Article:
White, B orcid.org/0000-0002-9011-5578 (2021) Anthems and Politics in the Restoration Chapel Royal. Music and Letters. gcab025. ISSN 0027-4224

https://doi.org/10.1093/ml/gcab025

Anthems and Politics in the Restoration Chapel Royal

Bryan White

In the Restoration period the Chapel Royal was a site of political as well as religious activity. Chapel services provided the occasion for ceremonies through which the monarch's position in the religious and political hierarchy of the nation was enacted. In the reign of Charles II these included the formal procession from his private apartments to the Chapel and back, and his manner of taking communion publicly.[1] Music played a significant role in sacralising Charles's person, particularly through the genre of the symphony anthem, which was closely associated with his attendance at the Chapel and his individual musical tastes. Beyond opportunities for the symbolic legitimization of the monarch, the Chapel Royal was also a site of quotidian political contestation. In particular, sermons were an important part of Chapel Royal services, in which preachers applied biblical stories and precepts to contemporary circumstances and events.[2] The political nature of the Restoration sermon in the Chapel Royal and in the wider public sphere has been an important site of scholarly discussion for more than two decades.[3] It is therefore surprising that the political work carried out by anthems composed for the Chapel Royal has received comparatively little attention, especially given the similarities

The idea for this article was inspired through work with Alex Chisholm-Loxley on his undergraduate dissertation in the School of Music at the University of Leeds. Early versions of the article were presented at the Annual Conference of the Society for Seventeenth-Century Music, Miami and the Biennial International Conference on Baroque Music, Canterbury in 2016. I am grateful to the two anonymous reviewers for *Music & Letters* whose comments significantly improved the article, and to Robert Thompson who offered insightful remarks on it.

1 Anna Keay, *The Magnificent Monarch Charles II and the Ceremonies of Power* (London, 2008), 145–69.

2 See for instance Tony Claydon, *William III and the Godly Revolution* (Cambridge, 1996); Matthew Jenkinson, *Culture and Politics at the Court of Charles II, 1660–1685* (Woodbridge, 2010), 75–106.

3 See for instance Peter McCullough, Hugh Adlington, Emma Rhatigan (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of the Early Modern Sermon* (Oxford, 2011).

in the ways in which biblical texts were used to comment on contemporary events in both the sermon and the anthem.[4]

In considering the political functions of anthems in the Chapel Royal, it is important to differentiate between the symbolic and the specific. In terms of the former, the role of symphony anthem is well understood. It developed under the encouragement of Charles II and involved expanding the verse anthem, which alternated passages for soloists and chorus, by the addition of passages for strings alone, the 'symphonies' that provided the coinage of genre's modern designation.[5] Symphony anthems were almost exclusively the preserve of the Chapel Royal where they were performed on days when Charles II was in attendance. They served, therefore, as a sonic representation of his presence, aiding in the solemnization of his person. The great flourishing of the symphony anthem was curtailed in the reign of James II, who did not attend the Anglican Chapel Royal but instead pursued his worship at Catholic chapels. During his reign Princess Anne supported the Anglican Chapel with her attendance—at which the violins were required—but the *raison d'etre* of the symphony anthem as an aural amplification of the monarch's presence was lost, and its composition and performance became infrequent.[6] When William and Mary succeeded to the throne, their Calvinist-influenced propensities led them to ban the use of any instruments other than the organ in the Chapel Royal.[7] In Anne's reign the genre had a minor revival and was used on

[4] For contributions to the use of the anthem as a political tool see Franklin Zimmerman, *Henry Purcell, 1659-1695: His Life and Times* (Philadelphia, 2/1983); Eric van Tassel, 'Music for the Church', in Michael Burden (ed.), *The Purcell Companion* (London, 1994), 101–199; Andrew Walkling, 'Politics, Occasions and Texts', in Rebecca Herissone (ed.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Henry Purcell* (Farnham, 2012), 201–268, esp. 216–220; James Winn, *Queen Anne Patroness of Arts* (Oxford, 2014).

[5] For a concise summary of the development of the symphony anthem and Purcell's work in this genre see Peter Holman, *Henry Purcell* (Oxford, 1994), 125–141.

[6] Andrew Ashbee, *Records of English Court Music*, 9 vols (Snodland and Aldershot, 1986–96), ii. 15–16 (21 Oct. 1687).

[7] London, The National Archives, RG 8/110, fos. 24r–25v, dated 'Feb: 23d 1688/9', transcribed in Andrew Ashbee and John Harley (eds), *The Cheque Books of the Chapel Royal*, 2 vols (Aldershot, 2000), ii. 287. See also Don Burrows, *Handel and the English Chapel Royal* (Oxford, 2005), 24–5. The order was also recorded by the

special occasions, though, since she was often unwell, not necessarily with the queen in attendance.

The specific political work of the anthem did not rely upon the use of the strings, but rather upon the text that was set. Attention to the ways in which sermons functioned in the Restoration Chapel Royal offers a helpful context for understanding the political work of anthems. Both through convention and through explicit rubrics in the Book of Common Prayer the sermon played a significant part in Chapel Royal services, as it did in the Anglican church more widely. Whereas the collects, canticles and readings from the Bible used in each service were prescribed by the Book of Common Prayer, the verses chosen by clerics as subjects for sermons were not. Preachers were able to select biblical verses and apply them to the pressing concerns of the day in ways that suited their religious and political outlooks. Indeed, in the Chapel Royal and throughout the Anglican church preachers often acted as government publicity agents, construing scripture in ways that legitimated monarchical authority, promoted royal initiatives and interpreted current events in terms favourable to the regime.[8] In addition to burnishing the image of the monarch by creating parallels with great biblical figures such as King David, the sermon could also be used to offer moral instruction to the monarch and the court.[9] During James II's reign it became a powerful and extremely contentious means through which Anglican clergy fought against the king's promotion of pro-Catholic policies.[10]

'In quires and places where they sing' the anthem was, along with the sermon, a significant feature of Anglican worship services, formally recognized in the rubrics of the

Dissenter and political chronicler Roger Morrice: 'The B*ish*op of London has sent out a Written Order that no musick shall be used nor retained in the Kings Chappell, but the Organs only and they only for Psalms and one of the Anthims. **Nota.** The Musick removed out of the Chappell is only the Violin and the rest of the Fiddles, I believe the Wind-Musick is still to remiane there.' *The Entring Book of Roger Morrice 1677–1691*, Mark Goldie, general editor (Woodbridge, 2007), *Volume V: The Reign of William III 1689–1691*, ed. Mark Knights, 9–10.

8 Tony Claydon, 'The Sermon and the Public Sphere', in Lori Anne Ferrell and Peter McCullough (eds), *The English Sermons Revisited: Religion, Literature and History 1600–1750* (Manchester, 2000), 208–34, at 215.

9 Jenkinson, *Culture and Politics at the Court of Charles II,* 75–106.

10 Claydon, 'The Sermon and the Public Sphere', 219–20.

Prayer Book for the first time in 1662.[11] And like the sermon, the texts selected for anthems were free from the strictures of the liturgy. The anthem text was in some ways even more malleable than the choice of text for the subject in a sermon, since the verses themselves were frequently altered and rearranged. Anthems almost invariably set biblical verses; throughout the Restoration period the Psalms provided the majority of verses set by composers.[12] The potential for such texts to be applied to current events was wide, and just as Anglican divines applied scripture topically to suit the messages of their sermons, we should expect that care was taken to suit anthem texts to specific occasions. Likewise, we should consider the possibility that composers did more than passively set anthem texts to music. Their musical responses had the potential to engage actively in the political work of anthem texts and indeed to go beyond the texts in terms of interpreting their contemporary application. This article investigates a number of occasional anthems written for the Chapel Royal by Henry Purcell (1659–1695), John Blow (1649–1708) and William Turner (1651/2–1740) in an attempt to understand the political work enacted through the texts and the composers' interactions with them. Where such observations seem to be available, I will consider what these compositions might tell us about the personal opinions of their composers—and where known their performers too—with regard to the political circumstances in which their music participated. Finally, I will examine an anthem text that shares close correspondences with clearly established occasional texts in order to evaluate the extent to which knowledge of the way the former were developed and used can be employed to draw conclusions regarding the latter, specifically Purcell's *My song shall be alway*, the occasion for which has not been recorded.

Anthem texts in the Restoration Period

Though the choice of text for an anthem was of critical importance to a composer, and similarly significant to the religious and political work of Chapel Royal services, we are largely ignorant with regard to how they were selected. The organization of the Chapel Royal offers some clues regarding those people who may have been involved in the selection of anthem texts. As a Royal Peculiar the Chapel Royal was exempt from

11 See Ian Spink, *Restoration Cathedral Music 1660–1714* (Oxford, 1994), 28.

12 Ibid.

episcopal and archiepiscopal authority.[13] It was administered by the dean (after the Restoration always a bishop) chosen directly by the king. But the Chapel Royal was a part of the royal household, and therefore under the authority of the Lord Chamberlain, whose role it was to swear the dean into his post. While the dean was responsible for the liturgy, the Lord Chamberlain took a role in defining the practicalities of seating in the Chapel and aspects of its decoration, and was influential in the selection of court preachers.[14] Under the dean was the sub-dean, to whom the day-to-day administration of the liturgy was devolved. This responsibility probably included some oversight of anthem texts along with choosing music and anthems for services.[15] We learn from a chapter meeting of December 1663 that the Master of the Children of the Chapel Royal also took a significant role in deciding on the music for services: 'The service shalbe appointed by ye Deane or SubDeane or his substitute, with advice of the Master of the Children, for such Anthems as are to be pformed by ye Children of ye Chappell.'[16] Very little evidence regarding the agency of individual Chapel Royal composers in selecting the texts that they set is available.

A few general characteristics of Restoration anthem texts can be established by examining those set by Purcell. Of the seventy extant English language anthem texts he set, fifty-five are taken from the Psalter of the Book of Common Prayer.[17] The Psalter, printed in the Book of Common Prayer for the first time in 1662, used the translation of the Psalms made by Miles Coverdale for the Great Bible of 1540 rather than that of the King James Bible.[18] The preponderance of psalm texts, and of the use of the Book of

13 Keay, *The Magnificent Monarch*, 147.

14 Jenkinson, *Culture and Politics at the Court of Charles II, 1660–1685*, 76.

15 David Baldwin, *The Chapel Royal: Ancient and Modern* (London, 1990), 249. Sub-deans during Purcell's tenure at the Chapel Royal were William Holder, 1674–89 and Ralph Battell, 1689–1712.

16 *The Cheque Books of the Chapel Royal*, i. 123–6.

17 The figures are based on Van Tassel, 'Music for the Church', 195, n. 5. More general comments draw upon Robert Manning, 'Purcell's Anthems: An Analytical Study of the Music and its Context', 2 vols (Ph.D. diss., University of Birmingham, 1979), and Ruth Smith, *Handel's Oratorios and Eighteenth-Century Thought* (Cambridge, 1995), 92–107.

18 'Introduction', *The Book of Common Prayer: The Texts of 1549, 1559, and 1662*, ed. Brian Cummings (Oxford, 2011), xv.

Common Prayer is also typical of Purcell's contemporaries.[19] Of the other texts he set, five are passages from the Book of Common Prayer other than the Psalter, six are from the Old Testament, two from the New, and two combine texts from Psalms and Isaiah. Robert Manning notes that Purcell and his contemporaries rarely set a complete psalm, even when it was a short one.[20] Eric van Tassel has drawn particular attention to 'discontinuous' anthem texts in which some intermediate verses are omitted or reordered.[21] He identifies these as likely to indicate a 'topical anthem'. There are fifteen such texts amongst Purcell's anthems.

It is instructive to begin a consideration of the political work of individual anthem texts by examining several that were set for coronations. Though these were not Chapel Royal services, they provide the only occasions in the Restoration period for which the selectors/compilers of the anthem texts are known. These are also texts designed obviously to serve a specific and well-defined purpose. It was traditional for the Archbishop of Canterbury to design the coronation service, including choosing anthem texts. By the seventeenth century, many of the texts set to music were dictated by tradition.[22] However, two texts set by Purcell for coronations were newly compiled. In 1685 Purcell was responsible for *My heart is inditing*, the anthem following the crowning of the queen consort, James II's wife, Maria Beatrice of Modena. The text was compiled by archbishop of Canterbury William Sancroft (1617–1693).

Psalm 45[23]

1 My heart is inditing of a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made unto the king.

19 Spink, *Restoration Cathedral Music*, 28.

20 Manning, 'Purcell's Anthems', i. 67.

21 The term is used in the set of lists of Purcell's anthems provided in 'Music for the Church', 106–113.

22 See Matthias Range, *Music and Ceremonial at British Coronations: from James I to Elizabeth II* (Cambridge, 2012).

23 Here and elsewhere I show verses that were not used, or that were altered by the arranger of the text in order to better understand the purpose of the newly devised anthem text. In this and subsequent examples, words that are struck through are omitted from the anthem text; words shown in grey shading were added or changed in the anthem text in comparison with the source text.

10 Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women: upon thy at his right hand did shall stand the queen in a vesture of gold, wrought about with divers colours.
14 The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold.
15 She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needle-work: the virgins that be her fellows follow her shall bear her company, and shall be brought unto thee.
16 With joy and gladness shall they be brought: and shall enter into the king's palace.
11 Hearken, O daughter, and consider, incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house.
17 Instead of thy fathers thou shalt have children: whom thou mayest make princes in all lands.

Psalm 147

12 Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem: praise thy God, O Sion.

Isaiah 49

23 For kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers.

Alleluia.

In general, texts for music in coronation services served the purpose of divinely legitimizing the monarch, for instance by analogy with biblical precedent as in 'Zadok the priest'. Sancroft, however, created a text that was specifically topical. In contemporary biblical commentaries Psalm 45 was interpreted as prophetic of the divine marriage between the Church and Christ. In choosing only those verses that referred to 'the queen' (i.e. the Church), Sancroft implied that Maria Beatrice stood in relation to the king as the Church did to Christ.[24] The text thereby offered both figurative and literal interpretations; Maria was joined to the nation as well as to her husband. The relocation of verse eleven immediately before verse seventeen heightened the sense in which it might be read as an instruction to the queen to 'forsake her homeland and devote herself to her husband's dynasty'.[25] Sancroft may also have intended to suggest the sublimation of Maria Beatrice's Catholicism, at least in terms of her formal role as queen, and to imply (rather hopefully) that any children following as a reward for such loyalty would be raised as the Anglican children of the nation rather than as Catholic children of James. Doubts about the likelihood of such an outcome were perhaps overwhelmed in the spectacle of the day, and Purcell's magnificent setting betrays no discomfort with the problematic connotations of the text for the prospects of an Anglican succession.

[24] See for instance Matthew Poole, *Annotations Upon the Holy Bible* (London, 1683–5).

[25] Van Tassel, 'Music for the Church', 187–8.

At the coronation of William and Mary as co-regents in 1689 Purcell was assigned the anthem that followed the joint crowning, *Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem*. Henry Compton (1631/2–1713), bishop of London and dean of the Chapel Royal designed the service instead of Sancroft who, as a non-juror, did not officiate the ceremony. Compton chose several verses also used in *My heart is inditing*; of those, he adjusted Isaiah 49, verse twenty-three to acknowledge the equal standing of the two monarchs by the omission of the word 'their'.

Psalm 147
12 Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem: praise thy God, O Sion.
Psalm 48
7 Like as we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God: God upholdeth the same for ever.
Isaiah 49
23 For kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers.
Psalm 21
13 Be thou exalted, Lord, in thine own strength: so we will sing, and praise thy power. Hallelujah.

The obvious signs of manipulation in these texts draw attention to the political work they were intended to accomplish. Likewise, 'discontinuous' texts, as noted by Van Tassell, immediately reveal the agency of an individual responsible for the discontinuities, and therefore beg the question of their significance. But it is also the case that any partial psalm text used for an anthem was consciously selected and removed from its context for reasons that may have been specific to the occasion for which it was to be used. This act of selection might involve ignoring the wider implication of the whole for the potential application offered by a sub-set of verses. Psalm 89 is any interesting case study in this respect. John Blow's anthem for the coronation of James II, *God spake sometime in visions*, sets verses 20–30 of this psalm. The text offers a powerful image of God anointing David, protecting him from his enemies, and blessing his progeny. Yet the biblical commentary *Annotations upon the Holy Bible* prefaces Psalm 89 with an 'Argument' beginning: 'This *Psalm* manifestly treats of the declining and calamitous time and state of the House of the Kingdome of *David*.' Verses 35–50 take the psalm in a significantly different direction to that of the earlier verses. The 'Anointed' is forsaken; God has 'cast his throne down to the ground'. Sancroft did not alter the order of lines or change words within the passage he provided to Blow for setting, but his exclusion of that part of the

psalm exploring the grave challenges of kingship shows a similar concern for selecting from the source text verses suitable to carry a message as specific as that of the more obviously manipulated texts discussed above.

Indeed, even in those instances in which a composer set a psalm without omitted verses or other significant alteration, the text might nevertheless be applied with great effect to a specific occasion. Purcell's symphony anthem *Blessed are they that fear the Lord*, composed for performance at the Chapel Royal, is a case in point.[26] We learn from annotations on the copy of the anthem made by John Gostling (1650–1733), an ordained priest and Gentleman of the Chapel Royal, that it was 'for ye Thanksgiving appointed Jan: 15th 1687/8 for ye Queens being wth child'.[27] Maria Beatrice's pregnancy was both unexpected, and of crucial national importance, since a male child would be the heir to the throne, and would almost certainly be raised as a Catholic. In the special form of prayer devised for the thanksgiving, Psalms 21, 127, 128 and 132 were specified as proper for the day.[28] At the Chapel Royal Psalm 128 was the text appointed for the thanksgiving anthem.

Psalm 128

1 Blessed are all they that fear the Lord: and walk in his ways.
2 For thou shalt eat the labours of thine hands: O well is thee, and happy shalt thou be.
3 Thy wife shall be as the fruitful vine: upon the walls of thine house.
4 Thy children like the olive-branches: round about thy table.
5 Lo, thus shall the man be blessed: that feareth the Lord.

[26] Another anthem that sets all but one verse and a single phrase of a psalm text and which has a clear topical application is John Blow's symphony anthem 'Hear my voice, O God' (Psalm 64), written for the Chapel Royal in July 1683 to mark the conviction and execution of conspirators in the Rye House Plot. See Winn, *Queen Anne*, 49–51.

[27] University of Texas, Austin, Harry Ransom Center MS 85. The end of the copy gives a different date, which perhaps signifies when Purcell's completed the composition: 'Jan: 12. 1687. / For the Thanksgiving --/ Appointed in London / & 12 miles round, upon her /Majesties being wth Child. / & on the 29 following, over England.' In this annotation Gostling used the English system of reckoning the year from Lady Day (25 March). The same dating system was used in the publication of the thanksgiving liturgy (see n. 28).

[28] *A Form or Order of Thanksgiving, and Prayer, to be Used in London, and Ten Miles Round it, on Sunday the 15th. of this Instant January … Upon Occasion of the Queen's Being with Child* (London, 1687).

6 The Lord from out of Sion shall so bless thee: that thou shalt see Jerusalem in prosperity all thy life long.
7 Yea, that thou shalt see thy children's children: and peace shall be upon Israel.
Alleluia.

As set by Purcell
1 Blessed are they that fear the Lord: and walk in his ways.
2 For thou shalt eat the labours of thine hands: O well is thee, and happy shalt thou be.
2b O well is thee
3 Thy wife shall be as the fruitful vine: upon the walls of thine house.
2b O well is thee
4 Thy children like the olive-branches: round about thy table.
2b O well is thee
6 The Lord from out of Sion shall so bless thee: that thou shalt see Jerusalem in prosperity all thy life long.
2b O well is thee
7 Yea, that thou shalt see thy children's children: and peace shall be upon Israel.
2b O well is thee, and happy shalt thou be.
5 Lo, thus shall the man be blessed: that feareth the Lord.
Alleluia.

The text suited the occasion perfectly, and the two minor alterations of wording do not affect its meaning. In Purcell's setting, however, the verses are not presented in the order in which they appear in the psalm. There are two types of changes, one probably attributable to the composer and one less clear. In the first case, lines from the second half of the second verse are employed after every verse, an arrangement that facilitates a musical refrain. In the second case, the placement of verse five after verse seven creates a textual frame. Purcell either recognized the frame, setting verses one and five with a verse group of two trebles, countertenor and bass, or created it in order to strengthen the structure of the anthem. While these manipulations of the text facilitate the formal musical structure of the work, they also create extra-musical meaning. The positive assertions in each of the verses 2–4 and 6–7 are reinforced by the refrain 'O well is thee', thereby confirming the deserved fruits of those that walk in the way of the Lord, that is, James and Maria Beatrice. If, as seems most likely, these decisions did originate with Purcell, then he chose actively to strengthen the meaning of the text. And if the potential of a male child was a cause of concern to some members of the Chapel Royal, it seems not to have affected Purcell's approach to setting this anthem. Gostling's annotation leaves no doubt as to how the text was to be applied, but even had no source recorded

the anthem's purpose, an occasion related to a royal birth (though not which one) would have been an obvious likelihood for anyone attempting to link it to a specific context.

The liturgy into which *Blessed are they that fear the Lord* was introduced was specially designed as a national act of thanksgiving for Maria Beatrice's pregnancy. Like the coronation services, the archbishop of Canterbury, or clerics under his direction, was usually responsible for the special liturgies of fast and thanksgiving services, which commemorated significant events and which demonstrated the nation's commitment to pursuing a godly path.[29] These liturgies were typically a form of Morning Prayer (sometimes also of Communion and Evening Prayer) specifying proper psalms, lessons and collects for the day. They took as their model the three state services commemorating the martyrdom of Charles I (30 January), the restoration of the monarchy (29 May), and deliverance from the Gun Powder Plot (5 November) printed as addenda to the 1662 Prayer Book. Readings for the liturgies of these state services were 'evidently selected so as to suggest a typological or prefigurative correspondence between events narrated in the Bible and events of recent church/state history'.[30] The liturgies also included a hymn newly compiled from the Psalms and other passages from the Bible to be sung or spoken antiphonally between the priest and congregation in place of the *Venite*. Though of much greater length, these hymns nevertheless share with complied anthem texts the characteristic of being designed to suit a specific occasion.

Thanksgiving and fast services were ordered by monarchs with regularity throughout the Restoration period. Neither the state services or the special liturgies included rubrics for an anthem, but on some occasions at the Chapel Royal—and probably on many more than can now be accounted for—they were certainly performed. Four anthems are recorded to have been composed specifically for use at the Chapel Royal on such occasions between 1660 and 1702. Several other works can be identified speculatively as thanksgiving or fast anthems through circumstantial evidence (Table 1). A few other anthems were composed to mark events that were commemorated subsequently with a thanksgiving or fast. Tony Claydon has drawn attention to the way in which thanksgiving and fast services were used to promulgate propaganda in support

[29] Burrows, *Handel and the English Chapel Royal*, 27–9.

[30] Charles Hefling, 'The State Services' in Charles Hefling and Cynthia Shattuck (eds), *The Oxford Guide to the Book of Common Prayer* (Oxford, 2006), 73.

William and Mary's regime.[31] He argues that the selection of dates for observances, readings for the liturgies, specially compiled hymn texts and prayers, and preachers for these occasions were meticulously planned to convey courtly reformation ideology.[32] In such a context it seems likely that equal care was taken over the anthem texts selected for use at the Chapel Royal on these occasions.

[Insert Table 1 here]

The way of God is an undefiled way

Only eight of Purcell's anthems can be definitively associated with a specific occasion. Of these, two employ a compiled and two a discontinuous text. Perhaps the most sophisticated discontinuous text set by Purcell was that of *The way of God is an undefiled way*. Indeed, the unique characteristics of this anthem mark it out as a work specifically designed to play a part in a series of Chapel Royal services celebrating William III's summer campaign of 1694. Once again, an annotation in Gostling's scorebook provides the occasion: 'November ye 11th 1694 King William then returnd from Flanders.' William had arrived in England on 9 November following a relatively successful summer campaign against the French in the Spanish Netherlands; in late September he had led the forces of the Grand Alliance in taking Huy.[33] A public thanksgiving was celebrated in London on 2 December.[34] On the following Sunday, Narcissus Luttrell recorded the performance at the Chapel Royal of Purcell's grand, instrumentally accompanied settings of Te Deum and Jubilate.[35] These settings had been first performed the previous month as part of the annual Cecilian celebrations, and their repetition at the Chapel is the only

[31] Claydon, *William III and the Godly Revolution*, 100–110.

[32] Ibid., 106.

[33] Abel Boyer, *The History of King William the Third in III Parts*, 3 vols (London, 1702–3), ii. 397; John Childs, *The Nine Years' War and the British Army 1688–1697*: *The Operations in the Low Countries* (Manchester, 1991), 249–63.

[34] *A Form of Prayer and Thanksgiving to Almighty God, to be used … on Sunday the Second Day of December next Ensuing* (London, 1694); see also Burrows, *Handel and the English Chapel Royal*, 2–30.

[35] Narcissus Luttrell, *A Brief Historical Relation of State Affairs from September 1678 to April 1714*, 6 vols (London, 1857), iii. 410.

definitive evidence of the use of instrumentally accompanied sacred music there during the reign of William III.[36] The detailed reorganization of the source text for *The way of God is an undefiled way* speaks clearly of the effort made to communicate a specific message through the anthem, and it is consistent with the care taken over the wider programme of fasts and thanksgivings that characterized William and Mary's reign.[37] The anthem text is taken from Psalm 18, beginning at verse thirty and ending at verse fifty-one. Purcell set the work for a trio of soloists (two countertenors and a bass) and chorus, accompanied by organ.

Psalm 18, verses 30–51

30 The way of God is an undefiled way: the word of the Lord also is tried in the fire; he is the defender of all them that put their trust in him.
31 For who is God, but the Lord: or who hath any strength, except our God?
32 It is God, that girdeth me with strength of war: and maketh my way perfect.
33 He maketh my feet like harts' feet: and setteth me up on high.
34 He teacheth mine hands to fight: and mine arms shall break even a bow of steel.
35 Thou hast given me the defence of my salvation: thy right hand also shall hold me up, and thy loving correction shall make me great.
36 Thou shalt make room enough under me for to go: that my footsteps shall not slide.
37 I will follow upon mine enemies, and overtake them: neither will I turn again till I have destroyed them.
38 I will smite them, that they shall not be able to stand: but fall under my feet.
39 Thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle: thou shalt throw down mine enemies under me.
40 Thou hast made mine enemies also to turn their back upon me: and I shall destroy them that hate me.
41 They shall cry, but there shall be none to help them: yea, even unto the Lord shall they cry, but he shall not hear them.
42 I will beat them as small as the dust before the wind: I will cast them out as the clay in the streets.
43 Thou shalt deliver me from the strivings of the people: and thou shalt make me the head of the heathen.
44 A people whom I have not known: shall serve me.
45 As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me: but the strange children shall dissemble with me.
46 The strange children shall fail: and be afraid out of their prisons.
47 The Lord liveth, and blessed be my strong helper: and praised be the God of my salvation;
48 Even the God that seeth that I be avenged: and subdueth the people unto me.
49 It is he that delivereth hath deliver'd me from my cruel enemies, and setteth me up above mine adversaries: thou shalt rid me from the wicked man.

[36] Bryan White, *Music for St Cecilia's Day from Purcell to Handel* (Woodbridge, 2019), 171–6.

[37] Claydon, *William III and the Godly Revolution*, 100–110.

50 For this cause will I give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the Gentiles: and sing praises unto thy name.
51 Great prosperity giveth he unto his king: and sheweth loving-kindness unto David his Anointed, and unto his seed for evermore.

The editing of the verses is designed to present William as a divinely sanctioned military victor. In reducing the text to a manageable size, the verses selected for omission could be characterized in two ways: 1) verses 33, 35–6, which are not focussed on warfare (though verse thirty-seven is removed despite its martial theme; 2) verses 43–46, 48, which might invite application to William's status as a foreign king who has subdued the British people.

The sensitive excision of verses was only the first stage in compiling the text. The remaining verse were rearranged with the following effects (see below): 1) breaking up and reordering of first-person verses; 2) breaking up verses of thankfulness, and placing a verse of praise (verse fifty) in the centre of the text; 3) the creation of question and response through splitting verse thirty-one into two parts; 4) the addition of Alleluias at the end of verses of praise. These changes improve the structure of the text for musical setting. While it is not possible to determine whether Purcell himself chose the psalm or removed verses from it, there are good reasons to think that he undertook the reordering since it expedites the musical characterization of the text. All of the first-person verses, apart from verse fifty, are given to the bass soloist. The work is framed by verses sung by all three soloists, while the other verses are given to the pair of countertenor soloists. Verse fifty is the only first-person verse to focus solely on praise. Allocating it to the countertenor voices breaks up an otherwise overlong passage for the bass; it might furthermore be understood as a choric 'I', since it provides the occasion for the interjection of a choral Alleluia.[38]

Order of verses as set by Purcell shown with voice allocations
First-person text: Bass Soloist; *Other text*: Countertenor Duet; *Reallocated First-person text*: *Countertenor Duet*; *Framing text*: CCB Trio; *Alleluias:* **Full Choir**

30 The way of God is and undefiled way: the word of the Lord also is tried in the fire; he is the defender of all them that put their trust in him.
32 It is God, that girdeth me with strength of war: and maketh my way perfect.
31a For who is God, but the Lord:
34 He teacheth mine hands to fight: and mine arms shall break even a bow of steel.

[38] A point suggested to me by Robert Thompson.

31b or who hath any strength, except our God?
39 Thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle: thou shalt throw down mine enemies under me.
38 I will smite them, that they shall not be able to stand: but fall under my feet.
50 *For this cause will I give thanks unto thee, O Lord: and sing praises unto thy name.*
Alleluia
40 Thou hast made mine enemies also to turn their back upon me: and I shall destroy them that hate me.
42 I will beat them as small as the dust before the wind: I will cast them out as the clay in the streets.
41 They shall cry, but there shall be none to help them: yea, even unto the Lord shall they cry, but he shall not hear them.
47 The Lord liveth, and blessed be my strong helper: and praised be the God of my salvation;
51a Great prosperity giveth he unto his king:
49 It is he that hath delivered me from my cruel enemies, and setteth me up above mine adversaries: thou shalt rid me from the wicked man.
51 Great prosperity giveth he unto his king: and sheweth loving-kindness unto David his Anointed, and unto his seed for evermore.
Alleluia

One way to characterize this anthem is as a sacred court ode: a royal panegyric celebrating William as a military victor, with the added lustre of biblical legitimization. Purcell's musical setting, however, takes the work into a different realm, creating a sacred dramatic scene. By casting the first-person verses as a solo bass voice, Purcell makes explicit what is implicit in the text: the voice is that of the psalmist, King David, whose contemporary analogue is William III. The focus on the bass voice is further emphasized by matching it with two countertenor voices; more usually composers wrote for a countertenor, tenor and bass when using a trio of soloists.[39] Purcell's agency in fashioning the image of the king is particularly strong in this setting. In comparison, the composer's agency is more limited in the court ode. There his music certainly burnishes the image of monarchy, but he sets texts provided by poets whose words do the explicit work of praise. In this anthem it is Purcell's choice to unify the first-person verses into a single voice that turns the anthem into sacred drama, thereby representing William as David, in a way that recalls Dryden's representation of Charles as David in *Absalom and Achitophel*.[40] But the anthem goes a step further. Whereas in Dryden's poem Charles

[39] I am grateful to Robert Thompson for this observation.

[40] For a concise discussion of *Absalom and Achitophel* and a summary of significant criticism see *The Poems of John Dryden*, *Volume 1: 1649-1681*, ed. Paul Hammond (London, 1995), 444–532.

becomes David in the mind's eye through the act of reading and imagination, in the *The way of God is an undefiled way* William as David is staged before the congregation of the Chapel Royal, embodied in the voice of the bass soloist, who most likely was John Gostling.

Church of England Loyalty: Anthems at the Chapel Royal during the Reign of James II

If anthems were used as political propaganda to enhance the image of the monarch, could they not also be used to criticize? The ascension of the Catholic James II to the throne in 1685 initiated a period of intense religious controversy in England. From early in his reign, James's pro-Catholic policies brought him into conflict with Church of England clerics. These disputes, which struck at the heart of the religious settlement in England, culminated in the king's prosecution of the archbishop of Canterbury William Sancroft and six other bishops for seditious libel in June of 1688.[41] The Chapel Royal was affected directly by James's personal religious observance and his attempts to force the Church of England to tolerate Catholic worship. Three anthems composed during this period, one by William Turner and two by John Blow, appear to engage directly with these disputes, and particularly in the case of those by Blow, may be read as rebukes of James and his policies. The identification of a political dimension to these anthems depends entirely on an understanding of the contemporary political circumstances facilitated by the precise dates given to each by John Gostling in his scorebook. Unlike the two anthems discussed above, he did not record the nature of the occasions for which these anthems were composed. Gostling was almost certainly the featured bass soloist in each of them, and the care he took over dating them hints at the personal significance they held for him.

Unease with James's Catholicism was already entrenched before his accession, and though he vowed in his first address to the Privy Council 'to preserve the government in Church and State as it is by Law established' the coronation service was altered so that he did not partake of the Anglican sacrament.[42] As king, James did not attend the Anglican Chapel Royal; at the beginning of his reign, he took Mass publicly at

41 A detailed account can be found in William Gibson, *James II and the Trial of the Seven Bishops* (Basingstoke, 2009).

42 J.S. Clarke, *The Life of James the Second*, 2 vols (London, 1816), ii. 3.

the Catholic chapel at St James and almost immediately initiated plans to build a new Catholic chapel at Whitehall. By the time it was consecrated on Christmas Day 1686 a large establishment to furnish music for its services had been recruited.[43] Significant sums were poured into the Catholic chapel, while the Anglican chapel languished in comparison. Though Princess Anne continued to attend the Anglican chapel, payments to musicians, particularly those of the violin band, were retrenched, and performances of symphony anthems became more infrequent.[44]

Additional disquiet was caused by the removal of bishop Compton as Dean of the Chapel in November 1685 following a parliamentary speech in which he criticized James's employment of Roman Catholic officers in the army in defiance of the Test Act of 1673.[45] Compton had held the post of dean for ten years. He was turned out of his apartments in Whitehall Palace, and was replaced as dean by Nathaniel Crew, bishop of Durham, and a close friend and advisor to James.[46] Compton was Princess Anne's spiritual counsellor; he oversaw her confirmation in 1676, officiated at her marriage in 1683, and maintained a close relationship with her until his death.[47] Indeed, John Reresby attributed Compton's dismissal as dean to his defence of Princess Anne's Protestant religion against those who wished to convert her to Catholicism.[48] Compton's dismissal

[43] Peter Leech, 'Music and Musicians in the Catholic Chapel of James II at Whitehall, 1686–1688', *Early Music*, 39 (2011), 379–400. Andrew Barclay's 'The Impact of King James II on the Departments of the Royal Household' (Ph.D. diss., University of Cambridge, 1993) offers a detailed analysis of the relationship between the Anglican Chapel Royal and James's Catholic chapel (esp. 104–115).

[44] Evelyn, *Diary*, iv. 433; Barclay, 'The Impact of King James II on the Departments of the Royal Household', 105; Peter Holman, *Four and Twenty Fiddlers The Violin at the English Court 1540–1690* (Oxford, 2/1995), 411.

[45] Edward Carpenter, *The Protestant Bishop Being the Life of Henry Compton, 1632–1713 Bishop of London* (London, 1956), 83–5.

[46] Gibson, *James II and the Trial of the Seven Bishops*, 54. Crew officiated at the validation of James's proxy marriage to Maria Beatrice when she arrived in England in November 1673.

[47] Winn, *Queen Anne*, 15.

[48] *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby*, ed. Andrew Browning, the second edition, ed. Mary K. Geiter and W. A. Speck (London, 1991), 405.

confirmed him as Protestant champion; a letter to John Ellis in Dublin dated 5 January 1686 reported: 'the Bishop of London's fame runs high in the vogue of the people'.[49]

James renewed his attack on Compton in the summer of 1686. In July he established the Ecclesiastical Commission, giving it sweeping powers to discipline Church of England clergy. On 3 August the Commission issued a summons requiring Compton to explain his refusal to obey James's direct order that he suspend John Sharp (1645?–1714), dean of Norwich and rector of St Giles in the Fields, London, for his anti-Catholic sermons.[50] Compton obeyed the summons but requested time to prepare his defence. A further delay was requested at his appearance before the Commission on the 16th. His trial was eventually held on 31 August; a sentence of suspension was issued, which came into force on 20 September. Subsequently bishop Crew, along with bishop of Rochester, Thomas Sprat, and bishop of Peterborough, Thomas White, took over administration of the London diocese.

The proceedings against Compton were the 'talk all over England'.[51] The Dissenting political chronicler Roger Morrice reported 'it was never known of late yeares that so universall an Interest of Churchmen, Trimmer and Dissenters – did follow any one Cause as now follows his.'[52] Sitting on the Commission was Compton's successor as

[49] *The Ellis Correspondence*, ed. G. A. Ellis, 2 vols (Colburn, 1829), i. 3; quoted in Winn, *Queen Anne*, 119. In letters to Ellis, who was serving as Secretary of the Commissioners to Public Revenue in Dublin, the sender is usually unnamed.

[50] A detailed account of the Commission's proceedings against Compton can be found in Carpenter, *The Protestant Bishop*, 87–98.

[51] Sir Ralph Verney to Edmund Verney, 15 August 1686, quoted in Steven Pincus, '"To Protect English Liberties": The English Nationalist Revolution of 1688', in Tony Claydon and Ian McBride (eds), *Protestantism and National Identity: Britain and Ireland, 1650–1850* (Cambridge, 1998), 75–104, at 90. See also *Ellis Correspondence*, i. 156–168; Luttrell, *A Brief Historical Relation*, i. 383–5.

[52] *The Entring Book of Roger Morrice*, *Volume III: The Reign of James II, 1685–1687*, ed. Tim Harris, 223–4. Morrice reported the proceedings against Compton in great detail, noting widespread support for him. See also Jacqueline Rose, *Godly Kingship in Restoration England: The Politics of Royal Supremacy, 1660–1688* (Cambridge, 2011), 256–8.

dean of the Chapel, bishop Crew.[53] One week before Compton's trial William Turner's symphony anthem *Preserve me, O God* was performed at the Anglican Chapel Royal. The anthem is dated 'Aug: 24th. 1686' in Gostling's scorebook, the only known source of the work. It sets verses drawn from Psalm 16.

Psalm 16, verses 1–12

1 Preserve me, O God: for in thee have I put my trust.
2 O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord: Thou art my God, my goods are nothing unto thee.
3 All my delight is upon the saints, that are in the earth: and upon such as excel in virtue.
4 But they that run after another god: shall have great trouble.
5 Their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer: neither make mention of their names within my lips.
6 The Lord himself is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup: thou shalt maintain my lot.
7 The lot is fallen unto me in a fair ground: yea, I have a goodly heritage.
8 I will thank the Lord for giving me warning: my reins also chasten me in the night-season.
9 I have set God always before me: for he is on my right hand, therefore I shall not fall.
10 Wherefore my heart was glad, and my glory rejoiced: my flesh also shall rest in hope.
11 For why? thou shalt not leave my soul in hell: neither shalt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption.
12 Thou shalt shew me the path of life; in thy presence is the fulness of joy: and at thy right hand there is pleasure for evermore.

The anthem is on a grand scale: 365 bars in an unremitting triple time, and requiring five soloists (two countertenors, tenor, and two basses), and chorus.[54] Gostling was one of the foremost bass soloists of his day, known especially for the wide range of his voice which extended down to *C*. The character of several of the bass solo passages in the anthem, one of which includes scalic passages descending from *d* 1 to *D*, suggests they

[53] The Commission was led by the Lord Chancellor, George Jeffreys, and included the Earl of Rochester, Lord Chief Justice Herbert, the Catholic Lord Sunderland, and bishop Sprat. Archbishop Sancroft declined to take part claiming ill health.

[54] Gostling's copy is barred irregularly, sometimes in three and more often in six crotchet beats per bar. This bar-count is based on a regular barring of three crotchets per bar and includes specified repetitions of several ritornellos.

were written specifically for him, while the use of strings indicates that Princess Anne was in attendance at the Chapel for its performance.[55]

Anne's attendance at the Chapel a week before her spiritual advisor's trial was probably a gesture of support for his cause. Likewise, the turmoil surrounding his prosecution almost certainly influenced the compilation of the text for and the reception of Turner's anthem. In such circumstances the psalmist is likely to have been read by many at the Chapel as Compton, who, opposing the Catholic interest—those who 'run after another god'—is sustained by his faith in God (and by implication the Church of England). The omission of verse five, which in the charged atmosphere might seem to associate negatively 'drink-offerings of blood' with the Catholic belief in transubstantiation, softens the tone. The omission of verses 6–8 tightens the structure of the text, throwing emphasis on the psalmist's steadfast trust in God. The omission of verse eleven—a part of the psalm considered prophetic of Christ's death and resurrection—removes any implication for those associating Compton with the psalmist that he was in some way a Christ-like figure.[56]

If, as seems likely, Turner's anthem was designed to be applied to the circumstances of Compton's prosecution by the Ecclesiastical Commission, it seems primarily aimed at offering support to Compton rather than a reproach to James. Its anti-Catholic overtones were mild in comparison to stronger positions being taken by preachers at the Chapel. On 13 March 1687 Evelyn heard Thomas Ken, bishop of Bath and Wells, preach

> at W-hall before the Princesse of Denmark, & an innumerable crowde of people … upon 8: *John*: 46 (the Gospel of the day) all along that whole discourse describing the blasphemies, perfidie, wresting of Scriptures, preference of Traditions before it, spirit of persecution, superstition, Legends & fables, of the Scribes & pharisees; so as all the Auditory understood his

[55] A letter sent from London to John Ellis dated 14 August 1688 indicates that 'the Queen and Princess [Anne] will be in town next week' (*Ellis Correspondence*, i. 167).

[56] See for instance Poole, *Annotations Upon the Holy Bible*. *Annotations* uses the King James Bible version of the Psalms in which verses 4–5 of the Prayer Book version of Psalm 16 are combined into a single verse.

> meaning of paralleling them with the Romish Priests, & their new Trent Religion.[57]

Despite increasing opposition to his pro-Catholic policies, James forged ahead, and in April 1687 issued a Declaration of Indulgence for Liberty of Conscience. It aimed at the establishment of freedom of religion for Catholics and Dissenters by asserting the king's dispensing power over the penal laws. James's action flew in the face of his brother's failure to assert the same power in 1672, which he was forced to concede in the face of vigorous opposition from the House of Commons.[58] James's Declaration threw Church of England clerics into the centre of controversy, forcing them to take positions for or against the policy. At the end of April four prominent bishops, Crew, Sprat, Samuel Parker of Oxford, and Thomas Cartwright of Chester signed a congratulatory address to James for the Declaration. The bishops attempted to enlist other clergy—including those of the Chapel Royal—in support of the address. Roger Morrice reported:

> The Address that the four B*isho*ps signed has been offered to the Clergy of London and all of note do refuse to subscribe it, And divers Clergymen of Note have been closetted by the B*isho*p of Durham, and I thinke Oxford and Chester, as Dr. Hestcard Dean of Windsor, who positively said that if the Divines of London were called togeather to consider of it, he would then only give his answer. Dr. Stratford Deane of St. Asaph who positively refused. Dr. Houlder sub:Dean as absolutely refused as he. They closeted also Mr. Crispin the Confessor to the family, that is preaches and reads prayers to the household, and visits those that are sick, he is a very sober and discreet person, And also Mr. Gosnell (the excellent singer) Dean of the Chappell, and one other Deacon, they all three refused. Dr. Green has not signed it nor is not likely.

[57] *Diary*, iv. 541. See also Evelyn's description of Ken's sermon at court on 14 March of the previous year (*Diary*, iv. 504). Ken's sermon of April 1688, in which he preached on the 'calamity of the true Judean church under Babylon' is discussed by Rose in *Godly Kingship in Restoration England*, 242–4.

[58] Ronald Hutton, *Charles the Second King of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (Oxford, 1989), 285–6, 292–8.

> The Deacons of the Kings Chappell were also closeted and Mr. [blank] the good singer did peremptorily refuse.[59]

Morrice's account demonstrates considerable antipathy towards the Declaration in the Chapel Royal. Despite pressure from Crew, the sub-dean William Holder (1616–1698), and the Chapel Royal priests, including Stephen Crespion (*c.*1649–1711), Gostling—whom Morrice confusingly identifies as dean—and possibly John Sayer (d. 1694) refused to support the bishops' address.[60]

In the spring of 1688 James II reissued the Declaration of Indulgence ordering that it be read out in the churches of London on 20 May, and in those of the rest of the country on 27 May and the two following Sundays. The order caused intense consternation among Church of England clerics. Sancroft and six other bishops, Ken, White, Turner (Ely), Lake (Chichester), Lloyd (St Asaph), and Trelawny (Bristol), encouraged by the suspended bishop of London, agreed to challenge James's dispensing power on the basis that it had previously been declared illegal in parliament.[61] On 18 May they presented a petition to him 'that he would not impose the reading of [the Declaration] to the severall Congregations within their diocesse'.[62] James was incensed by their opposition, and when the petition was circulated in print—an act for which the bishops claimed not to be responsible, and who some suggest was the work of Compton—they were charged with seditious libel.[63]

On 20 May John Evelyn 'went to Church in White-hall Chapell, where after the morning lessons; The Declaration was read, by one of the *Coire* [Choir] who used to

[59] *The Entring Book of Roger Morrice*, *Volume IV: The Reign of James II, 1687–1689*, ed. Stephen Taylor, 42. The editor identifies 'Gnosell' as 'probably John Gostling' and 'Mr [blank]' as 'possibly John Sayer (d.1694)'. Dr Green is Thomas Green (c.1648–1720), vicar of St Olave, Jewry. For Morrice's account of the circumstances surrounding the address of the four bishops, see pp. 31–2.

[60] See entries in *A Biographical Dictionary of English Court Musicians 1485–1714*, compiled by Andrew Ashbee and David Lasocki, assisted by Peter Holman and Fiona Kisby, 2 vols (Aldershot, 1998).

[61] R. Thomas, 'The Seven Bishops and their Petition, 18 May 1688', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 12 (1961), 56–70.

[62] Evelyn, *Diary*, iv. 583.

[63] Gibson, *James II and the Trial of the Seven Bishops*, 91.

reade the Chapters: Then followed the sermon, preached by Dr. *Scott* on 14 *John*: 17 making an eloquent & pious discourse upon the vicissitudes of worldly things. I heare it was also read in the Abby at Westminster; but almost universaly forborne throughout all London; the Consequences of which, a little time will shew'.[64] Bishop Sprat, reading the Declaration at Westminster Abbey where he was dean 'could hardly hold the proclamation in his hands for trembling'.[65] The following week 'the new reader at the Chapel Royal was so agitated as to be unable to read the Declaration audibly'.[66] It seems likely that Crew was instrumental in enforcing the reading of the Declaration at the Chapel Royal; he severely reprimanded prominent clerics in Durham for refusing to read it.[67]

The contrast between Compton and Crew must have been felt strongly amongst Chapel Royal personnel, particularly by a figure such as Blow, who, in his post of Master of the Children, doubtless worked closely with the former over the ten years in which he served as dean. Compton was an advocate of the traditions of Anglican liturgical practice as were Blow and Princess Anne.[68] Anne's support of the musical establishment of the

64 Evelyn, *Diary*, iv. 584. According to De Beer, the preacher was probably John Scott (*c.* 1639–1695); D.D. 1685; chaplain in ordinary *c.* 1692–5. Morrice reported that the Declaration was read 'In the Kings Chappell at Whitehall by Mr. White that has a little place there' (*The Entring Book of Roger Morrice*, *Volume IV*, 269). This may have been the Chapel Royal priest Blaise White. See also Thomas Smith, Bishop of Carlisle to Sir Daniel Fleming: 'at Whitehall the Declaration was read by one of the *singing men*—by special order from the Lord Chamberlain—and by *another* at Westminster where the Bishop of Rochester imposed it' (*The Manuscripts of S. H. Le Fleming Esq., of Rydal Hall*, Historical Manuscripts Commission (London, 1890), 210).

65 James Mackintosh, *A View of the Reign of James II. From his Accession to the Enterprise of the Prince of Orange* (London, 1835), 252.

66 Mackintosh, citing a letter of the Dutch ambassador Aernout Van Citters (*A View of the Reign of James II*, 252).

67 Gibson, *James II and the Trial of the Seven Bishops*, 103.

68 Winn, *Queen Anne*, 155–6. In his dedicatory address to Anne in *Amphion Anglicus* (London, 1700) Blow identifies his sacred compositions as 'those I only esteem as the Fruits of all my Labours in this kind'. Of his intention (which remained unfulfilled) to publish his sacred music he writes 'Nor will my Mind be ever

Chapel Royal, her close association with Compton, and the latter's long-standing role as leader of the Chapel all reinforce the probability that many amongst the Chapel Royal had aligned themselves firmly with the bishops in their dispute with the king.

On June 8 the bishops were called before the Privy Council. Refusing to give recognizances for their trial, they were imprisoned in the Tower of London. Popular opinion fell squarely behind them; Evelyn reported 'infinite crowds of people on their knees, beging their blessing & praying for them as they passed out of the Barge' on the way to the Tower.[69] On 10 June, in the midst of the crisis, Maria Beatrice gave birth to James France Edward, Prince of Wales. A day of thanksgiving was proclaimed for 17 June. The birth of a male heir to the throne—certain to be raised as a Catholic—further exacerbated anxiety surrounding James's pro-Catholic policies, of which the Declaration of Indulgence had become a potent symbol.

On 15 June the bishops were released from the Tower by a writ of *habeas corpus* and brought to Westminster to be arraigned; they pleaded not guilty. Bail was set at £200 for Sancroft, and £100 for the other six bishops.[70] Morrice described the scene vividly:

> The Court and whole Hall were both very full, the people made a Lane for the B*isho*ps both at their goeing in and coming out and paid them very great respect and veneration now they stand at the Protestant Post in defence of Religion Liberty and Property, and some of the people bowed down craving their blessing, and the B*isho*ps said according to their wonded ['wonted'?] forme God Confirm you and bless you.[71]

The bishops were brought to trial on 29 June; the jury delivered a verdict of not guilty the following morning. The Earl of Clarendon, who was in attendance, reported that at the announcement of the decision 'there was a most wonderful shout, that one would

at rest, till I have offer'd them up to God, for the Publick use of the best Church in the Christian World, under the Propitious Authority of Your Royal Highness's Name.'

[69] Evelyn, *Diary*, iv. 586. Morrice reported the scene in a similar fashion as part of a detailed account of the confrontation between James and the bishops (*The Entring Book of Roger Morrice, Volume IV*, 275–8).

[70] Gibson, *James and the Trial of the Seven Bishops*, 117.

[71] *The Entring Book of Roger Morrice, Volume IV*, 283.

have thought the Hall had cracked'.[72] John Reresby found the response of the crowds around Westminster Hall to be 'like a little rebellion in noise though not in fact', while the Dutch ambassador, Aernout van Citters, described scenes in which the jurors were embraced as deliverers by large crowds.[73] In the evening there were widespread bonfires, burnings of the Pope in effigy, and people lit illuminations in the form of seven golden candlesticks.[74] On the same evening bishop Compton and six leading nobles sent a secret invitation to William of Orange to intervene in England with a Dutch force to ensure a Protestant succession.[75] James's mismanagement of the conflict with the bishops is widely considered to be a significant contributing factor toward the revolution that led him to flee Britain, and brought William and Mary to the throne.

It is in these circumstances that Blow composed the anthems *O Lord, thou art my God* and *Blessed be the Lord my strength* for use in the Anglican Chapel Royal. Gostling copied both anthems into his scorebook, providing them with the dates 'June 19 1688' and 'June 30 1688' respectively.[76]

Isaiah 25

1 O Lord, thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth.
2 For thou hast made of a city an heap; of a defenced city a ruin: a palace of strangers to be no city; it shall never be built.
3 Therefore shall the strong people glorify thee, the city of the terrible nations shall fear thee.
4 For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible

[72] *The Correspondence of Henry Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, and his Brother Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester; with the Diary of Lord Clarendon from 1687 to 1690*, ed. Samuel W. Singer, 2 vols (London, 1828), ii. 179.

[73] *Memoirs*, 501. Parts of Citters' report are quoted in Lord Macaulay, *The History of England from the Accession of James the Second*, 2 vols (London, 1906), i. 517–18.

[74] Gibbs, *James II and the Trial of the Seven Bishops*, 132–4.

[75] Tim Harris, *Revolution: The Great Crisis of the British Monarchy, 1685–1720* (London, 2006), 271–2.

[76] H. Watkins Shaw was the first scholar to associate *Blessed be the Lord my strength* with the acquittal of the bishops: see 'The Gostling Manuscript by Franklin B. Zimmerman', *Music & Letters*, 60 (1979), 487–90 at 489. Bruce Wood has discussed both anthems in relation to James's confrontation with the bishops; see *Purcell An Extraordinary Life* (London, 2009), 111–14. Neither anthem is found in any other source nor has either been published.

ones is as a great storm against the wall.

5 Thou shalt He shall bring down the noise of strangers, as the heat in a dry place; even the heat with the shadow of a cloud: the branch of the terrible ones shall be brought low.

6 And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.

7 And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations.

8 He will swallow up death in victory; and for the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it.

9 And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

Psalm 144

1 Blessed be the Lord my strength: who teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight.

2 My hope and my fortress, my castle and deliverer, my defender in whom I trust: who subdueth my people that is under me.

3 Lord, what is man, that thou hast such respect unto him: or the son of man, that thou so regardest him?

4 Man is like a thing of nought: his time passeth away like a shadow.

5 Bow thy heavens, O Lord, and come down: touch the mountains, and they shall smoke.

6 Cast forth thy lightning, and tear them: shoot out thine arrows, and consume them.

7 Send down thine hand from above: deliver me, and take me out of the great waters, from the hand of strange children.

8 Whose mouth talketh of vanity: and their right hand is a right hand of wickedness iniquity.

How might these anthems have been received in the Chapel Royal in June of 1688? The text of the first anthem is 'discontinuous' and therefore likely to have been adjusted to suit the occasion. One might have expected that only two days removed from the thanksgiving for the birth of the heir to the throne a celebratory text would have been appropriate. The text Blow set, however, presents a people under siege. The deletion of verse six removes a celebratory feast, and that of verse seven weakens any sense of imminent triumph over an adversary. The filleting of the text serves to emphasize a sense of subjection and resistance. In the furore surrounding the imprisonment and impending trial of the bishops the text was likely to have been read as not only aligning the Chapel with their cause, but as a call for God to strike down their oppressors. The removal of

the second half of verse one might furthermore be seen to withdraw the settlement upon which the Church of England had reconciled its loyalty to James II. The old counsels 'of faithfulness and truth', under which James had promised to 'maintain the government in Church and State as it is by law established' had been breached.[77]

The text of *Blessed be the Lord my strength* is equally open to application to the turbulence of the June crisis. For those who felt themselves to be supporters of an embattled Anglican church facing the prospect of a Catholic succession, as well as for those who may have supported the king, the febrile atmosphere of the day would have invited listeners to the anthem at the Chapel to associate the 'hand of strange children' with James and his co-religionists. Likewise, the intensification of 'wickedness' into 'iniquity', with its implication of 'unrighteous action or conduct' seems pointedly directed at the king's conduct toward the bishops. Once again, the anthem seems to call for God's vengeance to be visited upon the bishops' persecutors.

It is astonishing that a pair of anthems for the Chapel Royal should have employed texts so bald in their potential to be interpreted as attacks against the king. In the discussion of the setting of *The way of God is an undefiled way* we have seen that Purcell's musical choices were crucial in creating the image of William III presented through the anthem. However, his role as a court employee obscures any significant insight into his personal opinion of William and his kingship. To compose an anthem so clearly consistent with the positive promotion of one's master is to do no more than meet expectations. Purcell was at no personal risk in producing a work that praised a king who commanded broad support in the court and in the country. In contrast, Blow's acts of setting *O Lord, thou art my God* and *Blessed be the Lord my strength* were not the obedient discharge of his responsibilities to the Chapel Royal, which even in the altered circumstances of James's reign was still directly responsible to the king. Instead, the settings seem likely to reflect a personal response to the prosecution of the bishops—an assertion of Church of England loyalty above loyalty to the king.[78] Blow's settings put him at personal risk. Were the anthems to be brought to James's attention and interpreted by him as acts of disloyalty, he could have had Blow removed from one or

[77] Gibson, *James II and the Trial of the Seven Bishops*, 47. See also Emma Major, '"That Glory May Dwell in Our Land": The Bible, Britannia, and the Glorious Revolution', in Kevin Killeen, Helen Smith and Rachel Willie (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of the Bible in Early Modern England, c. 1530–1700* (Oxford, 2015), 427–48.

[78] Major, 'The Bible, Britannia, and the Glorious Revolution'.

more of his court positions. Compton's removal as dean of the Chapel Royal offered ample precedent for James's willingness to censure the actions of figures much more powerful than Blow.

Blow's settings of the two anthems can be interpreted as going beyond the censure of James implied in the texts. They are vigorous, dramatic and colourful; in performance they could not have been passed over lightly. *O Lord, thou art my God* is written for bass soloist and chorus accompanied by organ. It is clear from the virtuosity of the solo writing, which requires a compass extending from *C* to *e flat*$_1$, that it was composed for Gostling. Blow put Gostling's lowest notes to powerful dramatic purpose. *C* is used on two occasions only, and in close proximity (Ex. 1). This compositional choice could be seen to equate the humbling of the 'branch of the terrible ones' with death. For an anthem performed two days after the thanksgiving celebrating the birth of a Catholic heir, the association of these two concepts through musical means, an association not implied by the text, might—for those with an ear to hear it—appear nothing short of treasonous. Whatever interpretation auditors gave to the passage, few could have ignored it striking sonic effect. Elsewhere Blow's compositional choices could be interpreted as embroiling the choir in the storm of controversy. Though it was called upon to sing two short choruses only, in the first, furious roulades are passed through the voices, and a chromatically-charged descending line in the trebles enacts the assault the Chapel had endured in the current crisis, which included one of the choir being required to read the Declaration of Indulgence only a month previously (Ex. 2).

[Insert near here: Ex. 1 John Blow, 'O Lord, thou art my God', bb. 59–77]
[Insert near here: Ex. 2 John Blow, 'O Lord, thou art my God', bb. 40–48]

It seems likely that Blow began work on *O Lord, thou art my God* on or shortly after 8 June, in response to the bishops' imprisonment. He must have set to work on *Blessed be the Lord my strength* on or immediately after 15 June, the day of the bishops' arraignment at which their trial was set for two weeks' time. *Blessed be the Lord my strength* is written for treble and bass soloists and chorus accompanied by organ. Though Blow did not require a *C*, the bass part nevertheless relies on a low tessitura and is clearly written for Gostling. Blow must have had one or more reliable boy soloists in the choir, since the anthem opens with a 20-bar treble solo and includes two treble and bass duets. Whereas the anthem of 19 June relied almost entirely on Gostling, who might be

expected to have coped even with such a virtuosic part at very short notice, the boy (or boys) charged with singing the anthem performed on 30 June would likely have required more time to learn their parts, and to rehearse the duet passages with Gostling.

Blessed be the Lord my strength is a more polished work than *O Lord, thou art my God*. It has a clear large-scale formal structure, made up of sections of which each forms a closed unit usually punctuated with a chorus (Table 2).

Table 2: Structure of John Blow's *Blessed be the Lord my strength*

Bars	Text incipit	Forces	Tonality	T-S
1–22	Blessed be the Lord my strength	Tr	G min	cut C
23–29	Who subdu'th my people	Choir	G min	[cut C]
30–55	Lord what is man	Tr, B	G maj	[cut C]
56–62	Man is like a thing of nought	Choir	G min	[cut C]
63–85	Bow thy heav'ns, O Lord	B	C maj–G min	[cut C]
85–100	Cast forth thy light'ning	Tr, B	G maj–D maj	[cut C]
101–123	Send down thine hand	Tr, B	D maj–G min	3, cut C
123–137	Whose mouth talketh of vanity	Choir	G min	[cut C]

Tr=treble solo; B=bass solo

The musical expression is less impetuous and raw in character than that of *O Lord, thou art my God*, as if the sudden rage at the unexpected imprisonment of the bishops had given way to a considered response to their plight. Each of the individual sections of the anthem includes telling musical responses to text, as for instance the descending chromatic lines traded between treble and bass at 'shoot out thy arrows and consume them'. Gostling's vocal range is exploited effectively if rather obviously at the lines 'Bow thy heav'ns, O Lord, come down: touch the mountains' in which a compass of *D* to e^1 is employed. Blow reserves the most dramatic effect for the final chorus in which the decani and cantoris sides of the choir hammer home the 'iniquity' of the 'strange children' in antiphonal exchanges (Ex. 3). Many of the singers and those attending the Chapel on 30 June must have found in this chorus a vehement rebuke of the king's prosecution of the bishops.

[Insert near here: Ex. 3, John Blow, *Blessed be the Lord my strength*, bb. 127–37]

As he set to work on *Blessed be the Lord my strength* Blow could not have anticipated the result of the trial, though the anthem could have been interpreted in support of the bishops whatever the verdict. There is some possibility that the bishops were at the Chapel when the anthem was performed. Macaulay claimed that following the verdict they 'took refuge in the nearest chapel from the crowd which implored their blessing', though he did not cite a source.[79] The trial had been held in Westminster Hall, and the verdict was read around 10 in the morning, so it may be that the bishops did resort to the Chapel Royal at Whitehall. A broadsheet published in 1700, *Great and Good News to the Church of England*, which offers 'Four most Remarkable Providences … which import that God Almighty of His infinite Wisdom and Goodness has frequently given his People peculiar Tokens to distinguish Good from Evil' recounts 'That it was upon the 29th of June, St. Peter's Day, that they [i.e. the bishops] were Delivered; They went immediately to White-Hall Chappel, the same morning, to Return Thanks, Where the Epistle for the Day was Read in the 12th Chap. of the Acts, from Verse the 1st. to the 12th.' The accuracy of this document—produced long after the event, and clearly a piece of Protestant propaganda—must be doubted. While the trial took place on the 29th, the verdict was not announced until the following morning; the passage from Acts (specified in the Book of Common Prayer as the Epistle for St Peter's Day), beginning 'About that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church', which recounts Peter's escape from imprisonment by Herod, would not normally have been read on 30 June. Whether or not the bishops were in attendance when *Blessed be the Lord my strength* was performed, it was surely sung with particular relish by many in the choir in light of the acquittal.

The suggestion that Blow's anthems should be read as evidence of his own and the wider Chapel Royal's support of the bishops is strengthened by diary entries showing the manner in which biblical verses were used and interpreted in sermons relating to the crisis. On 8 July 1688 Evelyn recorded: 'In the morning at W. hall, preached Dr. [blank] one of the Kings Chaplains before the princesse: on: 14 Exod[us] 13. Stand still & behold the salvation of the Lord: which he applied so boldly to the conjuncture of the

[79] Macaulay, *The History of England from the Accession of James the Second*, i. 517.

Church of England, as more could scarse be said to encourage desponders: In the meane time more virulently did the popish priests, in their sermons against the C. of England, raging at the sucesse of the Bishops, as being otherwise no ways able to carry their Cause against their learned Adversaries confounding them both by disputes & writings.'[80] On 10 April of the previous year, just days after James first issued the Declaration of Indulgence, the bishop of Chester, a strong supporter of the king, reported 'I heard … in the morning in the King's chapel … Dr. Tillotson … upon Moses by faith refusing to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and choosing rather to endure affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; who in the close magnified those who in this hour of temptation stick so close to the Church of England as to choose rather to be God's favourite than the King's, &c'.[81] In a context such as this it is inevitable that some, and probably most, listeners to Blow's anthems applied the texts to the crisis of the bishops.

In composing *O Lord, thou art my God* and *Blessed be the Lord my strength*, Blow seems to have proclaimed his allegiance to church over king. The same is likely to be true in the case of John Gostling. The specificity of Blow's writing for his voice implies his consent in voicing the words of these anthems, a consent reaffirmed by the copies he made of the two anthems in which their dates are recorded in both the table of contents and at the end of each anthem. Gostling was a clergyman, having been ordained at Ely in

[80] Evelyn, *Diary*, iv. 589–90.

[81] *The Diary of Dr. Thomas Cartwright, Bishop of Chester*, ed. J. Hunter (London, 1843), 44. Roger Morrice also commented upon this sermon along similar lines: 'Dr. Tillotsons text was in the 11th of the Heb*rews* upon these words Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaohs daughter &c and chose rather to suffer afflictions, and after he had shewed how great temptations Moses had to comply, he inferred that we had great cause to bless God that so few had fallen in this hour of temptation &c And Exhorted that as those that had lost their preferments for their Religion had given a very good argument that they would. So he pressed them very strongly to be carefull to live up to, and practice that true Religion they had suffered for.' (*The Entring Book of Roger Morrice, Volume IV*, 14). Hebrews 11.24–5, *KJB*: 'By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season'. Tillotson (1630–1694) was at the time dean of Canterbury and prebendary and residentiary canon of St Paul's; he became archbishop of Canterbury in 1690. See also the sermons of Bishop Ken noted above.

1675. He had served alongside Blow in the Chapel Royal since 1679 and must also have been well acquainted with Compton; there is every reason to believe he shared their church loyalty in the face of James's attempts to advance Catholic policies. As we have seen, he resisted the closeting by the bishop of Durham regarding the address in support of the Declaration of Indulgence.

In addition to his role as a prominent soloist in Turner's anthem of August 1686 and Blow's of June 1688, Gostling must also be a candidate to have been involved in the choice and editing of the texts.[82] Hawkins relayed an anecdote that Gostling, having been aboard the royal yacht Fubbs in a storm in which the vessel was in danger of capsizing, subsequently chose the text *They that go down to the sea in ships* to be set by Purcell to mark its—and his—deliverance.[83] The bass solo in that anthem was designed specifically for Gostling, and though the details of the anecdote have been questioned, it nevertheless suggests his active participation in the selection of anthem texts for composers in the Chapel, particularly for those in which he was to take a prominent part.[84] Indeed, Gostling is also a good candidate to have participated in devising the text for Purcell's *The way of God is an undefiled way*.[85] As the likely soloist, he had an important stake in the anthem and its reception. Gostling was appointed sub-dean of St Paul's in January 1690, a role that, like in the Chapel Royal, implied day-to-day oversight of the music for services. As one of the most important singers in the Chapel Royal and as an ordained priest and chaplain in ordinary to the king, he would have been well placed to have taken a role in the development of other texts used for Chapel Royal anthems. We must also consider the possibility that bishop Compton played some part in encouraging Blow and Gostling with regard to the anthem texts used in June 1688. He is known to have actively encouraged the bishops' protest, and his interest in undermining James II's position is clear.

The interpretation of Blow's anthem settings of June 1688 as acts of protest against the king's attack on the seven bishops encourages a re-evaluation of a story

82 I am grateful to Robert Shay for this suggestion.

83 John Hawkins, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, *A New Edition with the Author's Posthumous Notes*, 2 vols (London, 1875), ii. 693.

84 Robert Shay and Robert Thompson, *Purcell Manuscripts* (Cambridge, 2000), 145–50.

85 I am grateful to Robert Shay for this suggestion.

reported by John Hawkins that the composer was suspended from his duties at the Chapel Royal in 1688:

> There is an anecdote, which, as it was communicated by Mr. Weeley of the king's chapel, who had been a scholar of Blow, we may venture to give as authentic. In the reign of king James II. an anthem of some Italian composer had been introduced into the chapel, which the king liking very much, asked Blow if he could make one as good; Blow answered he could, and engaged to do it by the next Sunday, when he produced the anthem 'I beheld,' &c. ['I beheld, and lo! a great multitude'] When the service was over the king sent Father Petre to acquaint Blow that he was much pleased with it. 'But,' added Petre, 'I myself think it too long:' 'That,' answered Blow, 'is the opinion of but one fool, and I heed it not.' The Jesuit was so nettled at this expression of contempt, that he meditated revenge, and wrought so with the king, that Blow was put under a suspension, which however he was freed from by the Revolution, which took place shortly after.'[86]

Samuel Weely (d. 1743) was a child of the Chapel Royal until February 1702 and was appointed as a gentleman of the chapel in 1709.[87] He was, therefore, a scholar under Blow as Hawkins asserts. In 1937 Watkins Shaw evaluated this anecdote noting that there was no surviving record of Blow's suspension, and furthermore that 'the anthem in question is known to have been written at the latest by 1683'. He nevertheless quoted the Oxford historian E. A. Freeman's (1823–1892) comment that 'a false anecdote may be good history'. Shaw thought it possible that Hawkins had received the story directly from Weely, and furthermore felt that it 'may well embody the germ of truth'.[88]

[86] Hawkins, *A General History*, ii. 743. I am grateful to Peter Holman for alerting me to this anecdote.

[87] Burrows, *Handel and the English Chapel Royal*, 592.

[88] 'John Blow, Doctor of Music: A Biography by Harold Watkins Shaw: III', *The Musical Times*, 78 (1937), 1025–8 at 1027.

Extant sources of *I beheld and lo!* demonstrate that it was composed no later than 1677. It appears in the bass part-book London British Library, Add. MS 50860, where its ascription by the copyist William Tucker (d. 1679) to 'Mr: Jo: Blow' suggests it was composed before the composer received his Lambeth Doctorate in December 1677. The information regarding an anthem by an Italian composer 'introduced into the chapel' is ambiguous, since during James's reign either of two chapels were described in contemporary sources as the 'king's chapel', i.e. the Anglican Chapel Royal (which the king did not attend) and the king's Catholic chapel. The only English-language anthem written by an Italian composer known to me is G. B. Draghi's *This is the day*, a work which Sandra Tuppen argues may have been written for the Charterhouse in the 1690s.[89] It may be that the anthem by an Italian composer referred to in Weely's anecdote was a Latin motet written for the king's Catholic chapel.

Weely's anecdote as retold by Hawkins is incorrect with respect to the specific anthem cited therein, but the gist of the story may nevertheless provide an insight into Blow's circumstances in the second half of 1688. Blow, whom Hawkins described as 'not so insensible of his own worth as to be totally free from the imputation of pride', is unlikely to have been well disposed to Sir Edward Petre (1633?–1699) a Jesuit priest, and James II's confessor. Petre was installed on the Privy Council in November 1687 (prompting the bishop of Durham to stop his attendance) and he also usurped a number of other roles previously held by Anglican priests in the Chapel Royal. At the same time as he joined the Privy Council he was appointed Clerk of the Closet (a role he had held informally since 1685) and also probably took over the role of sub-almoner from William Holder.[90] It is easy to imagine Blow coming into contact with Petre with respect to some

[89] Copies in score: Cambridge University Library, EDC 10/7/5; University of California, Los Angeles, William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, MS fC6966/M4/A627/1700. A set of performance parts is held at Canterbury Cathedral. I am grateful to Sandra Tuppen for sharing her research on this anthem with me, including her unpublished paper, 'Giovanni Battista Draghi: an Italian in London' delivered at *Church Music and Musicians in Britain 1660–1900: Between the Chapel and the Tavern*, 20–23 June 2017.

[90] Barclay, 'The Impact of King James II on the Departments of the Royal Household', 112–114. At the same time Cardinal Howard became Lord High Almoner in place of Francis Turner, bishop of Ely, with John Leyburne, vicar-apostolic of England, deputizing in his absence. The daily alms and the Royal Maundy were the responsibility of the Lord High Almoner, and Barclay speculates that the change may

issue relating to music in the king's chapels and offering him an insult, and Petre subsequently looking for an opportunity to punish him in turn. Blow's anthems of June 1688 could have provided Petre with the ammunition necessary to seek his suspension. Such a circumstance sits neatly with the timescale of Hawkins's anecdote, which suggests Blow was suspended for a period of time immediately preceding William and Mary's accession to the throne.

With the caveat that Hawkins's report of Blow's suspension is otherwise unsubstantiated, it is tempting to revisit another work copied by Gostling into his scorebook in this light. Watkins Shaw noted that Gostling attributed his copy of *The Lord is king* to 'J [or I] anonimous B'. He comments: 'In Tenbury 1176–82 Gostling names the composer as Blow, but as the score at Texas was his own, one can only assume that he was alluding there to some kind of private joke.'[91] The anthem sets verses from Psalm 97.

Psalm 97, verses 1–12

1 The Lord is King, the earth may be glad thereof: yea, the multitude of the isles may be glad thereof.
2 Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgement are the habitation of his seat.
3 There shall go a fire before him: and burn up his enemies on every side.
4 His lightnings gave shine unto the world: the earth saw it, and was afraid.
5 The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord: at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.
6 The heavens have declared his righteousness: and all the people have seen his glory.
7 Confounded be all they that worship carved images, and that delight in vain gods: worship him, all ye gods.
8 Sion heard of it, and rejoiced: and the daughters of Judah were glad, because of thy judgements, O Lord.
9 For thou, Lord, art higher than all that are in the earth: thou art exalted far above all gods.
10 O ye that love the Lord, see that ye hate the thing which is evil: the Lord preserveth the souls of his saints; he shall deliver them from the hand of the ungodly.
11 There is sprung up a light for the righteous: and the joyful gladness for such as are true-hearted.

have meant that the distribution was subsequently restricted to Catholic recipients. In December 1687 Luttrell reported that Holder had lost his place as sub-dean of the Chapel (*A Brief Historical Relation*, i. 425), but no other evidence confirms this report.

91 Shaw, 'The Gostling Manuscript by Franklin B. Zimmerman', 489–90. MSS Tenbury 1176–82 are held in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

12 Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous: and give thanks for a remembrance of his holiness.

If we accept Weely's story as told by Hawkins, it is possible to read Blow's putative suspension from the Chapel as a reason for *The Lord is king* to be ascribed by Gostling to 'J anonimous B'. As *persona non grata* Blow's anthem could not have been offered under his name, but we can imagine Gostling, his close colleague and collaborator in the anthems that may have led to his suspension, providing this anthem to the Chapel 'anonymously'. The choice of text is telling in this context. If the anthem was offered in November of 1688 for instance, after William's invasion at Torbay on 5 November, but before Blow was reinstated to his post (perhaps at the point when James fled England in late December), the text can be read as a thinly veiled welcome to William of Orange and his stated intention of preventing James from exceeding his prerogative. Verses 2–7, which might be too sensitive under the circumstances, were omitted. Gostling also copied into his scorebook a setting of Psalm 97, verses 1–6 and 10–12 by Henry Purcell with the date '1688'. Purcell's setting includes most of the verses that would have been both most sensitive and most applicable in November and December of 1688 as William advanced toward London and the fate of the nation lay in the balance (i.e. verses 2–6).[92] Perhaps Purcell responded to Blow's setting, taking on those verses Blow did not set from his unsuspended, and therefore stronger, position in the Chapel.

As tempting as this hypothesis is, it has weaknesses. Blow's *The Lord is king* is copied into Gostling's scorebook using his 'Bing' hand (which is dated to the mid-1690s) as the last of a group of five works, the first four of which bear dates between September 1694 and April 1696.[93] Perhaps Blow's anthem was, in fact, composed in 1696, and Gostling's ascription reflects some other inside joke between the two of them. Or perhaps the anecdote reported by Hawkins is faulty, and Blow was never suspended from his post. At this juncture, it is necessary to return to the facts. James II was unable or unwilling to bring his army to bear against William's invading forces. He fled England

92 In fact, Gostling's date of '1688' could represent a date as late as 24 March 1689 if he was following the official administrative calendar as he did at the end of his copy of Purcell's *Blessed are they that fear the Lord*, see n. 27 above.

93 Shay and Thompson, *Purcell Manuscripts*, 72–3.

on 23 December, and William and Mary were offered the English throne in February 1689. Bishop Compton was made a member of the Privy Council on 14 February, and reinstated as dean of the Chapel Royal, a post which he held until his death in 1713.

Other dated works in John Gostling's scorebook

We have so far considered all but four of the anthems in John Gostling's scorebook for which he recorded a specific date. The others are Purcell's *Behold, I bring you glad tidings*, which Gostling annotated 'For Christmas day 1687', Blow's *We will rejoice in thy salvation*, which Gostling annotated 'Anthem made upon ye discovery of ye plot against King William Sung April 16: 1696 the Thanksgiving Day', Thomas Tudway's *Is it true?*, which Gostling annotated 'Sung before Queen Anne at Windsor July 12. 1702' and Jeremiah Clark's *I will love thee … it is God*, which Gostling annotated 'Thanksgiving Anthem Aug: 23. 1705'. The explicit association of two of these anthems with thanksgiving services (in addition to Purcell's *Blessed are they that fear the Lord*) should alert us to the possibility that other works in this manuscript fulfilled a similar purpose. Several instances in which Gostling provided the month and year in which an anthem was composed allow for the cross referencing of these works against dates of public thanksgivings and fasts. One such work is *Thy righteousness, O God*, which Gostling annotated 'Anthem composed by Dr. Blow, Aug: 1693'. Maureen Duffy has used this date to associate the work with a thanksgiving held on 6 August 1693.[94] A few weeks previously, William was wounded while leading his troops in the battle of Landen. When news reached London that he was recovering and not in mortal danger, Queen Mary ordered a thanksgiving for 'the Wonderful Preservation of His Majesties Sacred Person'. Duffy furthermore suggested that *O give thanks*, which Gostling annotated 'Composed by Mr Purcell 1693', was written for the same occasion. While it is possible that Purcell composed his anthem for the thanksgiving of 6 August, it seems more likely that it was intended for use at the Chapel Royal on the thanksgiving held in London on 12 November and on the 26th elsewhere in the realm. This thanksgiving was explicitly 'for the preservation of His Majesty from the great and manifold dangers to which his royal person was exposed during his late expedition: and for his safe return to *his people*' [my emphasis]. The contrast between the two texts tends to support this conclusion. Blow's anthem sets Psalm 71, verses 17–22

[94] Maureen Duffy, *Purcell* (London, 1994), 224–5. I am grateful to Robert Thompson for alerting me to this reference.

(+Gloria Patri), a direct and personal prayer of the psalmist in which verse eighteen in particular is specifically appropriate to the king's recent injury in battle: 'O what great troubles and adversities hast thou shewed me, yet didst thou turn and refresh me: yea, and broughtest me from the deep of the earth again.' In contrast, the text Purcell set, Psalm 106, verses 1–2, 4–5 and 46, emphasizes the granting of God's favour upon, and the thankfulness of the 'people'. It therefore seems better suited to an act of thanksgiving dedicated to the wider summer campaign rather than the specific instance of the king's injury.

Purcell's anthem is well matched to the thanksgiving sermon preached at the Chapel by John Sharp, who had become archbishop of Canterbury in 1691.[95] Sharp took as his theme the first verse of Psalm 97: 'The Lord is King, the earth may be glad thereof: yea, the multitude of the isles may be glad thereof.' Sharp aimed at demonstrating the evidence of God's providence in the world, and concluded that it was a matter for '*Two* ways we ought to express our *Rejoycing*':

> *First*, In a hearty sense of all God's *past* and *present Mercies* to us, and an actual giving Him our Thanks for the same. *Secondly*, In a cheerful dependance [sic] upon Him for his *Future* Blessings.'[96]

The text of *O give thanks* responds ideally to Sharp's directive:

1 O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is gracious: and his mercy endureth for ever.
2 Who can express the noble acts of the Lord: or shew forth all his praise?
4 Remember me, O Lord, according to the favour that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation;
5 That I may see the felicity of thy chosen: and rejoice in the gladness of thy people, and give thanks with thine inheritance.
46 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting and world without end: and let all the people say, Amen.

[95] *A Sermon Preach'd Before the King & Queen, at White-hall the 12th of November, 1693: Being the Day Appointed for a Publick Thanksgiving to Almighty God, for the Gracious Preservation of His Majesty, and his Safe Return* (London, 1693).

[96] Ibid., 21.

If Purcell's anthem was written on the occasion of the November 12 thanksgiving it would seem that the text was chosen to coordinate specifically with the theme of Sharp's sermon. The anthem's place in the Gostling's manuscript is also consistent with associating it with the 12 November thanksgiving. *O give thanks* appears after *Thy righteousness, O God*, separated only by a copy of Turner's *Lord what is man*, a much older anthem. Shay and Thompson have argued that Gostling took a chronological approach to copying repertoire in this portion of the manuscript, and that the interruption of the sequence resulted from his desire not to waste a gathering that he had on an earlier occasion begun with Turner's anthem.[97]

Gostling annotated the anthem *Turn us again* with the comment 'Composed by Dr Blow, Septemb: 1694'. The text of the anthem, Psalm 80, verses 3–9, 12, 14–15, 17–19, is clearly penitential in tone. A special fast 'taking into most serious Consideration the continued War' was appointed for 29 August 1694 in London and two weeks later in the rest of the realm. Gostling's annotation suggests that the anthem was not performed on the date appointed for the fast in London, but we have seen in the example of Purcell's *The way of God is an undefiled way*, works related to a thanksgiving were not necessarily performed on the day of the thanksgiving itself. Blow's anthem nevertheless appears to participate in the programme of fasts and thanksgivings that were used to build support for the war effort and to encourage belief in the godly foundation of William and Mary's regime.[98] The evidence provided in correspondence between archbishop Tillotson, bishop Gilbert Burnet and Queen Mary in relation to the series of thanksgivings and fasts in 1692 shows the care with which these events were planned.[99] In 1693 and 1694 music seems to have been called upon to play a significant role in such events at the Chapel Royal.

From Text to Occasion: *My song shall be alway*

The discussions above clarify some of the ways in which the source texts of anthems were selected and adapted to carry messages well beyond those that might be seen to apply to personal or corporate spiritual and religious practice. We have also seen that knowledge of the specific date of an anthem can offer significant insight into the political

97 Shay and Thompson, *Purcell Manuscripts*, 73.

98 Claydon, *William III and the Godly Revolution*, 105–6.

99 Ibid., 108–9.

implications of its text and music. We may, therefore, wish to test the implications of reverse engineering the process of interpretation; that is, what is the potential of working from text to occasion in the case of an anthem for which the date of composition and its original purpose is uncertain? Purcell's *My song shall be alway* is particularly interesting in this respect. Its discontinuous text raises the suspicion that it was tailored to suit a specific occasion, and while the date of its composition is unknown, it can be narrowed down to a period of about a year on the basis of it position in Gostling's scorebook. Furthermore, the anthem exists in two distinct states, which invites a consideration of the way in which the text might interact with the different contexts that these states imply.

Gostling's copy of *My song shall be alway* is probably the earliest source of the work. It appears in his scorebook between Purcell's *Sing unto God*, annotated 'Composuit 1687', and Blow's *O Lord, thou art my God*, dated 19 June 1688.[100] Gostling's copy preserves the anthem as a work for bass soloist and chorus accompanied by organ, and its presence in this portion of the manuscript implies that it was composed for the Chapel Royal. Another copy of the anthem, which includes an opening symphony and several ritornelli for strings, was copied by the Oxford musician Francis Withy, who annotated it 'H.P. Sep.9/90'.[101] An undated set of four instrumental parts for this version of the anthem, partly in Purcell's hand, is also extant (Oxford Christ Church, Mus.1188/9). The most recent editors of the anthem have not found definitive evidence demonstrating which version of the work came first, but conclude 'all in all, it seems likely that the version without strings is indeed the original one, and that it was hurriedly fitted out with a symphony and its two meagre ritornelli for some special occasion.'[102]

The text of *My song shall be alway* is taken from Psalm 89, verses 1–15, from which six verses have been omitted.

Psalm 89, verses 1–15

1 My song shall be alway of the loving-kindness of the Lord: with my mouth will I ever be shewing forth thy truth from one generation to another.
2 I have said, Mercy shall be set up for ever: thy truth shalt thou stablish in the heavens.

100 Shay and Thompson, *Purcell Manuscripts*, Table 2.1 and p. 73.

101 Oxford Bodleian Library, MS Mus.Sch.C.61; see Shay and Thompson, *Purcell Manuscripts*, 154–5.

102 Henry Purcell, *Sacred Music Part I*, ed. Margaret Laurie, Lionel Pike and Bruce Wood (The Works of Henry Purcell, 13; London, 2016), xiii.

3 I have made a covenant with my chosen: I have sworn unto David my servant;
4 Thy seed will I stablish for ever: and set up thy throne from one generation to another.
5 O Lord, the very heavens shall praise thy wondrous works: and thy truth in the congregation of the saints.
6 For who is he among the clouds: that shall be compared unto the Lord?
7 And what is he among the gods: that shall be like unto the Lord?
8 God is very greatly to be feared in the council of the saints: and to be had in reverence of all them that are round about him.
Alleluia.
9 O Lord God of hosts, who is like unto thee: thy truth, most mighty Lord, is on every side.
10 Thou rulest the raging of the sea: thou stillest the waves thereof when they arise.
11 Thou hast subdued Egypt, and destroyed it: thou hast scattered thine enemies abroad with thy mighty arm.
12 The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine: thou hast laid the foundation of the round world, and all that therein is.
13 Thou hast made the north and the south: Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy Name.
14 Thou hast a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand.
15 Righteousness and equity are the habitation of thy seat: mercy and truth shall go before thy face.
Alleluia.

The outline summary of Psalm 89 in *Annotations Upon the Holy Bible* describe its first two sections as follows: '*The Psalmist praiseth God for making and keeping Covenant with* David *and his Seed*, 1–4. *for his great power and care over his Church*, 5–18.' In terms of this broad analysis, the verses that are omitted for the purposes of the anthem could be seen to increase its focus, and to bring it to a manageable length. The removal of verses 2–4 eliminates a digression regarding God's covenant with David and his heirs. Through cutting verse eleven, which emphasizes God's power to punish and destroy, a focus on his greatness, righteousness and strength, rather than his potential for vengeance is maintained. Verses 12–13 might have been removed to limit the length of the text for setting, since, though they provide poetic emphasis, they do not expand our understanding of the breadth of God's power. The text as set by Purcell offers a forthright song of praise. Were there no further contextual evidence it is difficult to see what the text reveals about the specific origin of the anthem.

However, the position of *My song shall be alway* within Gostling's scorebook invites a much more specific reading of the text. If the anthem was written within about a year of a June 19 1688 *terminus ad quem*, the text appears especially well suited to the

period following the announcement of Maria Beatrice's pregnancy, and more specifically to the thanksgiving for the birth of her son held on 17 June 1688. Gostling's scorebook has been observed to contain 'a complete record of Purcell's and Blow's activities between 1685 and 1695 as composers for the Chapel Royal', yet no anthem therein is specified as marking the thanksgiving for the birth of the prince.[103] Notwithstanding the depth of feeling against the king that prevailed in June of 1688, demonstrated powerfully in the two anthems Blow wrote in that month, it seems inconceivable that the Chapel Royal provided no musical offering for the thanksgiving. It may have been that Purcell's *Blessed are they that fear the Lord* or some other anthem was repeated. However, the opening verses of Psalm 89 are ideal to celebrate the birth of a royal heir, even if rather problematic in the context of June 1688. Indeed, Psalm 89 was one of the two psalms (the other being Psalm 72) prescribed as proper for the day in the published service of thanksgiving.[104] The text may have been also intended to recall that set by Blow for James's coronation, *God spake sometime in visions*, verses 20–30 of Psalm 89.

Reading the text of *My song shall be alway* as an anthem for the thanksgiving encourages a reinterpretation of the omitted verses: 1) removal of verses 2–4 to avoid the explicit legitimization of a Catholic monarchy—a 'covenant with my chosen'—which was likely to be applied given the circumstance; 2) removal of verse eleven, which might suggest the defeat of James's adversaries (the Church of England as Egypt and its clerics—the Seven Bishops—as enemies?); 3) shortening the text by the removal of verses 12–13 as before. Evelyn reported that the 'forme of prayer' for the thanksgiving had been devised by bishop Sprat, who also had a hand in designing the thanksgiving for the queen's pregnancy.[105] Despite his strong support of James, one could well imagine the bishop, having been called upon to prepare a text for a thanksgiving anthem, judiciously refraining from conferring through the psalm unequivocal divine approval for

[103] Bruce Wood, 'The Gostling Manuscript Facsimile with a Foreword by Franklin B. Zimmerman', *Early Music*, 9 (1981), 117–120 at 118.

[104] *A Form of Prayer with Thanksgiving for the Safe Delivery of the Queen, and Happy Birth of the Young Prince. To Be Used on Sunday Next, Being the Seventeenth Day of this Instant June, in all Churches and Chappels Within the Cities of London and Westminster … by His Majesties Special Command* (London, 1688).

[105] *Diary*, iv. 588; John Morgan, 'Sprat, Thomas (*bap.* 1635, *d.* 1713)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography Online* <oxforddnb.com> [accessed 15 July 2019].

a lasting Catholic monarchy in England. The alterations made for *My song shall be alway* respond sensitively to this circumstance; the text might on the one hand satisfy the king, while on the other hand serving, through the omitted verses, as a sign of resistance for those concerned about the long-term political and religious implications of the birth. As a member of the Ecclesiastical Commission Sprat initially advocated for the bishop of London's acquittal, though as Compton's biographer notes 'when he learnt the price of such a betrayal of the King's interest was likely to mean his having to part with the white staff, his passion for office overcame his scruples'.[106] Sprat ordered the bells of the Abbey silenced in the celebrations that followed the acquittal of the Seven Bishops, but on 15 August 1688 he resigned from the Ecclesiastical Commission causing it to be immediately adjourned, an act that may have precipitated James's decision to dissolve the body shortly thereafter.[107] The sense of circumspection that is offered through the text of *My song shall be alway* if read as a thanksgiving anthem for James Francis Edward's birth would seem to be consistent with Sprat's troubled engagement with James's policies toward Church of England clergy.

As noted above, thanksgiving liturgies were normally designed or overseen by the archbishop of Canterbury, but the uncomfortable relationship between James and Sancroft throughout the first half of 1688 led to the appointment of other clerics to devise the thanksgivings held in this period: for the queen's being with child the bishops of Durham, Rochester and Peterborough (the triumvirate responsible for the London diocese during Compton's suspension), and for the prince's birth the bishop of Rochester.[108] The relationship between the psalms specified in the thanksgiving liturgies and anthem texts set for these occasions was not fixed. As we have seen, Psalm 128 was specified in the thanksgiving liturgy for the queen's being with child, and Purcell set that text for the same occasion, but in the thanksgiving liturgy celebrating the discovery of the plot again William on 16 April 1696 the proper psalms were 9, 21 and 118 while Blow set verses from Psalm 20. If the fact that Psalm 89 was specified for the thanksgiving of the prince's birth is suggestive, it cannot be taken as conclusive evidence that Purcell's setting of verses from that psalm was made for the same occasion.

106 Carpenter, *The Protestant Bishop*, 96.

107 Morgan, 'Sprat, Thomas (*bap.* 1635, *d.* 1713)'.

108 *By the King, A Proclamation … Given at Our Court at Whitehall the 23d Day of December, 1687* (London, 1687); *By the King, A Proclamation … Given at Our Court at Whitehall the Tenth Day of June 1688* (London, 1688).

The lack of string instruments in Gostling's copy of *My song shall be alway* should be taken to indicate that Princess Anne was not expected for its performance. She was in Bath at the time of James Francis Edwards's birth, which occurred a month earlier than Maria Beatrice's doctors had predicted. Upon receiving the news Anne returned to London immediately, arriving on 15 June.[109] There is no record of her attendance at the Chapel Royal on 17 June, and she may have chosen to stay away, unable yet to come to grips with the order of council from 10 June 'for prayeing for the prince of Wales after the queen dowager, before the princesses of Orange and Denmark'.[110] The musical characteristics of *My song shall be alway* as copied by Gostling fit neatly with these circumstances. Given the unexpectedly early birth and the short timescale of a week between the birth and thanksgiving, it would have been an expedient solution for Purcell to produce an anthem that depended on one soloist and only two brief (and identical) choral interjections of 'alleluia'. In his *History*, Hawkins claimed that the anthem was 'composed on purpose for Mr. Gostling', information likely to have been passed to him by Gostling's son William (1696–1777).[111] The range of the anthem does not exploit the lowest register of the bass voice in the way that other anthems obviously written for Gostling do. He nevertheless would have been well suited to deliver the declamatory and the melismatic passages in the anthem, and as the leading bass soloist of the Chapel, he could have been depended upon to efficiently execute the anthem with minimal preparation.

Were we to accept this scenario as a plausible explanation for the origin of *My song shall be alway*, how could a symphony version of the anthem be explained? A performance of the work at Windsor on 9 September 1690 has been suggested on the basis of the date provided in Francis Withy's copy of the anthem.[112] William arrived at Windsor that day on his way back to London having abandoned the siege of Limerick. While it is appealing to associate this coincidence with a performance of the anthem, newly expanded with a symphony and ritornello for strings, it is not consistent with the approach to music in the Chapel Royal of William and Mary, in which, as we have seen,

109 Winn, *Queen Anne*, 130–1; Luttrell, *A Brief Historical Relation*, i. 444.

110 Luttrell, *A Brief Historical Relation*, i. 443.

111 Hawkins, *A General History*, ii. 753; Robert Ford, 'Minor Canons at Canterbury Cathedral: The Gostlings and their Colleagues' (Ph.D. diss. University of California at Berkeley, 1984), 230–1, 454.

112 Holman, *Four and Twenty Fiddlers*, 406; idem, *Henry Purcell* (Oxford, 1994), 140.

the use of instruments apart from the organ was banned. Shay and Thompson have demonstrated that a number of early sources of the instrumentally expanded version of the anthem have Oxford associations.[113] Another possibility for the symphony anthem version could have been a performance especially designed for Oxford where no ban on instruments was in place. The date in Withy's copy might preserve Purcell's completion of a new version of the work for Oxford or record that date on which Withy made his copy. Either way, the work's performance with instruments in Oxford seems rather likely.[114]

The day of thanksgiving for the birth of James Francis Edward was celebrated in London on 17 June and in the rest of the country on 1 July.[115] As Shay and Thompson note, there was a 'real if sporadic tradition of instrumental accompaniment' of anthems in Oxford.[116] The repetition of the anthem for the thanksgiving in Oxford on July 1 would have allowed time for Purcell to further solemnize the occasion through the addition of instrumental symphonies (which, after all, are not integral structurally to the work). Anthony à Wood reported that on the day of the thanksgiving 'most of the bells in Oxon rang in the morning' and briefly noted observances 'at St. Marie's before the Universitie' and at 'Magd. Coll. before the new president, society, popish officers and soldiers of Oxon, and all the papists in and neare Oxford, where besides was verie solemn service.'[117] No mention is made of Christ Church, where Withy was a singing-man.[118] Withy's copy of the anthem is found in a manuscript notable for its 'emphasis on music by Catholic composers'.[119] If the anthem was indeed composed for the prince's birth, might Withy, making a copy in 1690 of an elaborated version for Oxford, naturally have placed it with a Catholic-associated repertoire?

113 Shay and Thompson, *Purcell Manuscripts*, 150–7.

114 See also Purcell, *Sacred Music Part 1*, xii–xiii.

115 Luttrell, i. 443.

116 Shay and Thompson, *Purcell Manuscripts*, 153.

117 *The Life and Times of Anthony Wood: Antiquary, of Oxford, 1632–1695*, 5 vols (Oxford, 1891–1900), iii. 271.

118 Robert Thompson, 'Francis Withie of Oxon' and his Commonplace Book, Christchurch Oxford, Ms 337', *Chelys*, 20 (1991), 3–27.

119 Shay and Thompson, *Purcell Manuscripts*, 155.

But once again we are treading rather far down the path of speculation. Two other anthems by Purcell bear dates of '1688' in Gostling's scorebook, *The Lord is king* (see above), and *O sing unto the Lord*, an anthem with strings and with a discontinuous text that at least one scholar has suggested as appropriate for the thanksgiving of the prince's birth.[120] The elaborate nature of this anthem, in seven separate movements, including solos for bass voice, a duet for a treble and countertenor, and a number of contrapuntally sophisticated choruses, may make it an unlikely candidate circumstantially given the short period of time available between the birth and the thanksgiving day, but the case for *My song shall be alway*, depends on circumstantial evidence too.

In the end, a careful examination of the text of *My song shall be alway* cannot confirm the occasion for which it was composed. It is in the nature of biblical texts to be mutable in their application. Indeed, one of the attractions of biblical allusion is its flexibility. Clerics and composers no doubt found this to be useful for a number of reasons. It might offer plausible deniability in circumstances when an unflattering application was discerned (or intended); it could allow works to outlive their initial occasion. *My song shall be alway* is well tailored for repeat usage. If the anthem has any direct relationship to the birth of James Francis Edward it is not strongly signalled in the text. Likewise, if Purcell wrote the anthem for Gostling to sing, he did not create a part that *only* Gostling could sing. Nevertheless, the limitations of determining the occasion of an anthem through the analysis of its text should not dissuade us from trying, for the attempt provokes engagement with the variety of ways in which anthems may have been experienced by contemporary audiences. Such engagement can offer access to the emotional valence of a work that existed beyond the score. In the case of Blow's *Blessed be the Lord my strength* our understanding of the final chorus as sung and heard on 30 June 1688—a day which we can imagine in detail because of the numerous reports recording its pyretic emotional temperature—is fundamentally changed by understanding the implications of the text.

Furthermore, close attention to anthem texts demonstrates that Restoration composers were active agents in the political dramas of their day. A study of the text of *The way of God is an undefiled way* reveals not only the adaptation of biblical verse into royal panegyric, but also the artful role Purcell played in transforming that raw material into an aural and visible personification of William III as King David. The composer emerges

[120] Walkling, 'Politics, Occasions and Texts', 219. See also Wood, *Purcell An Extraordinary Life*, 114–15.

from the shadows as a creator of the image of William III every bit as active in his work as had been John Dryden in creating the image of Charles II. We can equally see in John Blow, through his settings of incendiary anthem texts in June 1688, a composer apparently willing to place his career in jeopardy for the sake of his beliefs. Active participation in the political life of the Chapel through musical means clearly extended beyond composers to the singing-men who brought their works to life. John Gostling's prominent role in shaping the creation and realization of the anthems performed in the Chapel Royal appears to have been as active and potentially as dangerous as that of the composers whose music he performed. The care with which he preserved these works in his scorebook, and the detail with which he recorded the dates of works in which he was intimately engaged, offers a vivid sense of his personal investment in the role music played in the Chapel, a role that was most certainly not narrowly circumscribed to the religious or the spiritual. Even for the many anthems from the Chapel Royal for which insufficient evidence survives to reveal whether or not they were written for specific occasions, a sensitivity to the construction of their texts, and to their potential—as well as that of the music setting them—to carry significant political charge, can only extend our appreciation of the role of the anthem in Restoration cultural practice.

Table 1: Anthems for the Chapel Royal for special thanksgivings and fasts 1660–1702

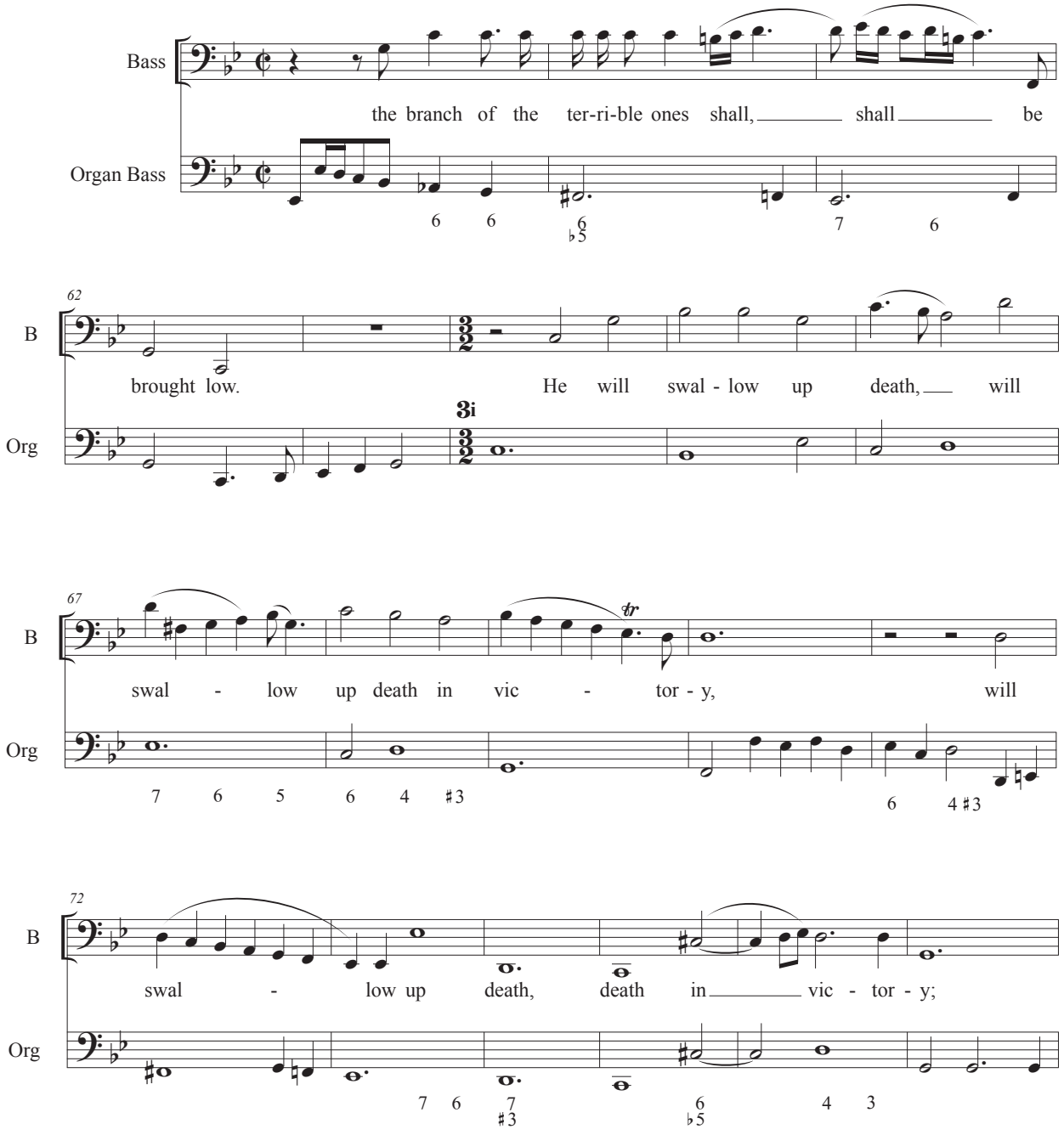
Date of observation*	Occasion	Printed liturgy	Thanksgiving/Fast Anthem	Ascription in source	Related anthem
14/23 August 1666	Thanksgiving for the naval victory over the Dutch	*A form of common prayer, with thanksgiving, for the late victory by His Majesties naval forces*	Matthew Locke, *Be thou exalted, Lord*	'A song of Thanksgiving for his Majesty's Victory over the Dutch on St. James his day 1666 And perfom'd before his Majesty on the 14th of August following'; GB-Ob, MS Mus.C.23	
9 September 1683	Thanksgiving for the king's deliverance from the Rye House Plot	*A form of prayer with thanksgiving … in due acknowledgment of God's wonderful providence, and mercy, in discovering, and defeating the late treasonable conspiracy against His Sacred Majesties Person, and Government*	Thomas Tudway, *The Lord hath declared*	'on the Thanksgiving for the discovery of the Rye House Conspiracy … 1682 [sic]'; GB-Lbl, Harleian MS 7340	John Blow, *Hear my voice, O god*, 'July ye 18th 1683'; GB-Cfm 117. This date falls immediately after the sentencing of the conspirators for the Rye House Plot.
15/29 January 1688	Thanksgiving for the pregnancy on Maria Beatrice	*A form, or order of thanksgiving, and prayer … upon occasion of the Queen's being with child*	Henry Purcell, *Blessed are they that fear the Lord*	'Anthem for ye Thanksgiving appointed Jan 15th 1687/8 for ye Queens being wth child'; US-AUS HRC 85	
17 June/1 July 1688	Thanksgiving for the birth of James Francis Edward	*A form of prayer with thanksgiving for the safe delivery of the Queen, and happy birth of the young Prince*	?Henry Purcell, *My song shall be alway*		
6 August 1693	Thanksgiving for the preservation of the king's life after his injury at the battle of Landen	*A Form of Thanksgiving to Almighty God, for the Wonderful Preservation of His Majesties Sacred Person in the late Battel of Landen, between the Confederate Forces Under the Command of His Majesty in Flanders, and the French Army There; on the 19th Day of July, 1693*	?John Blow, *Thy Righteousness, O God*	'Anthem composed by Dr. Blow, Aug: 1693'; US-AUS HRC 85	
12/26 November 1693	Thanksgiving for the king's return from	*A form of prayer and thanksgiving to Almighty God … for the preservation of His Majesty from*	?Henry Purcell, *O give thanks*	'Composed by Mr Purcell 1693'; US-AUS HRC 85	

	the summer campaign of 1693	*the great and manifold dangers to which his royal person was exposed during his late expedition: and for his safe return to his people*			
29 August/19 September 1694	Fast for the summer campaign of 1694	*A Proclamation for A General Fast … taking into most serious Consideration the continued War+*	?Blow, *Turn us again*	'Composed by Dr Blow, Septemb: 1694'; US-AUS HRC 85	
2/16 Dec. 1694	Thanksgiving for the king's return from the summer campaign of 1694	*A form of prayer and thanksgiving to Almighty God … for the preservation of His Majesty from the dangers to which his royal person was exposed during his late expedition: and for his safe return to his people: and for the success of his forces by sea and land*			Henry Purcell, *The way of God is an undefiled way*, 'November ye 11th 1694 King William then returnd from Flanders'; US-AUS HRC 85. William arrived in England on 9 November.
16 April 1696	Thanksgiving for the discovery of the plot against the king	*A form of prayer and thanksgiving, to almighty God … for discovering and disappointing a horrid and barbarous conspiracy of papists and other trayterous persons to assasinate and murder His most Gracious Majesties royal person; and for delivering this kingdom from an invasion intended by the French*	John Blow, *We will rejoice in thy salvation*	'Anthem made upon ye discovery of ye plot against King William Sung April 16: 1696 the Thanksgiving Day'; 'Composed by Dr. Blow Ap[ril] 9th 1696 Performed ye 16th following at Whitehall'; US-AUS HRC 85	
2 December 1697	Thanksgiving for the Peace of Ryswick	*A form of prayer and thanksgiving to Almighty God, for His Majesties safe return, and for the happy and honourable peace, of which God has made him the glorious instrument*	John Blow, *Praise the Lord, O my Soul*	'Composed vpon the Peace … 1697'; GB-Lbl Add. MS 31444	John Blow, *I was glad*; 'This was made by Dr. Blow Oct. ye 15: 1697 att Hamton Town for the opening of St. Paul's Cathedrall'; GB-Lbl Add. MS 31445. The opening of St Paul's Cathedral coincided with the thanksgiving for the Peace of Ryswick.

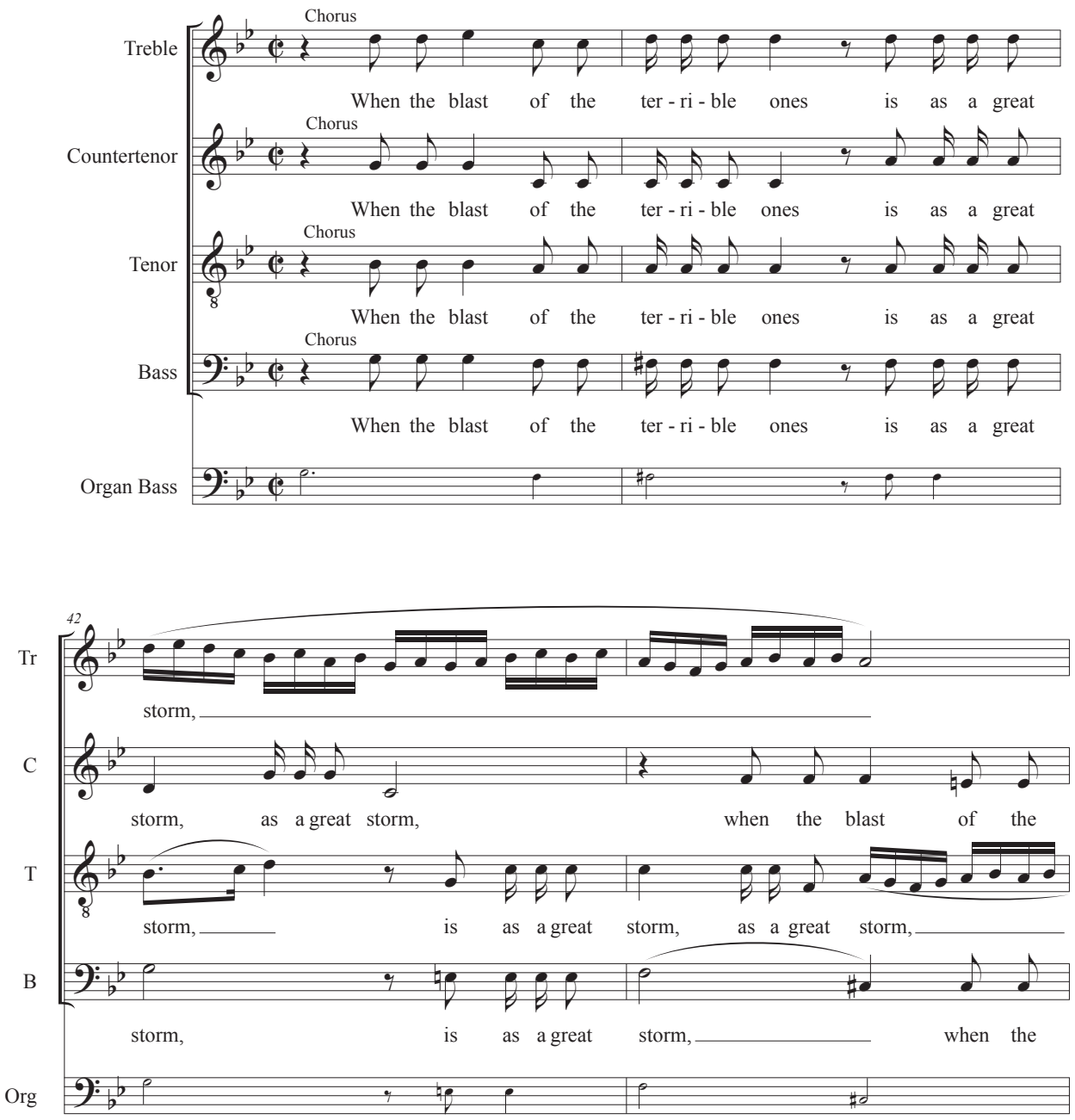
* Where two dates are given, the first is for the commemoration in London and vicinity and the second is for the rest of the realm.
+ The proclamation prescribed the use of the form of prayer for the previous general fast of 23 May/13 June 1694.

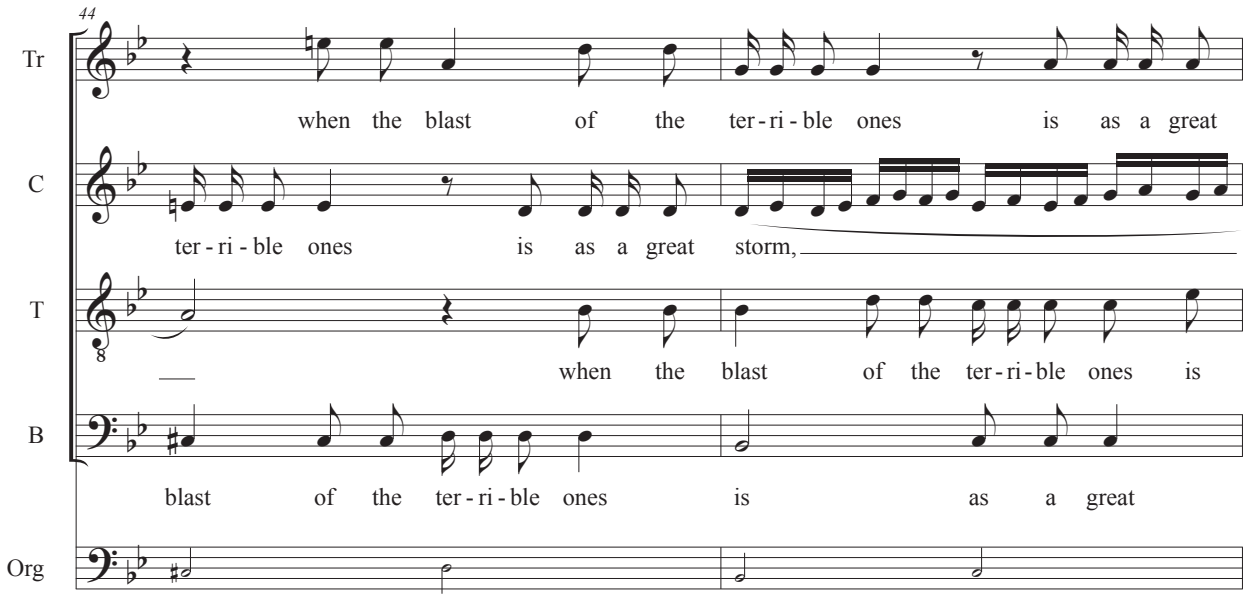
GB-Cfm: Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum; GB-Lbl: London, British Library; GB-Ob: Oxford, Bodleian Library; US-AUS HRC: Austin, Texas, University of Texas Harry Ransom Center

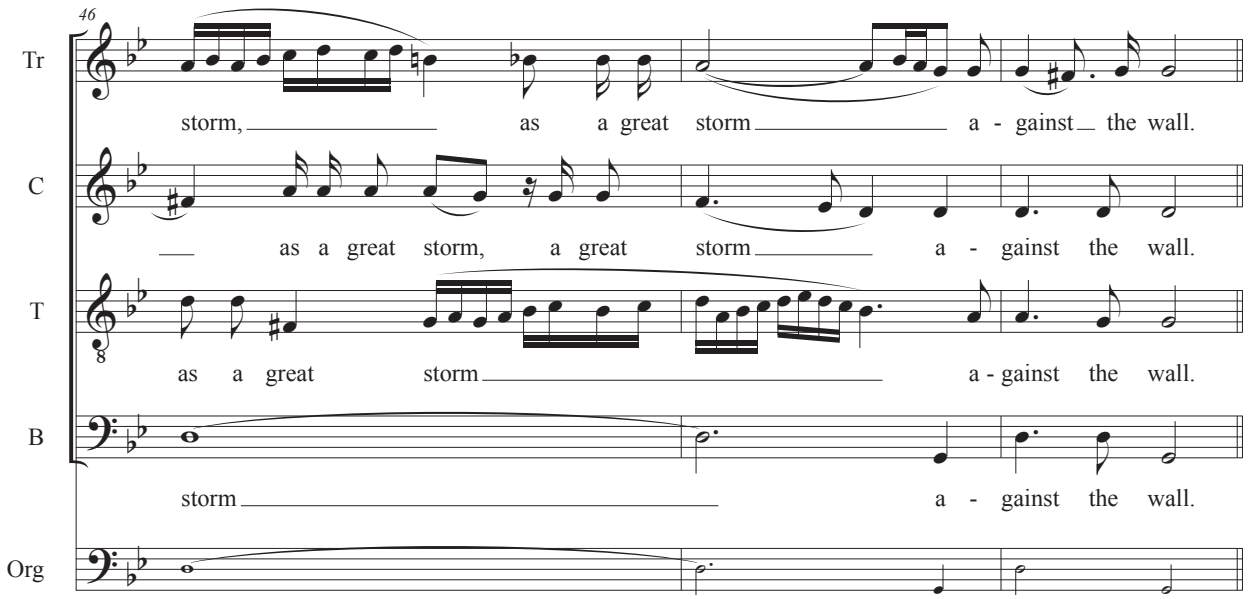
Ex. 1: John Blow, 'O Lord, thou art my God', bb. 59-77



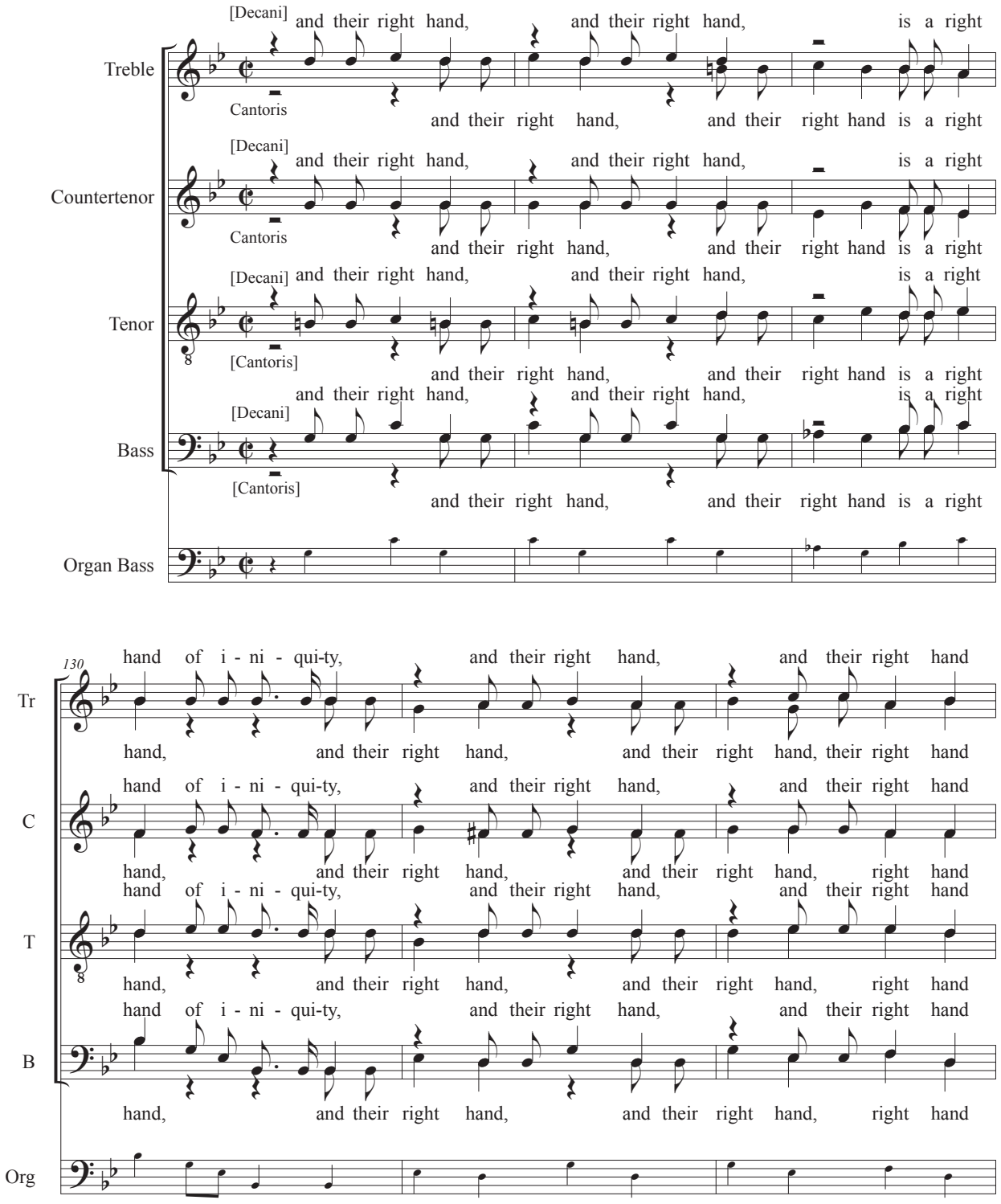
Ex. 2 John Blow, 'O Lord, thou art my God', bb. 40-48

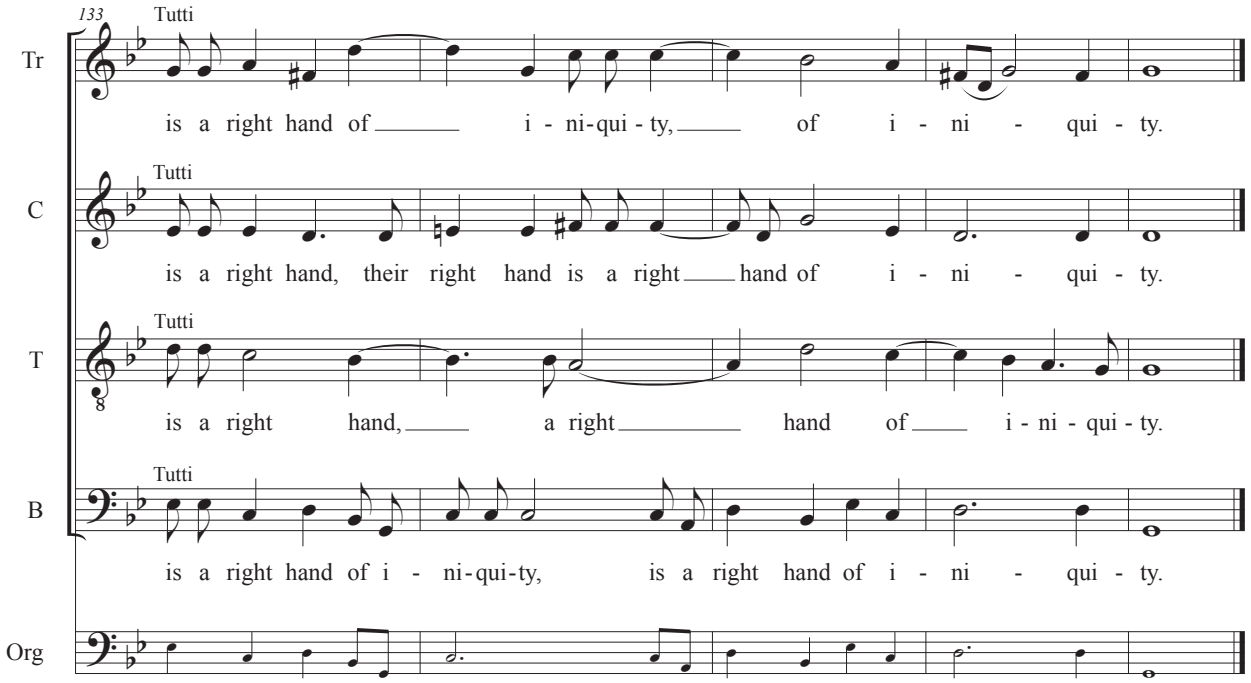



44
Tr
when the blast of the ter - ri - ble ones is as a great
C
ter - ri - ble ones is as a great storm,
T
when the blast of the ter - ri - ble ones is
B
blast of the ter - ri - ble ones is as a great
Org


46
Tr
storm, as a great storm a - gainst the wall.
C
as a great storm, a great storm a - gainst the wall.
T
as a great storm a - gainst the wall.
B
storm a - gainst the wall.
Org

Ex. 3 John Blow, 'Blessed be the Lord my strength', bb. 127-137




133
Tutti
Tr
is a right hand of i - ni-qui - ty, of i - ni - qui - ty.
Tutti
C
is a right hand, their right hand is a right hand of i - ni - qui - ty.
Tutti
T
is a right hand, a right hand of i - ni - qui - ty.
Tutti
B
is a right hand of i - ni-qui-ty, is a right hand of i - ni - qui - ty.
Org