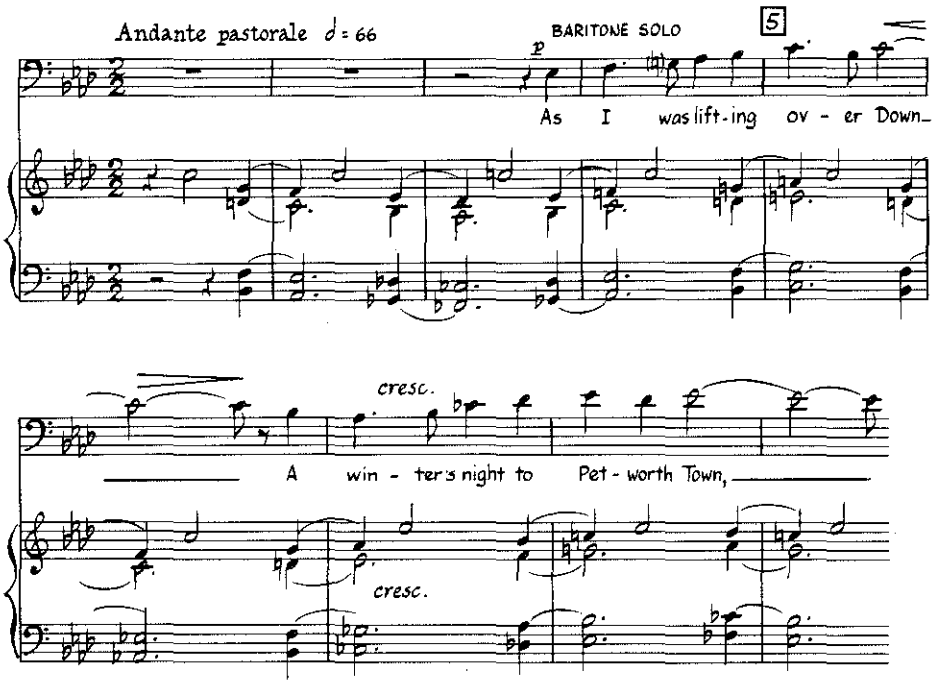


coming at that time from the Kidderminster Choral Society put into the composer's mind the idea of reworking the songs into a choral suite.

Valley of Arun represents a change in outlook for le Fleming: in the 1947 songs he was experimenting with a harmonic idiom more dissonant and impressionistic than he had previously used. In the choral version the effect of sectional, as opposed to solo sonority heightens effects such as shown in Example 10.

Similar passages of harmony on different planes abound in this work. The opening of the fourth movement ("Twelfth Night") illustrates this further (Ex. 11).

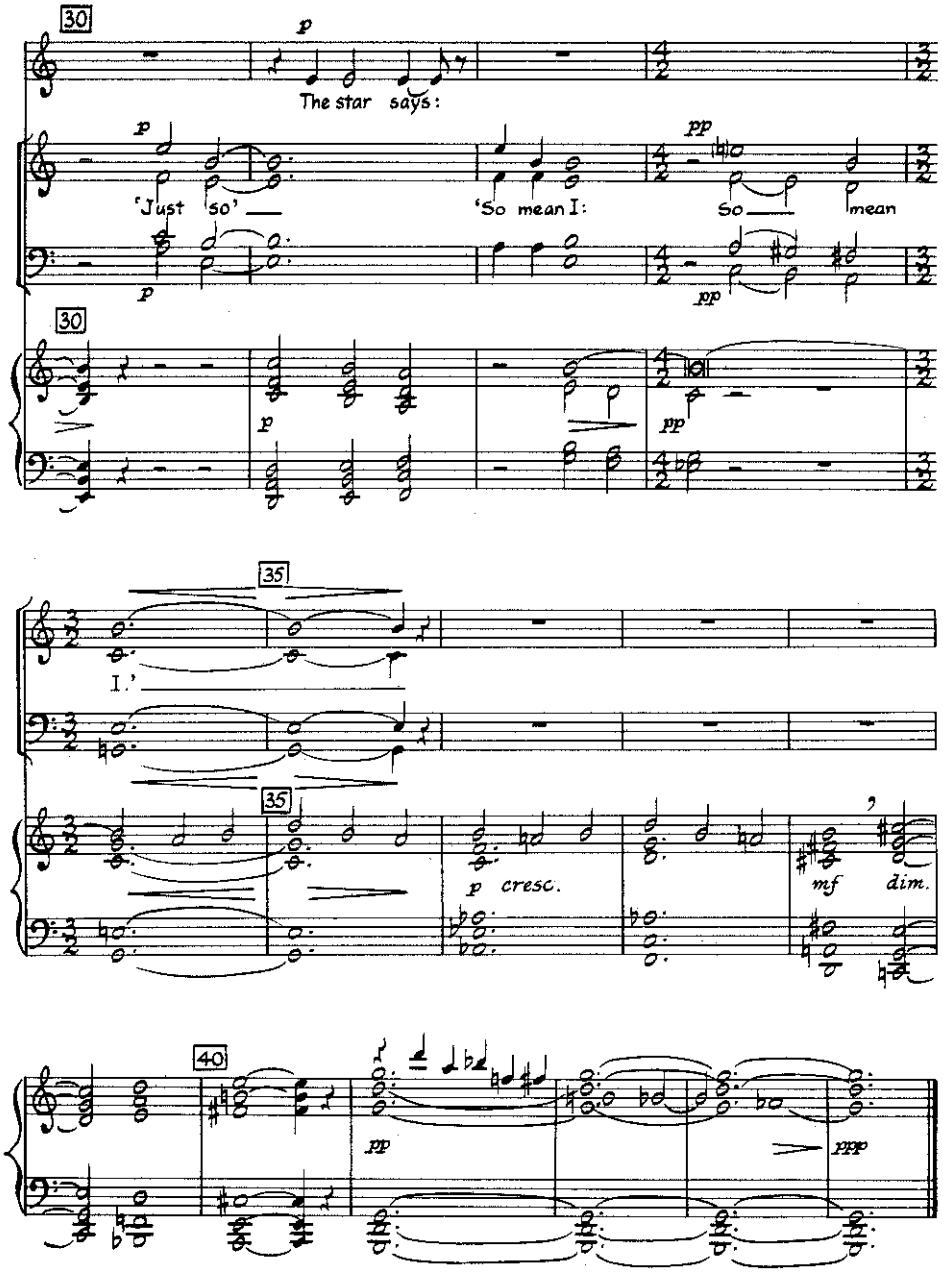
EXAMPLE 11



The final movement, "Tarantella," is a vivacious *brasileira* that brings to an exhilarating close a cycle unconnected by any specific stream of thought except the slightly odd, cynical character of Belloc's verse. It is interesting to note here two other settings of this poem that are radically different but point to a certain appeal the poem seems to have had for composers in the 30's and 40's: Randall Thompson's 1937 setting for men's voices and piano (written for the Yale Glee Club), and a setting (unfinished at the time of his death in 1934) by Edward Elgar, which is still in manuscript.

Almost immediately upon the heels of *Valley of Arun* followed *Six Country Songs,* Op. 34 (1962) for soprano and tenor soli, chorus, and orchestra, on poems by Thomas Hardy. Le Fleming continued much of the harmonic experimentation seen in *Valley of Arun* in this work, and the idiom seems to look back to Delius and the English impressionists rather

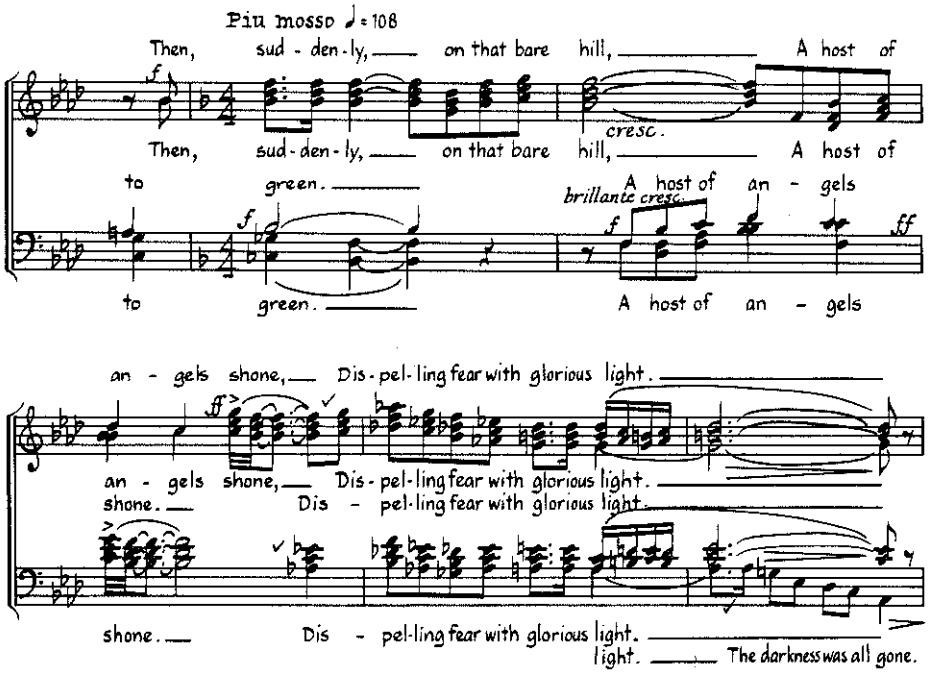
EXAMPLE 12



than to Vaughan Williams. The use of multi-plane harmonic structures casts an otherworldly sheen on the generally pastoral surface of the music, as at the end of "Waiting both" (No. 4) (Ex. 12).

The *Christmas Triptych,* Op. 38 (1966) for six-part chorus (SSATBB) is a distillation of all le Fleming's choral concerns: clarity of line and diction and a diatonic harmonic idiom inflected by chromatic parallelism. The first of three motets, as they are described, is a lucid and fresh setting of the well-known fifteenth-century poem, *I sing of a maiden.* The second, *The changing night,* a setting of a poem by Grace Armitage, is perhaps the finest, with a shattering climactic passage that could have come from Herbert Howells (Ex. 13).

EXAMPLE 13



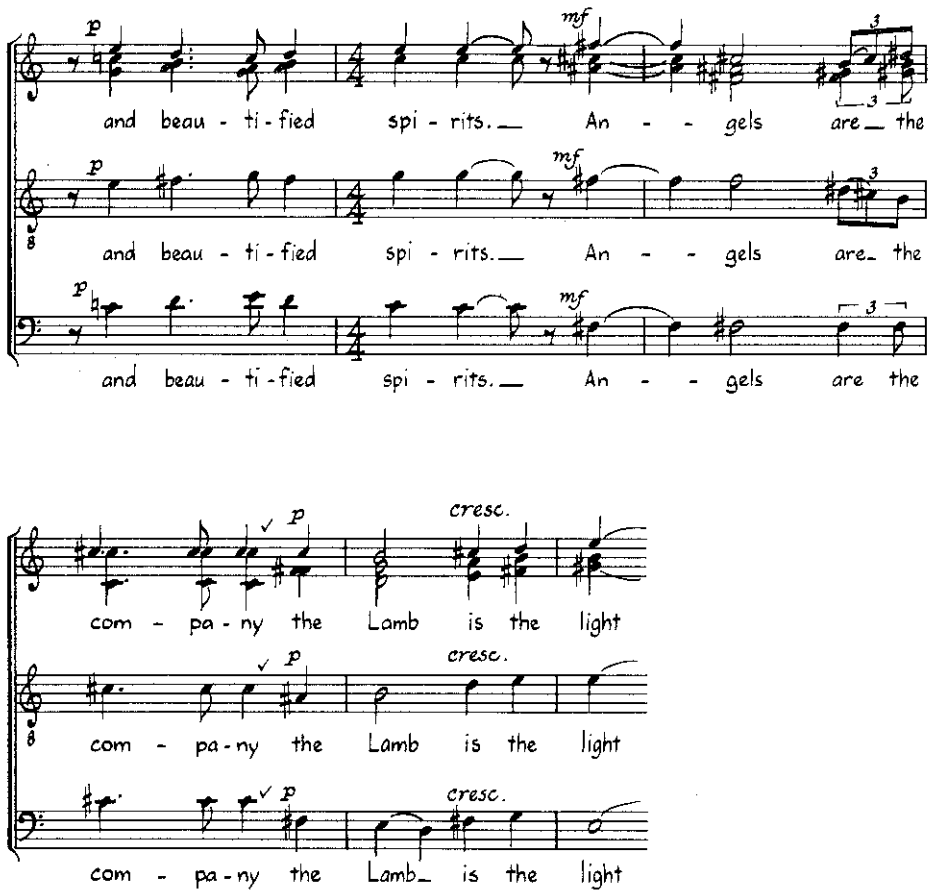
Le Fleming frequently returned to earlier works to recast them in new versions as he felt his conception of a "final" form had changed. In the case of *Valley of Arun* we are dealing with a full choral and orchestral reworking of a song cycle, and the same applies to the first and third movements of *Six Country Songs.* Another such work is *Five Songs of Earth and Air,* Op. 13 (1943) for SA chorus and piano, a revision of a 1937 song cycle.[15]

[15]On poems by Walter de la Mare. Le Fleming again (1983) preferred the solo version. His finest song cycle, *A quiet company,* Op. 18 (1947) is also based on poems by de la Mare.

The *Songs of Youth and Age,* Op. 44 (1976) are again the latest versions of earlier solo works, written between 1932 and 1936, with three additional movements. In these, much of the original accompaniment has been reworked for voices singing open syllables—often echoing a particular word in the poem being sung in another part. Much of the impetus for this kind of arrangement seems to have lain in wanting a large choral texture in which, nevertheless, the projection of the text would not be impeded by the amount of resultant verbal counterpoint.

Since we stay not here, Op. 45 (1977) is le Fleming's last published choral composition—a setting (SSATB) of a poem by Jeremy Taylor, which is a small but moving work, a summation of all his previous writing. The occasionally self-conscious chromaticism of earlier experimentation is now used in a more subtle way (Ex. 14).

EXAMPLE 14



Among the many short, isolated works that le Fleming has written (noted in the list of works at the end of this survey) one might be singled out as an especially fine example of English part-song: *St. David's,* Op. 30 (1960/1964), a setting for SATB and piano of a poem by Eiluned Lewis, which was a favorite of the composer's. Also, two beautiful folksong settings, *The Wraggle-Taggle Gypsies, O* (1950) and *O Waly, Waly* (1955), both SSA *a cappella.* These shown le Fleming's sensitivity, never mawkish, in dealing with transcriptions from the oral tradition.

"Sometimes," wrote le Fleming, "the obstacle to appreciation [of contemporary music] lies in an incomplete awareness of the imaginative impulse from which music has been written."[16]

Le Fleming's discussion in this portion of his autobiography has to do with the gradual disappearance of public hesitancy to accept the works of even such "accessible" British composers as Tippett, Berkeley, and Walton. Yet a certain "academic" orientation continues to show reserve to the work of composers such as le Fleming because of its idiomatic conservatism and modest scope.

Many other composers, past and present, have suffered at the hands of arbiters of musical worth. The problem is indeed "an incomplete awareness of the imaginative impulse from which the music has been written." Never has the need for the examination of contemporary music and its roots been greater, for the composer working in our midst faces an audience of unparalleled complexity.

[16]Le Fleming, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

List of Choral Works

Op. 1	1929	*Hymnus* (God be in my hede) SATB a *cappella* This, the earliest of le Fleming's choral publications, is a short homophonic setting of the well-known Sarum Primer text. Also arranged for voice and piano (or organ), it includes an optional 2-bar organ introduction in the choral version.	(Chester) Anglo-American
3	1933	*The Echoing Green* Cantata for SA chorus with piano (and strings, ad lib.) (discussed in the text) A substantial "Children's Cantata" in 17 movements. In addition to its use as music for young singers, the composer also intended it for adult women's choruses. In the half-century since its composition, changes in tastes and sensibilities may have made this impractical. Nevertheless, there are five easy solo numbers that would make a nice recital set (#5, "Children"; #7, "The Lass Sings"; #8, "The Colour"; #11, "The Shepherd"; #13, "The Lambing Fold").	(Chester) Various movements still in print
9	1937	*The Singing Friar* Cantata for tenor (or light baritone) SATB chorus and small orchestra (discussed in the text) The composer pointed out that this is "based upon five poems taken from Thomas Love Peacock's novel *Maid Marian*. This originally appeared in 1822, and very shortly afterwards became the basis of an operetta with music by Sir Henry Bishop [1786–1855, composer of 'Home Sweet Home']."	(Chester)

Op.10 1939 *Five Psalms* — Chester

Soprano solo, SATB chorus and full orchestra (also arranged for piano and strings)

(discussed in the text) Le Fleming's best known and most often performed work. (In the 1970's there was a performance at Niagara College in Sanborn, N.Y.) Two versions of the accompaniment are available on rental: a scoring for full orchestra, and a reduced scoring for strings and piano (or organ). Vaughan Williams included this work at the Leith Hill Festival during the 1950's.

11 1939 *Day that I have loved* — Chester

SSA chorus and 2 pianos (or piano and strings)

(discussed in the text) Setting of a poem by Rupert Brooke (1887–1915), dedicated to "B.H.C." (possibly Basil Cameron). Brooke's poetry has been neglected by composers; perhaps in contrast to the depth of some of the other First World War poets (Owen, Sassoon, Rosenberg), Brooke's style may seem somewhat inconsequential today.

12 1939/1942 *I love all beauteous things* — (Cramer) Available on rental Oxford University Press (Chester) Anglo-American

SATB and piano (strings ad lib.)

Lighten our darkness (Collect)

SA or TB and piano

The first is a part-song (also arranged for unison chorus with descant) to words by Robert Bridges (1844–1930). A similarity to part-songs by Holst and Finzi is evident.

The simple collect setting, *Lighten our darkness,* was originally written for tenor and bass. Both these works represent later arrangements of solo pieces.

13 1943 *Earth and Air* — Cramer

SA and piano

A suite of five songs for women's voices (unison, 2- and 3-part) to words by Walter de la Mare (1873–1956), who was a friend of the composer's. This was an expansion of a solo song cycle that le Fleming made for the West Kent Federation of Women's Institutes (which commis-

sioned Vaughan Williams to write *Folk Songs of the Four Seasons*). Moderately easy to perform.

Op.20a	1952	*The Progress of Love* A choral suite extracted from the incidental music to *Your Trumpets, Angels,* a play by K.M. Baxter, commissioned by the Provost and Chapter of Southwark Cathedral for the Festival of Britain.	In manuscript
22	1953	*Evening Service in D* SATB *a cappella* (discussed in the text) This Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (published under that title) is the best of le Fleming's three services. There are two different settings of the Gloria, not one for both canticles, as is often the case.	Oxford University Press
27	1958	*Morning Service in C* SATB and organ Commissioned, like Op. 22, for Liverpool Cathedral, this Te Deum and Benedictus (published under that title as Parish Choir Book #1384 in 1960) is on a larger scale (including organ) and might be compared with the Collegium Regale settings of Howells. The Benedictus is especially challenging.	(Novello)
30	1960/ 1964	*St. David's* SATB and piano A part-song, a favorite work of the composer, to words by Eiluned Lewis (1900–79). Lewis wrote the once popular children's book *Dew on the Grass* (1934) from which le Fleming set the poem "The Birthright" in 1936 (Op. 8). It has been arranged for various combinations and has become especially popular with a number of schools in England.	(Novello)
33	1961	*Valley of Arun* Cantata for baritone solo, SATB chorus and orchestra (discussed in the text) Written for the Kidderminster Choral Society in 1961, this is an ar-	(Novello) Available on rental

rangement of a solo song cycle (Op. 19, 1947) with the addition of one movement. The baritone solo is still the focus of attention, but there are some exciting moments for the chorus, especially in the last movement.

Op.34 1962 *Six Country Songs* (Novello) Available on rental

Cantata for soprano and tenor soli, SATB chorus and orchestra

(discussed in the text) Some of the material for this cantata was arranged from unpublished Hardy settings. The most harmonically "advanced" and intractable of le Fleming's works. When only one soloist is available (either tenor or soprano), the work can still be performed with a few authorized cuts.

35 1964 *The Silver Dove* (Belwin-Mills)

A Morality for narrator, children's chorus and various accompaniment from piano to full orchestra

An adaptation of a "mime with music" by K.M. Baxter, originally published under the title *Pull Devil Pull Baker*. Traditional children's nursery rhymes and songs were modified to fit into a Victorian morality play.

36 1965 *Communion Service in D*, "St. Matthew" In manuscript

This was commissioned for St. Matthew's, Northampton, by Philip Turner, then the vicar there.

38 1966 *Christmas Triptych* (Three Motets) Roberton

SSATBB *a cappella*

(discussed in the text) Published separately, the first motet, *I sing of a maiden*, was written for the Purcell Consort (originally published by Oxford University Press). All three works require experienced voices.

Op.40	1968	*Trees in the Valley* SSA and piano Eight songs written for the choir of St. Mary's School, Calne, where le Fleming was the director during the Second World War. The poems are by Grace Armitage, who also wrote the text for the second of the three motets in the *Christmas Triptych.*	Boosey & Hawkes
44	1976	*Songs of Youth and Age* SSATBB *a cappella* (discussed in the text) The use of vocalise for the "accompaniment" of these part-songs may not be to everyone's taste. Nonetheless, the composer rated these very highly, and his interest warrants attention.	Roberton
45	1977	Motet: *Since we stay not here* SSATB *a cappella* (discussed in the text)	Roberton

ARRANGEMENTS

1950	*The Wraggle-Taggle Gypsies O* SATB *a cappella*	Oxford University Press
1955	*O, Waly, Waly* SSA *a cappella*	Boosey & Hawkes
	Spring has now unwrapped the flowers SSA *a cappella*	Cramer
1957	*Agincourt Hymn* SAB and strings	(Elkin)
1961	*Rounds and Canons*	Belwin Mills
1964	*More Rounds and Canons*	Belwin Mills
1974	*The Mikado* (Gilbert and Sullivan) SSAA and accompaniment	Cramer

There are also a few short, miscellaneous choral pieces, mostly for unison choir with descant, or SA, which are not listed here. See *Journey into Music* for the complete works list.

Publishers' names listed in parentheses indicate editions out of print; as the list shows, however, in a number of cases new editions have taken the place of editions unavailable, and several of the old editions continue to be available on a rental basis. The addresses, given below, for Roberton and Anglo-American Music Publishers may be of special help in obtaining performance material:

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