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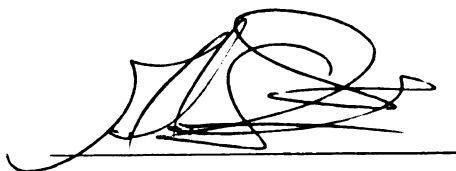
**WILLIAM BILLINGS: THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPOSER AS
SHOWN BY AN ANALYSIS OF HIS ANTHEMS**

presented by

Kimberly Anne Veenstra

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

M.M. degree in Music Theory



Major professor

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**WILLIAM BILLINGS: THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPOSER AS SHOWN BY
AN ANALYSIS OF HIS ANTHEMS**

By

Kimberly Anne Veenstra

A THESIS

**Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of**

MASTER OF MUSIC

School of Music

2000

ABSTRACT

WILLIAM BILLINGS: THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPOSER AS SHOWN BY AN ANALYSIS OF HIS ANTHEMS

By

Kimberly Anne Veenstra

William Billings (1746-1800) was an American composer who wrote music almost exclusively in four-part vocal texture. One genre that Billings was quite proficient in was the anthem, an English derivative of the Latin motet. From these anthems, much can be observed about Billings's compositional style.

The aim of this study is to trace the evolution of Billings's work through an analysis of nearly all of his forty-eight anthems. Elements addressed in this analysis include text, form, meter and rhythm, and harmony. An overview of the anthems in each large publication of Billings's work, which includes some defining features of his development as a composer, is presented first. A detailed analysis of two anthems with the same title and much of the same text, which shows more specific changes between Billings's earliest compositions and his later ones, is presented second.

The reader will find that such a study of Billings's anthems shows his marked growth as a musician. Successive publications reveal stylistic changes, and the changes demonstrate an ever-increasing understanding of music and composition.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to extend my thanks to the American Musicological Society for granting me permission to reproduce William Billings's music.

I am also grateful to several faculty members at Michigan State University for aiding me in the completion of my thesis. First of all, I would like to thank Dr. Gordon Sly for acting as chair of my thesis committee. His comments, suggestions, and flexibility with my hectic schedule have been much appreciated. Second, I would like to thank the other members of my thesis committee, Dr. Bruce Taggart and Dr. Jonathan Reed. They have inspired me to further my studies in early American music. Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Michael Largey for introducing me to the book, *The Clockwork Muse* by Eviatar Zerubavel, without which I don't know if I would have ever begun writing.

The prayers and encouragement from my family and friends have been a blessing to me. I would like to thank my colleagues and students at Michigan State University, my friends in Grand Rapids, my relatives and my parents for all their love and support during the past year.

I would especially like to thank my husband, Matt, who has been the best friend I could ever ask for. He has always been there for me, even when I could not be there for him. He has endured through my time-consuming schedule and my countless moments of stress. Throughout my studies at Michigan State University, he has showered me with compassion and support.

Finally, I must give my utmost praise and thanks to God. It has been such a comfort to know that He is always there for me, watching over me every minute of every day. He is my sole source of strength, and without him I can accomplish nothing.

"Not to us, O LORD, not to us
but to your name be the glory,
because of your love and
faithfulness."

(Psalm 115:1 NTV)

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INTRODUCTION

William Billings was a typical eighteenth-century American. Born on October 7, 1746, in Boston, Massachusetts, Billings spent his entire life working hard to support his large family. His main source of income came through his job as a tanner. He learned this skill early in life from his father, and he became quite respected in the trade. To supplement this income, Billings also worked as a street cleaner and a “hogreeve.”¹ Billings’s passion, however, was music. Though the generations that follow him may not remember his skill as a tanner, a hogreeve, or a street cleaner, there will always be evidence of his work as a musician.

The mid-eighteenth century in Boston, Massachusetts, marked a time of tremendous growth in American industry and commercialism. This growth was largely due to the developing skills and trades of Bostonians like Billings. In addition to tanning, skills like printing and engraving became important during this time. The brother of Benjamin Franklin, J. Franklin, was one of the earliest to print American books, and Paul Revere was one of Boston’s leading silversmiths. With the ability to print and engrave, sharing ideas became easier. Finally, Americans were making advancements in the music industry. The year 1720 marks what Oscar G. Sonneck calls the “formative period” in American

¹ According to John C. Swan, a “hogreeve” can be described as “an enforcer of the local stray-swine laws.” John C. Swan, *Music in Boston* (Boston: Trustees of the Public Library of Boston, 1977), 20.

musical history², beginning with an attempt to better the vocal performance of church choirs, and ending with the composition of some of the most intriguing music we have today. What follows is a brief history of music in New England, tracing the influences that led to its increased popularity.

The Puritans arrived in 1620, bringing with them very strict rules governing everyday life. One such regulation forbade the composition of new tunes. Other regulations discouraged dance classes and the performance of music outside the church. The Puritan tradition was grounded in psalmody (musical settings of verses of sacred text), and the singing of psalms at church was the only musical activity allowed in New England. In fact, the first book printed in America was the *Bay Psalm Book*, a large supply of psalm-tunes with which the new immigrants were very familiar. As time passed, succeeding generations of Americans lost the musical skills they once possessed, and familiarity with the psalm tunes declined. The main problem was an increasing inability to read music, which led to difficulty with the less familiar tunes.

Around 1720, the New England clergy noticed the decline in musical ability and established singing schools to remedy the situation. In a singing school, a member of the town or church congregation who could read music led classes where he would teach young children how to read music. This leader was called a "singing master," and was often not a professional musician. Basic

² Marion Bauer and Ethel Peyser, *How Music Grew from Prehistoric Times to the Present Day* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1939), 460.

note-reading skills were learned through the fasola solmization method.³

Eventually, the students of a singing school were able to perform in choirs at churches, bringing back a more desirable sound with which they could sing praises to God.

The first music studied at the singing schools came primarily from imported volumes of British psalmody. As years passed, Americans grew in their passion for nationalism, giving them a desire to compose music of their own. Many Americans were self-taught in their music knowledge and pursued crude attempts at composing. A composer in such a situation in Europe would probably never be acknowledged as legitimate, but the national pride felt during this time did not deter the Americans. Those who were brought up in the singing schools of the 1700s paved the way for Americans in the future to explore their talents in musical composition.

Among the attendees of the singing schools was William Billings. His interest in music undoubtedly began while he was a student there. Through the singing school he learned the basics of note reading and also gained some performance experience. He was also introduced to large compilations of psalm-

³ The solmization method of fasola was very important in teaching how to read music. Solmization methods were continually changing in the singing schools, however, and one product of these changes was shape notation. Bostonian John Tufts was one of the first to use non-traditional notation of pitch. In his book, *An Introduction to the Art of Singing of Psalm Tunes* (Boston, 1721), he placed the first letters of each fasola syllable on the staff (fa, sol, la and mi), followed by a series of dots to represent pitch duration. As this method of pitch reading became popular, shapes began to replace letters on the staff. In the early nineteenth century, urbanization in the northern United States replaced the singing schools with more formal music education. As this happened, singing schools began to spread into the South, where shape-note reading became very popular. To this day, southern church congregations thrive on singing shape-note hymns, such as those contained in *The Sacred Harp*, the best-known shape-note tune book.

tunes written by English composers, many of whom would later prove to influence his compositions.

Billings's desire to compose began while he was a student in the singing schools. Like many American composers who were to follow him, Billings was largely self-taught as a musician. He spent time studying the theoretical writings of his English contemporaries, and he immersed himself in the style of their compositions. Billings began composing in his mid-teens. Subsequently, composing became a skill that he nurtured throughout the rest of his life.

Billings continued to be involved with the singing schools through most of his life. In the late 1760s, he became a singing master. The following decades saw Billings organize and conduct in several singing schools all over the Boston area.

In 1770, William Billings published his first volume of original musical compositions. Though rough in style, it was the beginning of Billings's life as an American composer. Because of this publication, *The New-England Psalm-Singer*, Billings is often thought of as America's first composer. According to John C. Swan, Billings was "a musician, perhaps our first native-born, full-fledged professional musician, and he was a genius, a largely self-taught master of psalmody, our first great composer."⁴

⁴Swan, 20.

Altogether, Billings published six volumes of his own music containing psalms, anthems and fusing-tunes. The names of these tunebooks, as they are called, are as follows: *The New-England Psalm-Singer* (1770), *The Singing Master's Assistant* (1778), *Music in Miniature* (1779), *The Psalm-Singer's Amusement* (1781), *The Suffolk Harmony* (1786), and *The Continental Harmony* (1794).⁵ Of the three types of music found in these large publications, the anthems are the most elaborate. They are generally longer than the psalms or fusing-tunes, allowing a variety of textures and moods to be established in each piece.

The purpose of this thesis is to trace the musical development of William Billings. I will provide an overview of all the anthems he wrote, noting changes in his compositional style from his earliest anthems to his final ones. Then I will illustrate these changes with an analysis of two representative works. These anthems are unique in that they share a common text but differ in their musical content. The first of these is included in *The New-England Psalm-Singer*, the second is in *The Psalm-Singer's Amusement*, and they are both entitled "Blessed is He that Considereth the Poor." By looking at these anthems in detail, we can gain some knowledge about his development as a composer.

William Billings was a musician who, like all who strive to become proficient in a craft, practiced until he reached his goal.

⁵ Although he advertised his publications to the general public, it is likely that they were used most often in the singing schools, for in several of the publications Billings includes specific rules and guidelines intended to aid singing masters. Several of Billings's pieces were also likely performed by church choirs and congregations. In the late twentieth century, Billings's music became quite popular in both church and concert settings.

THE ANTHEMS

An anthem is a type of musical composition that evolved considerably over its history. According to Karl Kroeger, editor of *The Complete Works of William Billings*, "the anthem represented the most formidable musical challenge of the parish musical tradition, the most complex musical form that its composers tackled."⁶ An anthem is a setting of religious or generally non-secular texts, in English, derived from the Latin motet. Anthems first appeared in England in the late 1500s, written by such composers as Christopher Tye (1500-1573), Thomas Tallis (1505-1585) and William Mundy (1529-1591). They began as pieces alternating solo verse sections, usually accompanied by instruments, with full chorus sections. Anthems then developed into pieces that were entirely choral. Important composers of this type are William Byrd (1542-1623) and Thomas Morley (1557-1622). Further development occurred when composers added textural contrast. During the Baroque period, instruments again became a large part of the anthem. Henry Purcell (ca. 1659-1695) was the most important figure at this time, composing large-scale anthems. Though no one equaled Purcell's greatness, the anthem remained an important part of worship, and composers continued their attempts at creating them. By the mid-1700s several other English composers were known for their work in church music, including

⁶ Karl Kroeger, introduction to *The Complete Works of William Billings*, by William Billings, ed. Karl Kroeger (Boston: The American Musicological Society and The Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1981), 1:xxvii.

their composition of a large selection of anthems. Among them were William Knapp, Joseph Stephenson, Aaron Williams and William Tans'ur. It was the work of these fine composers that paved the way for the American composer William Billings. From his knowledge of their works, he was able to create his own writing style, clearly influenced by the Englishmen, but which also had a unique flavor that would come to be recognized as truly "American."

Of all the music William Billings wrote, the anthems are the most dramatic. Each anthem is a different length; each uses several different textures; each incorporates a variety of meters and tempos; and each has a different "mood," which is usually established by the key of the piece. His anthems also show a development of musicianship, which will be seen as each publication of his is examined in detail.

Altogether, Billings wrote forty-eight anthems, including independent publications and an anthem by Billings that remained unpublished but was found in manuscript sources. In *The Singing Master's Assistant* there is one piece of music that appears to be an anthem but is not listed in the index as an anthem. For this reason, I have not included it in my total count of anthems written by Billings. The piece is entitled "David's Lamentation" and is catalogued as an anthem by J. Murray Barbour in *The Church Music of William Billings*.⁷ Though Barbour was very thorough in his lists of Billings's church music, he failed to

⁷ J. Murray Barbour, appendix B to *The Church Music of William Billings* (East Lansing, Mich.: Michigan State University Press, 1960), 147-150.

produce a *complete* list of anthems by Billings. There are four anthems written by Billings that are not included in Barbour's appendix. The most surprising of these is the anthem "Consonance," which can be found in *The Psalm-Singer's Amusement* and is specifically called an "anthem" by Billings. The other three anthems not included in Barbour's appendix are either independent publications or unpublished manuscripts, which makes them more difficult to locate.

The texts used in Billings's anthems are mostly Biblical, though a few are other types of religious text or were written by ministers or other important figures with whom Billings came into contact. Allen McCain Garrett states that the Biblical texts that Billings uses fall into three categories: The first type quotes directly from a single chapter of the Bible; the second type quotes from various sections of the Bible and then combines them into the text of a single anthem; and the third type paraphrases Biblical texts.⁸ These texts will be examined in greater detail below.

In order to compare the works of this composer, it is best to examine the works in chronological order. Below the reader will find headings of each publication of Billings in the order they were published. Since no specific dates are given for individual pieces, analytical conclusions must be generalized for a time period rather than for a single year. The anthems in each publication will be

⁸ Allen McCain Garrett, "The Works of William Billings" (Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina, 1952), 80-82.

discussed according to the texts, the form and texture, the rhythm and meter, and the harmonies used.

The New-England Psalm-Singer⁹

The texts used in the anthems in *NEPS* all are taken from the Bible. The texts very closely follow the original Biblical verses; Billings uses little or no artistic license when using the Word of God. Four of the five anthems found in *NEPS* exclusively use the book of Psalms for the text. These are "The Lord is King" (Psalm 93), "As the Hart Panteth" (Psalm 42), "The Lord Descended from Above" (Psalm 18), and "Hear My Prayer, O Lord" (Psalm 143). The persistent use of Psalms as a text source can be explained in two ways. First of all, American composers of sacred music relied heavily on English composition examples, and the majority of English anthem texts came from Psalms. Second, the psalms are poetic in form. For this reason, they lend themselves to musical setting. The anthem that does not come exclusively from Psalms is "Blessed is He that Considereth the Poor." It actually uses a combination of Biblical texts, which includes Psalms 34 and 41. Other sources for the text in this anthem are I Corinthians and Matthew, both found in the New Testament. It should be noted that one of these passages, Matt. 5:7, is part of "The Beatitudes," or the "Sermon on the Mount," which is also a very poetic passage.

⁹ Hereafter, *The New-England Psalm-Singer* will be referred to as *NEPS*.

The anthems in *NEPS* are all through-composed, having new musical material written for each portion of text. Through-composition is especially apparent in "The Lord Descended from Above," in which several lines of text reappear throughout the piece, but none of the musical material returns. Although a clear description of the musical form is difficult, the text of "The Lord Descended from Above" has a form which could be described as ABB||:A:||BABC. Many other anthems written by Billings have textual material repeated without the repetition of musical material, but this particular anthem was probably arranged in this way because the text consists of only two verses. By repeating each portion of the text several times, he was able to write a more substantive piece of music. The other anthems in *NEPS* are formed from longer texts in which there is little or no internal repetition of text. There is one exception to this, however, in the anthem, "As the Hart Panteth." This is the only anthem in *NEPS* in which an entire "verse" returns. This occurs because a portion of the Psalm is repeated in the original text. In the anthem, the "verse" comes back after forty-three measures of other musical material. The musical material is identical, but the original word "hope" is replaced with the word "light" on the repeat.

“Why art thou cast down,
O my Soul?
And why art thou disquieted
within me?
Hope thou in God
for I shall yet praise Him
For the *Help*
of His Countenance.”

(Text of mm. 118-128)

“Why art thou cast down,
O my Soul?
And why art thou disquieted
within me?
Hope thou in God
for I shall yet praise Him
For the *Light*
of His Countenance.”

(Text of mm. 171-181)

All the anthems in *NEPS* end with a “Hallelujah” section. This was probably also a feature of the English anthems. Other text is sometimes added to these sections, such as “Amen” (found in “As the Hart Panteth”) and “Praise the Lord” (found in “The Lord Descended from Above”). Although the “Hallelujah” sections generally feature all of the voice parts, Billings does create different textures within these sections. Some “Hallelujah” sections involve a solo part which is then answered by the other voices, some are fugal, and some are basically homorhythmic with some added rhythmic movement within one voice for variety. Every anthem does end with a final exclamation in familiar style.¹⁰

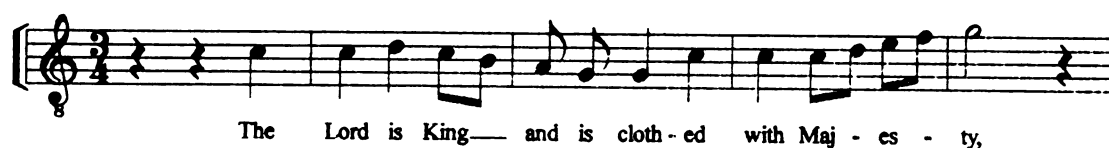
Rhythm and meter seem to have been a struggle for Billings in *NEPS*. Western art music of the Renaissance era was governed by several rules regarding the setting of text to music. The rules that were set in place during the Renaissance greatly influenced the future relationship between text and music.

¹⁰ Familiar style is four-part vocal writing that is set in a syllabic and homorhythmic manner.

One main governing force was that text should be set in a natural way, so natural accents in textual declamation fall on accented or stronger beats in music. This is the main area in which Billings struggled in *NEPS*.

Countless examples can be cited in which Billings shows his lack of understanding of the metrical relationship between music and text; we will consider only a few. The first of these is found in the opening line of "The Lord is King": "The Lord is King and is clothed with Majesty." The natural syllabic accents come on "Lord," "King," "cloth-," "Ma-" and "-ty." Billings, however, places the following syllables on the downbeats of measures: "Lord," "and," "with" and "-ty." Karl Kroeger, in *The Complete Works of William Billings*, edits this first line of music by changing the meter frequently (see Examples 1a-b).

Example 1a: "The Lord is King," mm. 1-5 (Original barring by Billings)

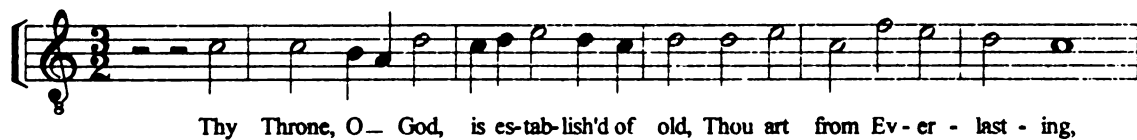


Example 1b: "The Lord is King," mm. 1-5 (Re-barring by Kroeger)

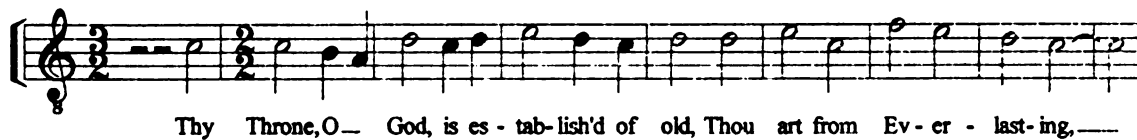


Another problem with Billings's writing is seen later in the same anthem. In mm. 74-79 of Billings's score, half notes and quarter notes are used in such a way as to imply a duple meter, but he uses triple meter (3/2) throughout the passage (see Examples 2a-b).

Example 2a: "The Lord is King," mm. 74-79 (Original barring by Billings)



Example 2b: "The Lord is King," mm. 74-79 (Re-barring by Kroeger)



The second anthem in *NEPS* shows many more examples of Billings's difficulty with meter. In "As the Hart Panteth," the first twenty-seven measures have been re-barr'd by Kroeger. This entire section was originally written in cut-time, but has been re-barr'd in 2/2 and 3/2 alternately, in no regular pattern (see Examples 3a-b).

Example 3a: "As the Hart Panteth," mm. 1-27 (Original barring by Billings)

As the Hart pant-eth af-

As the Hart pant-eth af-ter the Wa-ter-brooks,

As the Hart pant-eth af-ter the Wa-ter-brooks,

ter the— Wa-ter-brooks,

As the Hart pant-eth af-ter the Wa-ter-brooks,

As

As the Hart pant-eth af-ter the Wa-ter-brooks,

the Hart pant-eth af-ter the Wa-ter-brooks,

Example 3b: "As the Hart Panteth," mm. 1-27 (Re-barring by Kroeger)

As the Hart pant-eth af-ter the-
 Wa-ter-brooks, As

As the Hart pant-eth af-ter the Wa-ter-brooks,
 the Hart pant-eth af-ter the Wa-ter-brooks, As the Hart

As the Hart pant-eth af-ter the Wa-ter-brooks,
 pant-eth af-ter the Wa-ter-brooks,

In addition, the text in mm. 117-127 displays a very confusing relationship to the meter, so it also was re-barr'd by Kroeger, alternating 2/2 and 3/2 irregularly (see Examples 4a-b).

Example 4a: "As the Hart Panteth," mm. 117-127 (Original barring by Billings)

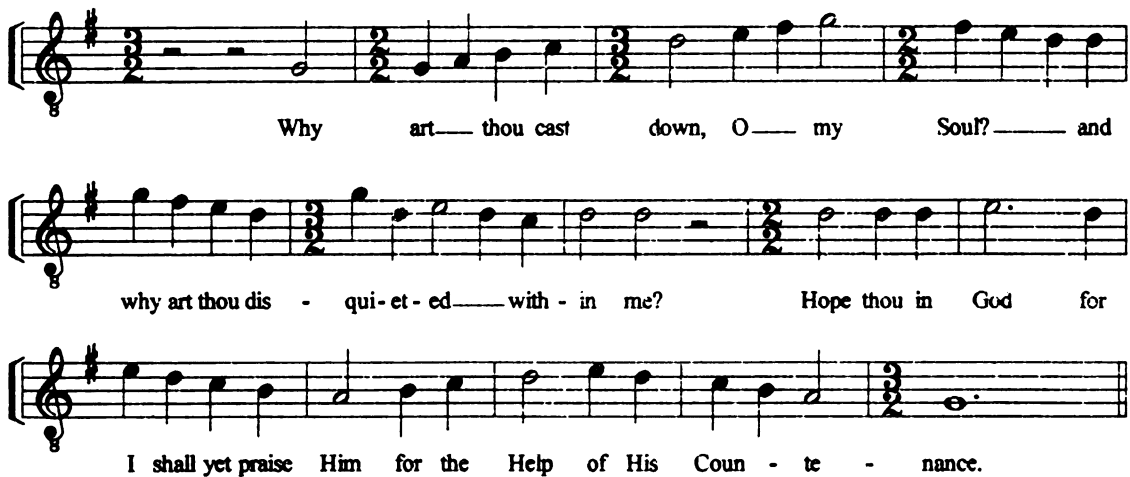


Why art— thou cast down, O— my Soul?— and why art thou dis-

qui- et- ed— with - in me? Hope thou in God— for I shall yet praise

Him for the Help of His Coun - te - nance.

Example 4b: "As the Hart Panteth," mm. 117-127 (Re-barring by Kroeger)



Why art— thou cast down, O— my Soul?— and

why art thou dis - qui- et- ed— with - in me? Hope thou in God for

I shall yet praise Him for the Help of His Coun - te - nance.

Despite these awkward metrical places in “As the Hart Panteth,” this anthem actually has many more places that do work well, such as the *vivace* section from m. 89 to m. 105 (see Example 5).

Example 5: “As the Hart Panteth,” mm. 89-105

The musical score for Example 5 consists of three staves of music in 2/4 time, written in a key with two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of two flats, and a 2/4 time signature. The lyrics for the first staff are: "For___ I had gone with the Mul - ti - tude, for___". The second staff continues the lyrics: "I had gone___ with the Mul - ti - tude, I went with___ them in -". The third staff concludes the lyrics: "to the___ House of___ God with the Voice of Joy and Praise,".

In general, all the anthems in *NEPS* could have been written to reflect prosaic stress.

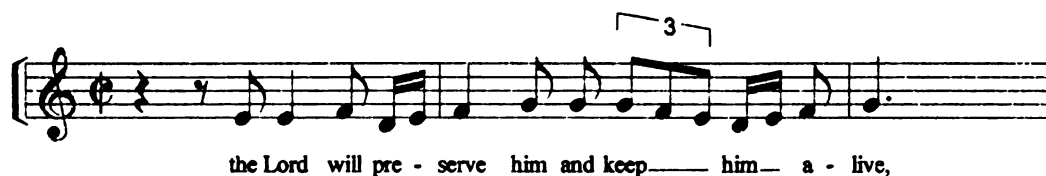
Billings uses a variety of rhythms in *NEPS*. Beside the use of even note divisions (half notes into quarter notes and quarter notes into eighth notes), he frequently uses dotted rhythms, but in an unsyncopated arrangement (see Example 6).

Example 6: Dotted rhythms found in *NEPS*



Billings also uses triplets in his music, both as quarter notes in cut-time and as eighth notes in common-time. Billings writes one particularly complicated rhythm for the alto voice in m. 14 of "Blessed is He that Considereth the Poor" (see Example 7).

Example 7: "Blessed is He that Considereth the Poor," mm. 13-15



Billings also writes triplets in one voice against eighth notes in another voice in mm. 127-137 of the same anthem. Among the variety of rhythms used by Billings, the more complex rhythmic patterns are generally reserved for melismatic purposes.

The anthems in *NEPS* are harmonically very simple. The basic harmonic progressions used in them are I-IV-V-I and i-iv-v-i. Notice that the minor v chord is used. This is due to the primitive lack of accidentals, which would normally be present to create a strong dominant function in a minor key.

Because the minor v chord is used quite frequently, these anthems tend to sound modal. One could say that all the anthems in *NEPS* are either written in the Ionian or the Aeolian mode.

Not only does Billings avoid using accidentals, but he seems resistant to venturing beyond one sharp or three flats in the key signature. Two of the anthems are in C Ionian, while one is in A Aeolian, both of which have no sharps or flats. The remaining two anthems include both the Ionian and the Aeolian modes, in a parallel relationship, but both end in the Ionian mode. With these two anthems, key signatures are necessary (G Aeolian, G Ionian and C Aeolian), but Billings still seems conservative in his use of different keys.

Some other features of the harmony ought to be mentioned here. First of all, very few dissonances occur in Billings's writing, but where they do occur, they are almost always passing tones. Second, the third of triads at cadences in minor keys is often missing.¹¹ Finally, the harmonies used by Billings in *NEPS* are quite basic. The tonic harmony is used most often, the dominant is used next most frequently, and the subdominant is often found connecting them. Any other harmonies that are found in these anthems generally have a passing function, connecting two of the previously mentioned main harmonies.

Using the observations I made about text, form, meter, rhythm, and harmony, several general conclusions can be made about the anthems in *NEPS*.

¹¹ This could be a reflection of the historical pattern of setting sacred texts. Up to this time, a minor triad rarely, if ever, concluded a setting of sacred text because it did not create a pure sound, whereas the open fifth sound was pure.

These anthems are primarily simple. They are an obvious first attempt at composition by Billings. This is most apparent by the awkward use of meter and by the elementary use of keys and harmony. On the other hand, Billings does display an interest in rhythm and uses it as the defining element of character in his early anthems. Let us now look at later publications by Billings and note any changes in his compositional style.

The Singing Master's Assistant¹²

The Bible continues to serve as the primary source for the texts of anthems in *SMA*. As in *NEPS*, every anthem uses some text taken directly from the Bible. In addition, the majority of the anthem texts still come from the book of Psalms, but in *SMA*, there are three anthems that do not include the Psalms at all. There is actually a much greater variety of Biblical books used in *SMA*. From the Old Testament, Billings uses passages from Exodus, II Chronicles, Nehemiah, Psalms, Song of Solomon, Isaiah and Jeremiah, and from the New Testament he uses Luke, Ephesians, Colossians, James and Revelation. Although the original Biblical texts remain fairly intact, in this volume Billings does take a little more liberty with his representation of the text. Sometimes he paraphrases the original text, and occasionally he even expands the text. The anthem "Lamentation Over Boston" may very well be the best example of Billings's literary freedom:

¹² Hereafter, *The Singing Master's Assistant* will be referred to as *SMA*.

The Holy Bible (NIV)

Psalm 137:1

By the rivers of Babylon
We sat and wept
When we remembered Zion.

Jeremiah 3:21

A cry is heard
on the barren heights,
the weeping and pleading of the
people of Israel,
because they have perverted their
ways
and have forgotten
the LORD their God.

Lamentation Over Boston

By the Rivers of Watertown
we sat down and wept
When we remember'd thee,
O Boston.

As for our Friends,
Lord God of Heaven,
preserve them, defend them,
deliver and restore them
unto us again.

For they that held them
in Bondage
requir'd of them
to take up Arms
against their Brethren.

Forbid it, Lord God,
that those who have
sucked Bostonian Breasts
should thirst
for American Blood.

A voice was heard
in Roxbury
which echo'd thro' the Continent,
weeping for Boston
because of their Danger.

The Holy Bible, cont'd

Jeremiah 31:20

"Is not Ephraim my dear son,
the child in whom I delight?
Though I often speak against him,
I still remember him.

Therefore my heart yearns for him;
I have great compassion for him,"
declares the LORD.

Lamentation Over Boston, cont'd

Is Boston my dear town,
is it my native Place?
For since their Calamity
I do earnestly remember it
still.

In addition to the Biblical sources Billings uses for his anthem texts, he now uses sources other than the Bible. For example, the rest of the text of "Lamentation Over Boston" is taken from one of Billings's psalm tunes, "Jargon." With the exception of "Lamentation Over Boston," the non-Biblical sources used in SMA are still sacred and are taken from other musical sources, such as hymnbooks. Additional sources used in SMA are the "Lesser Doxology," portions of hymns from Tate and Brady, and Isaac Watts.¹³

The forms of the anthems in SMA do not change much from the ones in NEPS. Through-composition is still prevalent. Of the nine anthems in SMA, there are two exceptions: "Is Any Afflicted" and "Independence." The formal organization of "Is Any Afflicted" can be summarized as A||:B:||C||:B¹:||.

Although the A and C sections are very different from each other musically, the

¹³ Isaac Watts and Tate and Brady were popular psalmists of the early eighteenth century. Hans Nathan mentions these other sources in "The Singing Master's Assistant: Commentary," appendix to *The Complete Works of William Billings*, by William Billings, ed. Hans Nathan (Boston: The American Musicological Society and the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1977), 2:352.

return of the B section prevents this anthem's characterization as through-composed. The form of "Independence" is more complicated but can be diagrammed as ||:A:||BB¹||:B²(extended):||C||:D:||. Here, the B section returns immediately, defined by the first several measures of each section.¹⁴

As mentioned earlier, the anthems in *NEPS* all conclude with "Hallelujah" sections and sometimes with additional text, such as "Praise the Lord," or "Amen." Such closing sections are missing from the anthems in *SMA*. Only two of the nine anthems in *SMA* have a closing section at all similar to the ones in *NEPS*. Six measures of "Hallelujah" and "Amen" appear at the end of "Retrospect," and only five measures of "Amen" appear at the end of "Independence." If the words "Hallelujah" or "Amen" appear at all in the other anthems, it is in the context of their original texts, occurring sporadically throughout the anthem. For one reason or another, Billings disregarded his previous passion for the closing "Hallelujah" sections between 1770 and 1778.

A final aspect of form that should be mentioned is compositional length. Although *NEPS* contains fewer anthems than *SMA*, they tend to be longer. There are four anthems in *SMA* that are a great deal shorter than any found in *NEPS*. The rest of the anthems are similar in length, but overall, Billings trims their length.

¹⁴ The first appearance of the B section begins at m. 31. The material in mm. 31-40 returns almost identically in mm. 55-62 and again in mm. 70-78.

The problem Billings had in *NEPS* with meter nearly vanishes in the anthems of *SMA*. Here Billings does a much more convincing job of organizing the meter; overall, stressed syllables are assigned to stronger metrical beats. Hans Nathan, editor of the second volume of *The Complete Works of William Billings*, chose not to re-bar any of Billings's original scores.

Although the metrical relationship between music and text has greatly improved, there still exist several awkward moments that should be pointed out. "Hear My Pray'r" includes the line of text, "and a Sojourner as all my Fathers were" (mm. 20-24). The most obvious disagreement between meter and textual declamation comes with the words "my Fathers." Billings places a weak syllable, "my," on beat one in cut-time, with a much stronger syllable, "Fa-," on beat two. Without changing the overall flow of this musical and rhythmic passage, I have offered a possible solution to this awkward spot (see Examples 8a-b).

Example 8a: "Hear My Pray'r," mm. 20-25 (Original setting by Billings)



Example 8b: "Hear My Pray'r," mm. 20-25 (Alternate re-barring)



"Funeral Anthem" also has places where accented syllables are left on weak beats. Measure 12 includes the beginning of the text, "Blessed are the Dead which die in the Lord." The accented syllables fall on "Bles-," "Dead," "die" and "Lord." The first twelve measures of this anthem are set very convincingly in triple meter (3/2), with beat one being the strongest and beat three sounding the next strongest. Nevertheless, the syllables "Bles-" and "Dead" should certainly fall on stronger beats. Once again, I give a possible solution to this passage (see Examples 9a-b).

Example 9a: "Funeral Anthem," mm. 12-15 (Original setting by Billings)



Example 9b: "Funeral Anthem," mm. 12-15 (Alternate re-barring)

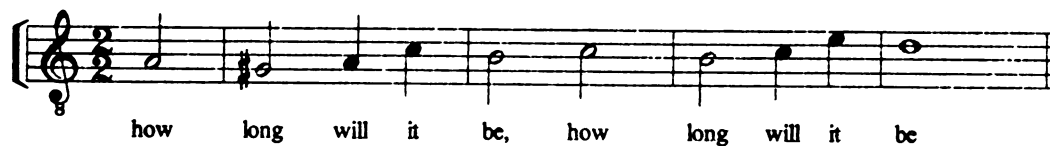


The final example of awkward metrical passages is slightly subtler and one might argue that it is not awkward at all. I feel, however, that the text itself should be the guide for its musical setting. This example comes from mm. 87-90 of "Retrospect." Here, the text reads, "How long will it be?" and Billings places special emphasis on the words "How" and "will" by placing them on downbeats. Reading the text out loud, however, makes it clear that the one word that is stressed the most is "long." Billings could avoid this misrepresentation of the text by keeping the rhythm of the passage intact, but beginning this text one-half measure earlier or one-half measure later (see Examples 10a-b).

Example 10a: "Retrospect," mm. 87-90 (Original setting by Billings)



Example 10b: "Retrospect," mm. 87-90 (Alternate re-barring)



Although Billings has made improvement with text setting, he has not yet displayed a mastery of this technique.

One final remark can be made concerning the meter in *SMA*. In the anthem, "I am the Rose of Sharon," Billings introduces compound meter (6/8 in this particular case). This small portion of the anthem shows a moment of true understanding of the metrical relationship we have been talking about. Billings sets this passage in a very convincing manner (see Example 11).

Example 11: "I am the Rose of Sharon," mm. 98-110

The voice of my Be-loved,

Be-hold, he com-eth, Leap-ing up-on- the moun-tains,

skip-ping, Leap-ing up-on- the moun-tains, skip-ping up-on- the Hills.—

skip-ping, Leap-ing up-on- the moun-tains, skip-ping up-on- the Hills.—

skip-ping, Leap-ing up-on- the moun-tains, skip-ping up-on- the Hills.—

skip-ping, Leap-ing up-on- the moun-tains, skip-ping up-on- the Hills.—

Rhythmically, little has changed from Billings's first publication to his second. Several of the same rhythmic figures appear. In fact, the dotted eighth-sixteenth note figure begins to take on a very important role in *SMA*.

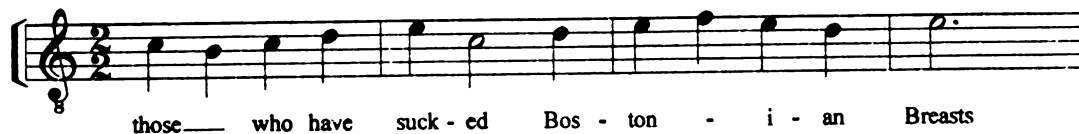
One frequently recurring rhythmic feature of the anthems in *SMA* is syncopation. Such a feature is new and fresh compared to the rhythmic organization in *NEPS*. In "Is Any Afflicted," Billings uses one of the first of these syncopated rhythms—an eighth note followed by a dotted quarter note in cut-time (see Example 12).

Example 12: "Is Any Afflicted," mm. 6-7



The next examples of syncopation are found in "Lamentation Over Boston." Again in cut-time, Billings writes two different types of syncopated rhythms: quarter-note/half-note/quarter-note and eighth-note/quarter-note/eighth-note (see Examples 13a-b).

Example 13a: "Lamentation Over Boston," mm. 54-57

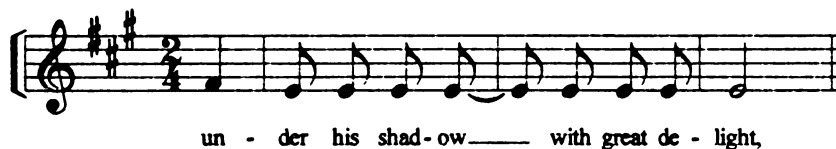


Example 13b: "Lamentation Over Boston," mm. 100-102



In "I am the Rose of Sharon," Billings also writes eighth-note/quarter-note/eighth-note, but this time in a common-time signature. This anthem also includes examples of syncopation occurring over barlines, such as is found in mm. 36-38 (see Example 14).

Example 14: "I am the Rose of Sharon," mm. 35-38



The harmonic make-up of the anthems in *SMA* is now a combination of modal and tonal. This change is mostly due to the addition of accidentals,

primarily to produce a leading tone. The anthems are written in major keys, minor keys, and a combination of major and minor. Of the anthems that include both major and minor sections, all are primarily written in major. In the minor sections, accidentals now produce leading tones, increasing the urgency of dominant harmonies. A leading tone is not present in every dominant harmony, however, which leaves some portions of the anthems sounding in the Aeolian mode. Accidentals are also used to create leading tones of secondary dominants, which is another important new feature of harmony in *SMA*. Such secondary dominants are typically used to tonicize the V chord.

In addition to the use of accidentals to create leading tones, Billings also adds a greater variety of tonal centers. Anthems are now found entirely or partially in the keys of A, a, b, C, c, D, E-flat, f, G, and g, using key signatures ranging from four flats to three sharps. These anthems tend to change mode frequently, moving between parallel major and minor keys. Billings also seems to recognize the important relationship between relative major and minor keys, because in "Gratitude" he presents a brief tonicization of E-flat major (mm. 39-41) while in the local key of C minor. In the eight years since the publication of *NEPS*, Billings has shown a visible growth in understanding of tonal harmony.

It is clear that Billings's compositional style has changed dramatically since his first publication of music in 1770. He used greater creativity when choosing and recreating text, and he experimented with length and form. He has shown a greater understanding of the metrical relationship between text and

music, and he developed a distinct rhythmic style involving several syncopated and dotted rhythms. Finally, he has increased his harmonic vocabulary.

The Psalm-Singer's Amusement¹⁵

The sources used for anthem texts in *PSA* are much more varied. The book of Psalms is no longer a primary source, although a number of texts continue to use portions from the Psalms. Biblical sources that appear for the first time include the Old Testament books of Genesis, II Samuel, and Proverbs. From the New Testament, the book of John is used for the first time. Five of the nine anthems in *PSA* use non-Biblical sources for portions of their texts,¹⁶ and two of those anthems do not use these texts in conjunction with Biblical passages. Even more dramatic is the fact that the text of one of these last two anthems, "Consonance," is not only non-Biblical, but it is non-sacred.¹⁷ At this point, Billings seems to challenge the definition of an anthem—does it still have to be a sacred piece of music?

It may be important to note here that in *PSA* an anthem exists which is not completely original. The anthem, "Blessed is He that Considereth the Poor," which appears in *PSA*, is very closely related to an anthem of the same title that

¹⁵ Hereafter, *The Psalm-Singer's Amusement* will be referred to as *PSA*.

¹⁶ Non-Biblical sources used by Billings in *PSA* include selected hymns by Isaac Watts; a poem by Alexander Pope; a poem by Dr. Mather Byles, entitled, "On Music;" and possibly some of his own words.

¹⁷ The text of "Consonance" comes from "On Music," a poem by Dr. Mather Byles.

appears in *NEPS*. This is a common occurrence with Billings's psalm tunes, which tend to reappear in volume after volume of music. In the case of these anthems, much in both the text and the music is changed from one version to the next. We will look at the similarities and differences between these two compositions in greater detail in the next chapter.

The forms of the anthems in *PSA* have not changed much from those that we saw in *SMA*. They are still mostly through-composed with only a few exceptions. "The Beauty of Israel," for example, begins with a four-measure passage that returns, slightly altered, in mm. 54-57 and again in mm. 77-80. These passages return with similar musical material, but different text. In the same anthem, a different passage including both music and text returns at irregular intervals throughout the piece. The first statement occurs in mm. 9-18, and it returns in mm. 67-75, mm. 100-109, and mm. 129-138. Several of the other anthems in *PSA* have minute examples of motivic or textual repetition, but they all remain rightly considered as "through-composed."

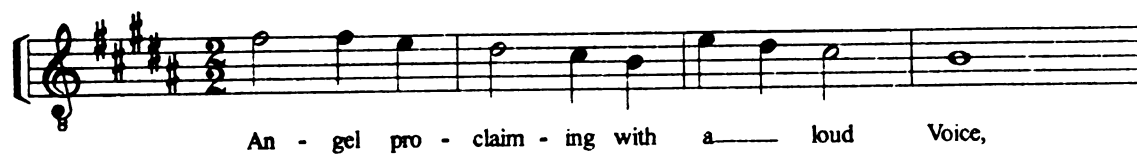
Other aspects of form seem to have returned from *NEPS*. The anthems in *PSA*, for example, are once again all rather long. The shortest is "The Dying Christian to His Soul," and it is still longer than most of the anthems found in *SMA*. Whereas Billings may have seemed to be tiring of writing anthems in *SMA*, he seems to have renewed energy in *PSA*. A second sense in which elements of *NEPS* have returned is in the presence of "Hallelujahs" and "Amens" at the ends of the anthems. Although such a section is not included in every

anthem in *PSA*, four out of the nine anthems include substantial “Hallelujah” and “Amen” endings.

Billings now appears to be even more comfortable with the relationship of text and meter. He changes meter often, but the changes are usually natural. I believe this shows a learning process Billings went through that began in *NEPS* with complicated ideas that he did not yet have the skills to execute convincingly. To achieve the appropriate skills, he first worked to simplify his original ideas, as in *SMA*. After learning how to portray his simpler ideas accurately, he reached back to his original, more complicated, ideas and began to execute them in a clear and convincing manner, producing *PSA*.

Although Billings now sets text more intuitively, there still remain occasional passages that could be improved. In mm. 4-7 of “And I Saw a Mighty Angel,” Billings emphasizes the word “a” by placing it on a downbeat and giving it a relatively long duration. This can be avoided by assigning notes to different syllables of text (see Examples 15a-b).

Example 15a: "And I Saw a Mighty Angel," mm. 4-7
(Original setting by Billings)



Example 15b: "And I Saw a Mighty Angel," mm. 4-7
(Possible alternate setting)



In the same anthem, one of the solo tenor lines is not set properly. The rhythm works well with the text in mm. 57-60, but the meter would match properly if the barlines were set half a measure back (see Examples 16a-b).

Example 16a: "And I Saw a Mighty Angel," mm. 57-60
(Original setting Billings)

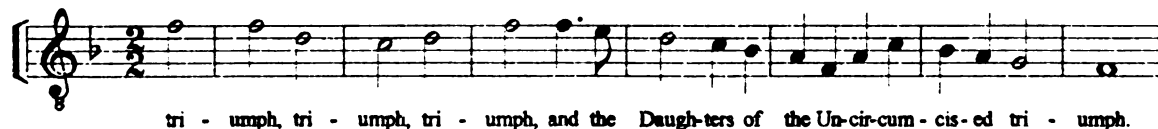


Example 16b: "And I Saw a Mighty Angel," mm. 57-60
(Alternate re-barring)



"The Beauty of Israel" displays a few words, as opposed to phrases, that are not set properly. The word "rejoice" is set correctly in mm. 28-31, with "-jice," the stronger syllable, on a downbeat. In m. 33, however, Billings puts "re-" on a downbeat and "-jice" on a weak beat, opposite of its inflection pattern. In a similar way, Billings sets the word "triumph" in a backward manner in mm. 37-44. With "tri-" as the accented syllable in this word, it should be located on a downbeat. Instead, Billings consistently puts it on an upbeat (see Example 17).

Example 17: "The Beauty of Israel," mm. 37-44



The entire topic of rhythm becomes much more interesting in *PSA*.

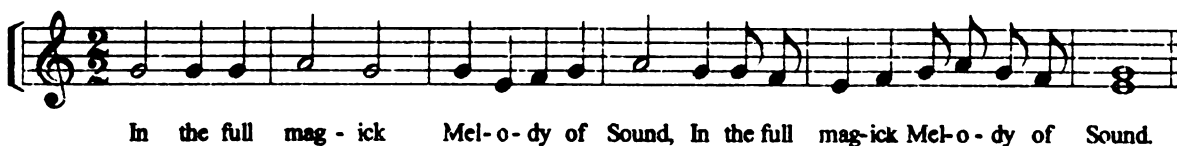
Syncopation again plays a very important role in these anthems, and dotted rhythmic figures continue to be prominent. In addition, it appears that Billings's awareness of sophisticated compositional techniques has increased tremendously. For example, in "Let Ev'ry Mortal Ear Attend," special care is given to rhythm to reflect performance requirements. In m. 21 in the tenor voice, Billings sets the word "sounds" twice, each time to a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth rest (see Example 18).

Example 18: "Let Ev'ry Mortal Ear Attend," m. 21



The result is both clear dictation and ample opportunities for the performers to breathe. An even more direct presentation of a new compositional technique is found in "Consonance." In mm. 77-82 we see an example of rhythmic diminution (see Example 19).

Example 19: "Consonance," mm. 77-82



One rhythmic passage, written in the alto voice, is immediately followed by the same rhythmic passage at twice the speed.

My final observation of the rhythm in *PSA* concerns, of all things, a rhythmically uneventful passage. This can be found in mm. 149-160 of “Who is This that Cometh from Edom.” At this point, all four voices are written in familiar style, and every note within this passage is either a quarter note or a half note (see Example 20).

Example 20: “Who is This that Cometh from Edom,” mm. 149-160

[♩. = M.M. 80]

Old A-dam the first, ex - cit-ed by Lust, And Eve the Se-duc-er en -

tail-ed the Curse; But A-dam the Se-cond, our Sav-iour and King, Has made the A-tone-ment and

freed us from Sin, and freed us from Sin, Has made the A-tone-ment and freed us from Sin.

What makes up for the monotonous rhythm is the rather quick tempo, causing this section of 6/4 to feel much more like a buoyant 6/8. Overall, there has been a clear advancement in Billings’s understanding of rhythm from the *SMA* to *PSA*.

Not much is changed harmonically from the anthems in *SMA* to the ones in *PSA*. Billings continues to use changes of mode, from a major key to its parallel minor and *vice versa*, to depict mood. All but two of these anthems include such a change of mode in them. The two anthems that remain in one mode for their entirety are both in C major. Billings adds to his repertoire of key centers by writing anthems in B, b, E, e, F, F-sharp and f-sharp in addition to some of the keys he has already explored in previous publications. Accidentals are still used primarily as leading tones, and even then they most often appear at cadences. A few secondary dominants also appear. Thus far it seems as if the greatest change in Billings's use of harmony came between *NEPS* and *SMA*.

An in-depth look at *PSA* reveals more development in the compositional style of William Billings. For one thing, he is more creative in his choices of text, going so far as to challenge the definition of an anthem by using a non-sacred text. Secondly, he shows development as a composer by "settling" into a formal organization that includes a typical length and procedure. Third, Billings shows a great deal of development in the area of rhythm by using new and more sophisticated rhythmic techniques.

The Suffolk Harmony¹⁸

The anthems in *SH* are few in number. Other than the publication *Music in Miniature*, which does not include any anthems, *SH* is the smallest volume of music Billings wrote. But Billings wrote it nonetheless, and it was published five years after *PSA*, so let us look at these anthems now.

There are three anthems in *SH*, and they each include a different arrangement of text sources. "Union" uses a combination of Biblical and non-Biblical sources. From the Bible, Billings sets the text from Ps. 133:1-4. For the rest of the text, Billings uses portions of several different pieces by Thomas Ken: "Doxology," "Morning Hymn," "Evening Hymn," and "Midnight Hymn."¹⁹ The text of "Lift up Your eyes" comes from a hymn by Isaac Watts,²⁰ who appears to be becoming a standard source for Billings. This anthem does not include any text from the Bible, but its text is sacred. Finally, the text of "Funeral Anthem" is entirely Biblical, drawing from the books I Samuel, Job and Psalms. The texts of the anthems in *SH* most resemble the make-up of texts in *SMA* – a combination of Biblical and non-Biblical sacred texts. Looking at the final

¹⁸ Hereafter, *The Suffolk Harmony* will be referred to as *SH*.

¹⁹ Karl Kroeger lists these sources and refers the reader to John Julian, *A Dictionary of Hymnology* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1892; reprint, New York: Dover, 1957), 618-621. This reference can be found in Karl Kroeger, "Commentary: *The Suffolk Harmony*" in *The Complete Works of William Billings*, by William Billings, ed. Karl Kroeger (Boston: The American Musicological Society & The Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1986), 3:379.

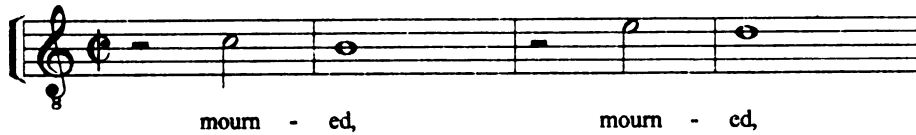
²⁰ Isaac Watts, *Hymns and Spiritual Songs in Three Books*, Book 2 (London: J.F. and C. Rivington, 1788), no. 43, stanzas 6-7.

publication of Billings's music, *Continental Harmony*, will help us determine the significance of this apparent retrogression.

All the anthems in *SH* are through-composed. Though of fairly modest length, these anthems use several different textures and are separated into numerous sections. There are no "Hallelujah" or "Amen" sections, although "Union" ends with a doxology, which resembles an "Amen." "Funeral Anthem" has one unique feature in its form. Measures 15-89 provide a small section of call-and-response. The following text is repeated several times, each time interjected by a solo voice part: "Have Pity on me, O ye my Friends, for the Hand of God hath touched me." As mentioned earlier, such a small publication of works may not hold any significant evidence of Billings's development as a composer, but that will not be certain until the analytical overview is complete.

This publication of music is the most convincing yet in the relationship between text and meter. I found only one example of a word that has been set in such a way that its natural accent does not lie on a stronger metrical beat than the weaker syllable. This happens in mm. 8-11 of "Funeral Anthem" with the word, "mourned." Whereas I feel the syllable "mourn-" should fall on a downbeat, Billings places it on an upbeat with "-ed" falling on a downbeat (see Example 21).

Example 21: "Funeral Anthem," mm. 8-11



The slow tempo at this point in the anthem does lessen the effect of unnaturally placed syllables. Billings sets this music to 80 bpm for the quarter-note, making the half-note pulse of "mourned" less metrical; it is more difficult to feel a strong downbeat at this point. The only other places that one might find awkward settings of syllables are usually in places of polyphonic writing. In these places, some adjustment must be made for compositional purposes. Also in these places, the tenor voice, which is considered in Billings's music to be the "melody," is often set naturally. Working with so few anthems in this publication may have enabled Billings to focus more attention to the metrical implications of text.

Another aspect of rhythm and meter to be noted in *SH* is tempo. Throughout the first three publications of music by Billings there have been occasional changes in tempo. These changes usually involve a change of meter, but the tempo change itself is not too dramatic. There is, however, a significant tempo change in "Lift Up Your Eyes." This anthem begins in 3/4 time with the quarter note set at 80 bpm. In m. 23 the meter changes to 6/4 and the dotted half note is set at 80 bpm. This keeps a governing beat at the same metronomical

tempo, but the consistent use of quarter notes throughout the anthem produces a feel of speeding up, for the quarter notes in m. 23 ff. are three times as fast as those in mm. 1-22. This makes for an extremely quick last half of the anthem, where it moves at a nearly unsingable pace. Billings's use of tempo in this anthem is certainly adventurous.

SH shows the most harmonic advances yet by Billings. Keys such as C, F and a continue to be used, but for the first time Billings writes a true modulation. Rather than simply alternating between parallel major and minor keys, Billings modulates from one major key to another. This happens in "Lift Up Your Eyes." The anthem begins in F major but quickly moves to its dominant, C major. Billings does this through the use of a secondary dominant in m. 7, where, instead of a diatonic G minor triad, Billings uses a G major triad to produce V/V. This leads into a C major triad and for the next fifteen measures the anthem stays in C. Modulation is a new practice for Billings, and that is apparent by his placement of the new key signature for C major in m. 9 rather than in m. 11, after the cadence (see example 22).

Example 22: "Lift Up Your Eyes," mm. 1-10

First system of the musical score, measures 1-10. It features four staves: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The lyrics are: "Lift up your Eyes, ye Sons of — Lift up your Eyes — ye Lift up your Eyes, ye Sons of Light, — Up to — his Lift up your Eyes, ye Sons of Light, Up".

Second system of the musical score, measures 11-20. It continues with the same four staves. The lyrics are: "Light, Up to his Throne — of shin - ing Grace; Sons — of Light, Up to his Throne — of shin - ing Grace; Throne — of shin - ing, shin - ing Grace; to — his Throne of shin - ing, shin - ing Grace;".

In m. 23, the anthem returns to F major, using the C major triad in m. 22 as its dominant. Though this may well be Billings's first attempt at modulation, it works convincingly, and it shows his continuing development as a composer.

The most valuable conclusion that can be made from the anthems in *SH* is that Billings is continuing to develop his understanding and use of harmony. It is now clear that he knows a piece of music does not have to remain in the same key throughout. It is also clear that he understands the function of the dominant chord and that it is a strong way to modulate from one key to the next. Finally, it is clear that he knows not to pick primary and secondary tonal areas arbitrarily. The increased understanding of harmonic relationships may be the most valuable development Billings has made in all his compositions.

The Continental Harmony²¹

The anthems in *CH* offer a complete turn-around in the choices of text sources used by Billings. *NEPS*, as noted earlier, uses texts that come only from the Bible, while *SMA* uses mostly Biblical texts but also begins to incorporate some sacred non-Biblical texts. Then, in *PSA*, Billings not only writes some anthems with texts that are purely non-Biblical, but goes so far as to write one with a non-sacred text. That seems to be as far as Billings dares to experiment,

²¹ Hereafter, *The Continental Harmony* will be referred to as *CH*.

for in *SH*, Billings returns to purely sacred texts. This is certainly an intentional reversal, as we will see as we examine the texts of the anthems in *CH*.

Though *CH* as a whole is a smaller publication than *NEPS*, it contains seventeen anthems, the most found in any of Billings's music publications. Of the seventeen anthems, only one, "The Dying Christian's Last Farewell," uses exclusively a non-Biblical, but sacred, text. "Deliverance" makes use of Watts once again, but a portion of one of his psalms appears in conjunction with additional text from the Biblical book of Psalms. Psalms again appears to be the source of choice for Billings, although several other books are again introduced, such as Joel, I Kings, and Malachi, all from the Old Testament.

The sudden return to the nearly exclusive use of Biblical text can be explained by something that appears in the introductory material of *CH*. Here, Billings includes a lengthy description of musical rules, which is followed by an article he wrote entitled, "A Commentary on the Preceding Rules; By Way of Dialogue, Between Master and Scholar." In this dialogue, one of the questions asked by the scholar is, "What is an Anthem?" The Master's response reads as follows:

It is a divine song,²² generally in prose, and although I have often heard it disputed, yet I think any piece of divine music, that is not divided into metre [i.e., set in verse] (excepting canons and chanting pieces) may with propriety be called an *Anthem*.²³

Billings's emphasis on the defining feature of an anthem as being its divine text shows that he is no longer focused on being experimental with text or on trying to make a political point. In previous publications, non-sacred texts and paraphrased texts were generally used in songs of patriotism. In *CH*, Billings continues to add some textual material of his own. In "O Praise the Lord of Heaven," for example, he adds the following text:

Join Creation, Preservation, and Redemption
join in one;
No Exemption, nor Dissention, one Invention, and Intention
reigns through the Whole,
to praise the Lord, praise the Lord.²⁴

²² A footnote in Billings's text at this point reads: "I have heard some object to this definition, because it was a partial one, for they say that all divine words when set to music, may with propriety be called divine songs, whether in prose or verse. — In answer, I grant that the remark is very pertinent; but as words were made to convey ideas, and different names were given to different things, for the sake of distinguishing one thing from another: I have (for the sake of convenience) distinguished *Anthems* from *Psalm-tunes* in the manner above mentioned."

²³ William Billings, *The Complete Works of William Billings*, ed. Karl Kroeger (Boston: The American Musicological Society & The Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1990), 4:34.

²⁴ Billings, "O Praise the Lord of Heaven," mm. 86-94.

In *CH*, Billings chooses to write anthems in the manner in which they were originally intended – as a setting of sacred texts, bringing praises and honor to God.

Little has changed in the form of Billings's anthems. He continues to write in a through-composed manner, dividing each anthem into several smaller sections, each of which is barely or not at all related to any other. The anthems in *CH* are quite evenly divided into having an ending "Hallelujah" section or not having one. There are two anthems that vary the "Hallelujah" ending slightly. "O Thou to Whom All Creatures Bow" is one of them. In it, some additional text is added, each phrase appearing at different times in each voice:

Glory be to God on high,
Peace be on Earth,
Good Will to Men,
Glory, Glory,
Hallelujah.²⁵

This ending section begins with all four voices singing together, "Glory be to God on high," and ends with the unison declaration, "Glory to God, Peace, good Will to Men, Glory to God." The second anthem that varies the "Hallelujah" ending is "Hark! Hark! Hear You Not." Here, a section of "Hallelujah" does not appear at the end of the anthem, and it includes the additional phrase,

²⁵ Billings, "O Thou to Whom All Creatures Bow," mm. 215-239.

“Hosannah in the Highest.” After this proclamation, a new phrase of text is used to complete the anthem. In addition to the slight differences in form related to “Hallelujah” endings, there is one other anthem whose form differs from the others in another way. In the second half of “Sanctify a Fast,” one verse of text returns frequently, alternating with a short solo by one of the voice parts. The musical setting each time is very similar, but each is elaborated in a slightly different way. The verse appears four times, and its text reads:

Be glad then, ye Children of Zion,
and rejoice in the Lord your God.
For he hath given you
the former Rain mod'rately,
And he will cause to come down for you
the former Rain and the latter Rain
in the first Month.²⁶

As was mentioned earlier, the overall form of the anthems in *CH* has not changed much from Billings's earlier publications. The few variances mentioned above may be considered artistic freedom within a clearly established compositional style.

Somewhat related to the form of these anthems is the texture, and it is important to point out one feature of the texture that stands out in *CH*. The dominating texture of these anthems appears to be four-part familiar style,

²⁶ Billings, “Sanctify a Fast,” mm. 117-143, 151-171, 182-205, and 218-241.

providing a full and unified sound. Short solos and duets and small sections of fugal writing still appear, but there is an abundance of full textures.

The full textures found in *CH* result in less independence of the voices, especially regarding their rhythmic use. Since all the voices move together, the rhythms used tend to be simpler than the rhythms of the past four publications. Dotted rhythms are still common, but rarely are they used in conjunction with other complicated rhythmic passages. The main rhythmic motion is provided by quarter notes, though Billings also uses large sections of persistently repeated half notes or eighth notes. It appears that Billings's experiments with rhythmic techniques are confined to his earlier works, and after several years of writing music, he settled into a pattern of fairly simple rhythmic passages involving his characteristic rhythmic figure, the dotted eighth note followed by a sixteenth note.

The harmonies used in *CH* require much attention because there exists a combination of certain harmonic qualities found in his earliest anthems and other harmonic qualities of the later anthems. We will be able to see similarities in the simple key choices and modal changes with his earliest anthems. We will also be able to see a drastic change from these earlier anthems because of varied uses of accidentals and modulation. *CH* represents a culmination of Billings's work. Here, he introduces new compositional techniques involving harmony.

Let us look first at the many ways that Billings's use of harmony has not changed much since his first compositions. First of all, a fondness for the key of

C major returns. Most other keys used in *CH* are closely related to C major, including A minor, E minor, G major and F major. Parallel major and minor keys are also used frequently. Secondly, major tonalities predominate. Of the seventeen anthems in *CH*, nine of them are written completely in major keys. In addition, all the anthems that modulate or change mode end in a major key. Further, only three anthems are written entirely in minor, but none ends with a minor triad. "I am Come into My Garden" and "The Dying Christian's Last Farewell" both end with an open fifth, avoiding both the major and minor final triad. "Hear, Hear, O Heav'ns," in F minor, ends with a Picardy third, creating a major triad to end the piece. This is the only example in all the anthems that uses a Picardy third for the final chord. It is unclear why Billings, after displaying his ability to write in so many different keys, decided to write exclusively in keys closely related to C for his last publication of music. Perhaps he truly felt these keys were able to portray the moods he desired.

Now let us observe some of the changes in the anthems Billings has made regarding key relations. As mentioned earlier, most of the tonal centers used in the anthems of *CH* are closely related to C. This does not, however, give any indication of what happens harmonically within a single anthem. Several anthems in *CH* simply involve a change of mode between major and minor. There are two anthems, however, which involve much more complicated modulations. The first of these is "O Thou to Whom All Creatures Bow." This anthem modulates from C major to F major, and then returns to C major to finish

the piece. What makes this interesting is the method by which Billings modulates. Rather than using the tonic triad in C major to pivot as V in F major, Billings writes out a brief duet, presumably to be played by two instruments, to bring the piece to F major (see Example 23).

Example 23: "O Thou to Whom All Creatures Bow," mm. 165-168



The duet runs four measures long and begins with a tonic harmony in C, followed by a deceptive cadence in C. Immediately following the deceptive cadence, the C major triad serves as a pivot to F major and V-I-V-I establishes this new tonal center. Billings uses this same technique later in the anthem to get back to C major (see Example 24).

Example 24: "O Thou to Whom All Creatures Bow," mm. 199-202



The second anthem with more complex modulations than have previously been seen is "Variety, Without Method." In this anthem, Billings modulates through several different keys. It begins in G minor and ends in C major, itself an unusual feature, since all of Billings's other anthems begin and end in the same key. The path Billings takes from G minor to C major is as follows: g-c-C-c-F-f-C. In the case of this anthem, modulation occurs quite frequently, and each modulation is produced by the use of a secondary dominant. The title of this anthem, "Variety, Without Method," seems to refer more to its harmonic make-up than its textual content.

Finally, let us look at some ways in which the anthems in *CH* show continued progress in the direction of innovative use of harmony. Throughout Billings's music we have seen advancement in the use of accidentals. In *CH*, the variety of uses of accidentals to comes to a climax. On the simplest end, there are two anthems that do not use accidentals at all, which is a feature we saw in *NEPS*. There are also one or two anthems that use accidentals for the sole purpose of providing the leading tone in a minor key, which is a common feature

with *SMA*. *SMA* also introduced the use of accidentals to create secondary dominant functions. This particular use of accidentals occurs frequently in *CH*. The most common secondary function found in *CH* is *V/V*, which is present in two-thirds of the anthems. Other secondary functions that appear are *V/vi*, *V/ii*, and *V/V* of the relative major in a minor key. Billings also uses accidentals to produce leading tones to single pitches, such as #4 leading to 5, where the harmonic support is something other than *V/V* to *V*. Other common uses of accidentals include borrowed chords, such as *ii* or *IV* from major when locally in a minor key, and Picardy thirds at interior cadences. One uncommon use of accidentals in the anthems of *CH* is conflicting chromatic embellishing tones. Their appearance creates a “split-third,” a compositional feature most often related to nineteenth-century compositions, which is essentially a triad that includes both the major third and the minor third above the root. In Billings’s writing, the split-third is a result of two chromatic neighbors, as in “I am Come into My Garden” (see Example 25), or two chromatic passing tones, as in “Hark! Hark! Hear You Not” (see Example 26).

Example 25: "I Am Come into My Garden," mm. 109-110

Example 25 is a musical score for measures 109-110, titled "I Am Come into My Garden." The score is written in 2/4 time and consists of four staves. The lyrics "a young Hart" are written below the staves. The melody is simple, with a rising line in the first staff and a falling line in the second staff. The third and fourth staves provide harmonic support with sustained notes.

Example 26: "Hark! Hark! Hear You Not," mm. 185-186

Example 26 is a musical score for measures 185-186, titled "Hark! Hark! Hear You Not." The score is written in 2/4 time and consists of four staves. The lyrics "great - or Gift," are written below the staves. The melody is more complex than in Example 25, with a rising line in the first staff and a falling line in the second staff. The third and fourth staves provide harmonic support with sustained notes.

The passing tones create an unusual situation because they appear here within the context of a major key, but they function much as the raised or lowered sixth and seventh scale degrees appear in minor keys. Accidentals have become a very important tool for Billings, and it is clear that he constantly revises his use and understanding of them.

The anthems found in *CH* embody all the skills Billings has learned and developed since he began composing around 1770. As a publication of music including the largest number of Billings's anthems, *CH* presents elements of both the earliest features and the latest developments of his writing style. Some of his established techniques include using the Bible for most of his textual material, using a through-composed form for nearly all his anthems, frequently applying dotted rhythms, and using simple harmonies. Some of his new techniques include creating some text of his own to supplement the text he was already using, learning how to relate meter and text in the most natural way, and using accidentals to achieve unusual effects. After all has been observed, certain features of Billings's anthems have not changed at all, but the progression from *NEPS* to *CH* reveals a definite search. It reveals several instances of trial and error. Those features of Billings's anthems that returned from his earlier works came back for a musical reason – because they worked. There are also several features of Billings's writing that changed drastically, and this is where we can see the true development of a composer.

BLESSED IS HE THAT CONSIDERETH THE POOR

As noted earlier, Billings wrote two anthems that use the same text. The first version of “Blessed is He that Considereth the Poor” is found in *The New-England Psalm-Singer* (1770); the second is in *The Psalm-Singer’s Amusement* (1781).²⁷ The following comparative analysis of these two anthems further supports my argument that Billings’s technique of composing went through a great deal of change through the years.

It has not been determined whether or not the second version is simply a reworking of the first. The tunes present in each version are not at all alike, but other musical elements, such as form, texture, and rhythm, are remarkably similar. Because of these similarities, I will treat the second version as a reworking, focusing on the improvements the second version presents. The musical features that will be discussed and compared between these two anthems include text, form, meter and rhythm, melody, and harmony.

Text

The sources that make up the texts of *Blessed I* and *Blessed II* are very similar, but not exactly the same. Much of the text is used in both anthems and comes from Matt. 5:7, 1 Cor. 13:13, 1 Cor. 14:1, Ps. 34:6, and Ps. 41:1-3. Text

²⁷ Hereafter, I will refer to each anthem individually. *Blessed I* is the version found in *NEPS*, and *Blessed II* is the version found in *PSA*.

found only in *Blessed I* comes from Matt. 25:34-35 and Ps. 41:13. Text included only in *Blessed II* comes from Ps. 68:5, Ps. 106:48, Prov. 19:17, and James 1:27. The texts of the two settings read as follows:

The New-England Psalm-Singer

Blessed is he that considereth the Poor;
the Lord shall deliver him,
in the Time of Trouble.
Blessed is he that considereth the Poor,
the Lord will preserve him
and keep him alive.

And thou wilt not deliver him
into the Will of his Enemies.

Blessed are the Merciful,
for they shall obtain Mercy.

Follow after Charity,
there is Faith, Hope, and Charity;
but the greatest of these is Charity.

Blessed is he that considereth the Poor,
the Lord shall strengthen him
upon the Bed of Languishing.

The Psalm-Singer's Amusement

Blessed is he that considereth the Poor:
the Lord will deliver him
in the Time of Trouble.
Blessed is he that considereth the Poor:
the Lord will preserve him,
and keep him alive.²⁸

And thou wilt not deliver him
into the Will of his Enemies.²⁹

Blessed are the Merciful:
for they shall find Mercy.³⁰

Follow after Charity:³¹
there is Faith, Hope, and Charity;
but the Greatest of these is Charity.³²

Blessed is he that considereth the Poor:
the Lord shall strengthen him
upon the Bed of Languishing.³³

²⁸ Ps. 41:1-2a.

²⁹ Ps. 41:2b.

³⁰ Matt. 5:7.

³¹ 1 Cor. 14:1.

³² 1 Cor. 13:13.

³³ Ps. 41:3.

The New-England Psalm-Singer, cont'd

The poor Man cried,
and the Lord heard him,
and deliver'd him from all his Trouble.

Come ye Blessed of my Father
inherit the Kingdom
prepared for you
from the Foundation
of the World.³⁶

For I was anhungered
and ye gave me Meat;
and I was athirsty
and ye gave me Drink.³⁷

The Psalm-Singer's Amusement, cont'd

He that giveth to the Poor
he lendeth to the Lord,
and he will repay it.³⁴

The poor Man cry'd,
and the Lord heard him
and deliver'd him from all his Trouble.³⁵

A Father to the Fatherless,
the Widow's God and Guide.³⁸

Pure Religion and undefiled before God
and the Father is to visit the Widow
and Fatherless,
and to keep himself unspotted
from the World.³⁹

³⁴ Prov. 19:17.

³⁵ Ps. 34:6.

³⁶ Matt. 25:34.

³⁷ Matt. 25:35.

³⁸ Ps. 68:5.

³⁹ James 1:27.

The New-England Psalm-Singer, cont'd

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel
from Everlasting to Everlasting,
Amen and Amen.⁴⁰

Hallelujah, Amen.

The Psalm-Singer's Amusement, cont'd

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel
from Everlasting to Everlasting.
Praise the Lord, Amen,
and let all the People say Amen.⁴¹

Hallelujah, Amen.

It appears that in *Blessed II*, Billings desired greater scriptural support for the theme of this anthem – helping the oppressed. The only text that Billings did not use in *Blessed II* that he did use in *Blessed I* is the text that states, “Come ye Blessed of my Father inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World. For I was anhungered and ye gave me Meat; and I was athirsty and ye gave me Drink.” Instead, Billings replaces it with a shorter text that brings across the same point in a more direct manner: “If you give to the needy, God will repay you greatly.”⁴² The next portion of text Billings adds in *Blessed II* focuses not only on those oppressed by lack of wealth, but also on those oppressed by lack of family, such as the widowed and the orphaned. By changing the text of this anthem slightly, Billings brings his message across in a much more direct manner.

⁴⁰ Ps. 41:13.

⁴¹ Ps. 106:48.

⁴² This is a paraphrase of Prov. 19:17.

Form

Though both these anthems are mainly through-composed, their forms do correspond considerably. This can be seen in the diagram below:

<i>Blessed I:</i>	A	B	C	D	A ¹		E	Ia	Ib		F
Measures:	1-17	18-28	29-34	35-43	44-58		59-70	71-87	88-100		101-140
Tonal Area:	C	C	C	C	C		c	C	c		C

<i>Blessed II:</i>	A	B	C	D	A ¹	IIa	E		IIb	F
Measures:	1-26	27-37	38-47	48-59	60-70	71-92	93-103		104-138	139-188
Tonal Area:	E	E	E	E	E	E	e		e→E	E

Each section is defined primarily by text, but corresponding texts also have corresponding musical features. In places where different text is used (as shown in the diagram where Ia, Ib, IIa and IIb appear), the musical elements are also original. We will now consider each successive section.

Section "A" is divided into two equal parts, each one introduced by a single line of text sung by only a small portion of the choir. In *Blessed I*, this introductory line is first sung by tenor voices in the form of a duet, and Billings gives specific directions that the upper part is to be sung softly. The main melody, then, is sung by the lower tenor part. In *Blessed II*, the corresponding introductory melody is different than in *Blessed I*, but the rhythm is identical. It is also sung by the tenor voice, but is arranged as a solo, not a duet. In each anthem, this introductory line is then followed by a response from the full choir,

in which it repeats the text, "the Lord shall deliver him," three times before finishing the phrase. The second part of section "A" then begins with another introductory statement by a small group of voices. Billings once again uses a duet in *Blessed I*, but uses a different combination of voices. This time it begins as a bass and tenor duet, but is concluded with a bass and soprano duet, creating a fragmented line. Billings does, however, retain the lower voice as melody and the upper voice as harmony. The second introductory statement in *Blessed II* is much different from the one that began the anthem, and it is sung as a solo by the bass section. Once again, at the conclusion of this introductory statement, the full chorus enters to complete the phrase. In summary, the form of the "A" section in each anthem is identical with the exception of two details: *Blessed I* uses duets where *Blessed II* uses solos for the introductory lines, and *Blessed I* retains the original melody line while *Blessed II* changes it.

Billings uses polyphonic writing as the main feature of section "B." In each anthem, the bass part begins a fugal passage with melodic motion from the dominant to the tonic. The "fuge" then continues with the addition of first the tenor voice, then the altos, and finally the sopranos, all imitating the initial melodic motion from dominant to tonic. The pitch interval at which each voice enters the "fuge" is different in each anthem. In *Blessed I*, the bass begins quite high in its range, where the tenor and alto can both enter in unison to it, and the soprano one octave above it. In *Blessed II*, the bass begins much lower in its range, and the tenor and alto both enter one octave above, and the soprano

enters two octaves above the bass. The treatment of the fuge tune is also different in each anthem. The tenor imitates only the first two pitches of the bass tune before going on to a completely original tune in *Blessed I*. The second tune created by the tenor voice is then imitated exactly by both the alto and soprano parts. In *Blessed II*, the first two-and-a-half measures of the opening bass line are imitated by all the remaining voices. This creates a more unified section than is found in *Blessed I*. Overall, however, very little changed in this section from *NEPS* to *PSA*.

The "C" section in each of these anthems is very short, and again shows little variation in form from one version to the next. Both anthems divide this section into two parts, each one stating in full the line of text, "Blessed are the Merciful, for they shall obtain Mercy." In *Blessed I*, the tenors and sopranos sing this text first, each voice part singing one half of the phrase. In *Blessed II*, the entire line is first sung as a duet in thirds between the bass and tenor voices, and on the final word, "Mercy," the entire chorus joins. Each anthem then continues with an exact repetition of the text, sung by the full chorus. Melodically, *Blessed II* uses a parallel format to unify these two statements of the text. *Blessed II* also extends the end of this section slightly by one internal repetition of the words, "the Merciful," by the chorus.

Another very short section, "D," arrives next in the music, but other than through text, there is little relationship between *Blessed I* and *Blessed II*. The melody in *Blessed I* is extremely fragmented. The first phrase is divided into brief

solos by each voice part, and then they all join together to sing, "but the greatest of these is Charity." The corresponding "D" section in *Blessed II* begins in a similar manner, but is much less fragmented melodically. In *Blessed II*, the tenors sing "Follow after Charity," but the full chorus joins immediately to complete this phrase. The full chorus continues together in the second phrase, which is expanded slightly by some repetition of portions of the text. The changes Billings made in this section from *Blessed I* to *Blessed II* are very appropriate; they help unite the text rather than divide it.

"A¹" is the next large portion of each anthem. The text that appears here and the basic form of this section are similar to that which was found in the "A" section. The text again begins with "Blessed is He that Considereth the Poor," and once again it is sung by a small portion of the chorus. In *Blessed I*, this line is sung by a bass duet (this time the upper part is the main melody), and in *Blessed II* it is sung by unison sopranos. One feature to point out is that the introductory melodies in "A" and "A¹" of *Blessed I* are not the same, whereas the corresponding melodies in *Blessed II* are identical. Section "A¹" is also like "A" because the introductory line is answered by the full chorus. At this point, the form of section "A¹" in each anthem changes slightly. *Blessed I* mirrors the beginning of the piece, using a different pair of voices to introduce the second phrase. This second introductory line is once again completed by all four voices of the chorus. *Blessed II*, on the other hand, omits the use of a second introductory phrase. Instead, the consequent from the first phrase is repeated.

From this point on, the forms of *Blessed I* and *Blessed II* do not correspond so precisely. As was seen with the comparison of texts, *Blessed II* now includes a section that simply does not appear in *Blessed I*. This section of the anthem begins with a duet between the tenor and soprano, which leads into a short fugal passage that forms the first phrase. In this fugal passage, the alto voice enters one measure after the tenor and soprano, and it enters one octave above the pitch on which the tenor began. One half measure after the alto enters, the bass comes in, beginning a perfect fourth below the tenor's first pitch. The full chorus in a homorhythmic texture sings the second phrase of this section.

The next section in each anthem corresponds in one, but not every, respect. The text used here, in section "E," is nearly identical, but the arrangement and texture of voices is different. The opening phrase in *Blessed I* is quite fragmented, as the text is broken up and is sung by successive solo voices. The tenors begin, singing, "The poor Man cried." The sopranos answer with, "and the Lord heard him." The second phrase concludes the text of this section with the basses singing, "and deliver'd him from all his Trouble." The text of the second phrase is then repeated at a much slower tempo, joining all four voice parts in homorhythmic texture. In *Blessed II*, the full chorus sings the entire text in familiar style, although there are occasional measures of more florid rhythm in individual voice parts. Also, rather than repeating an entire portion of text, *Blessed II* only repeats the words "and deliver'd." The less fragmented line and the thicker texture found in *Blessed II* add continuity to the anthem.

The next two sections in *Blessed I* comprise the first materials encountered that are not found in *Blessed II*. Section "Ia" is mostly a fugal section, and it begins with the bass voice. The tenor voice enters next, imitating the bass melody exactly for three eighth notes, but then leading into a different tune. The alto and soprano follow in exact imitation of the entire opening tenor line, much as was found in section "B." Once the soprano sings its imitative line of text, all voices cadence on a tonic triad. After a measure of rest, the full chorus enters, stating the last line of text in four-part harmony.

The format of section "Ib" very much resembles that of the "E" section of *Blessed I*. In it, the text is divided into four parts and each part is sung by solo voices. Once the text is completely exposed, the full chorus repeats it, again in familiar style.

Section "IIb" in *Blessed II* is the last independent section within these two anthems. It is made up of mostly four-part texture, although there are two brief solo interjections in the later part of this section. The first portion of "IIb" is made up of two phrases, parallel in structure because of their musical similarity and their verbatim repetition of text. Written in E minor, the first phrase ends on a III triad, while the second phrase ends with a Picardy third on a I triad. The second portion of "IIb" is lengthier than the first, and the phrase structure is rather vague. It begins with a change of mode to E major. The end of the first phrase elides with the beginning of the next phrase. The second phrase begins with the solo tenor voice, which is then joined by the other three voices to

complete the phrase. The third and final phrase of this portion is structured the same way – it begins with the solo tenor voice and is concluded by all four voices. The type of call-and-response found here is much more effective than the various fragmented melodies of *Blessed I*. There are also some parallel melodic patterns within each voice part in these last two phrases. The patterns that appear near the *end* of the second phrase, however, appear near the *beginning* of the third phrase. The format of this section shows a great deal of compositional creativity.

Section “F” is the final section that appears in each anthem. As with the other corresponding sections of these anthems, the form and texture of each version is similar. Each section begins with fugal writing and ends with a combination of four-part familiar style and four-part polyphonic writing. In *Blessed I*, the first fugal passage begins in the bass voice, which enters on the tonic pitch. In *Blessed II*, the corresponding fugal passage begins in the tenor voice, which enters on the dominant pitch. Both voices beginning the fugue sing through the first lines of text: “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from Everlasting to Everlasting.” The tenors join next in *Blessed I*, imitating the first three-note motive introduced by the basses. The polyphony found in *Blessed II* is apparently not intended to be imitative, for the only glimpse of imitation is in the opening rhythmic figure between the tenor and bass. Both anthems also extend the fugal portion of section “F” by repeating much of the text. The final portion of section “F” varies slightly in format from *Blessed I* to *Blessed II*. In *Blessed I*, this

final portion is begun with four-part familiar style proclaiming, "Hallelujah," and is concluded with fugal writing. The fugal section repeats the text that was used at the beginning of section "F." The sopranos lead into the last part of the text in *Blessed II*, beginning an extended segment of polyphonic writing. After a while, all voices join together one last time in homorhythmic texture, singing final "Amen" and "Hallelujahs."

The consistencies in form between *Blessed I* and *Blessed II* are a valuable aid in comparing Billings's writing style from one anthem to the other. The main change Billings made in the form of these anthems was reducing the number of times the texture changes. This action allows for a more unified piece of music in *Blessed II*. Other important changes between *Blessed I* and *Blessed II* will be observed on the following pages.

Meter and Rhythm

The overview of all the anthems written by Billings showed a marked change in his understanding and use of meter and rhythm as his compositional skills developed. An analysis of the meter and rhythm in *Blessed I* and *Blessed II* will bring us even closer to understanding these changes.

Blessed I displays a wide variety of meters and tempos, creating a sense of disorganization. Billings changes the meter three times during section "A," twice during sections "A¹" and "E," and three times during section "F." In addition to

the frequent meter changes, there are also frequent tempo changes. Altogether, this anthem has a disjointed effect.

Blessed II mends the disjointed quality that *Blessed I* had. Each section within the anthem is fairly consistent in its use of meter. The only changes in meter fall between major sections of the piece, not within each section. Even more consistent than the meter is the tempo; there are no tempo changes in *Blessed II*. The tempo used in this anthem, however, is quite deliberate and causes some sections of the music to drag. Overall, the consistency in meter and tempo that *Blessed II* displays is a unifying feature of the anthem and is an improved quality of Billings's writing.

The relationship between meter and text remains an issue. In section "A" of *Blessed I*, for example, Billings sets the solo parts in triple meter and the chorus parts in duple meter. This does not work well because some weak syllables fall on strong beats in the triple meter measures. Although the melody remains identical, the two settings for the solo voice are metrically inconsistent with each other: the first solo begins on an upbeat while the second solo begins on a downbeat. Billings fixes this problem in *Blessed II* by setting all of section "A" in duple meter. Though the rhythmic pattern in *Blessed II* closely resembles that in *Blessed I*, the setting in *Blessed II* is much more natural because all the accented syllables fall on strong beats.

Section "B" presents new difficulties in setting text convincingly. Because this section is fugal, the strong and weak syllables sung in each voice generally

do not coincide. This is especially true in *Blessed I*, where voices enter the “fuge” at irregular temporal intervals. The text itself works very well in duple meter, but Billings sets in triple meter. To complicate matters, the arrangement of the voices’ entries prevents this fugal section from being set well exclusively in duple or triple meter. Billings allows each voice of the “fuge” to enter at regular intervals in *Blessed II*, providing one solution to the problem that occurred in *Blessed I*. Billings also sets this section in duple meter rather than triple meter. These actions, along with other small changes within the musical setting, allow the text to be set convincingly.

Section “C” provides another example of problems created and solved by metrical placement of text. Each version is set with the exact same rhythmic pattern. In *Blessed I*, it is written in triple meter even though the text and rhythm strongly suggest duple meter. Billings once again solves the problem in *Blessed II* by setting this section in duple meter.

Billings’s early lack of understanding of meter is really exposed in section “D” of *Blessed I*. In this very short section, Billings presents some awkward and unorganized rhythmic patterns that do not fit well within the meter used. The result is that several notes are held over barlines and that highly complicated syncopated passages occur (see Example 27).

Example 27: "Blessed is He that Considereth the Poor," NEPS, mm. 35-43

[J.M.M. 120]

and Char - i - ty,
Hope,
Fol - low af - ter Char - i - ty,
there is Faith,

but the great - est of these is Char - i - ty,
but the great - est of these is Char - i - ty,
but the great - est of these is Char - i - ty,
but the great - est of these is Char - i - ty.

The musical passage found here is far from the typical style of choral writing of the day. Billings writes section "D" in *Blessed II* with a very pleasing arrangement of rhythm and meter. He lengthens this section slightly by adding some internal repetition of text. He also uses a repeating dotted rhythmic pattern within the boundaries of a steady metrical setting. These changes eliminate the ties over barlines and the complicated syncopation while creating an enjoyable segment of the anthem.

The metrical relationship to text in section "A¹" in each anthem closely reflects the comments made previously for section "A." Rather than alternating triple and duple time, however, Billings sets all of "A¹" in triple meter in *Blessed I*. Unfortunately, the meter used still does not reflect the natural pulse of the text. The setting in *Blessed II* is in duple meter, which works well.

Since section "E" is set up differently in *Blessed I* than it is in *Blessed II*, it is more difficult to determine whether or not improvements were made to the metrical setting of the text. Generally, however, it is safe to say that the setting in *Blessed I* is slightly more awkward than in *Blessed II*. The triple meter used throughout section "E" in *Blessed I* does not always fit naturally with the text, while the triple meter in *Blessed II* does achieve this goal.

The final section that allows direct comparison between the metrical settings in each anthem is section "F." This section in *Blessed I* begins with fugal writing. Once again it includes irregular temporal entrances by each voice, which may be one cause of the unfavorable setting of text. The "Amens" of the

last three measures in *Blessed I* work very well, finally, in the quadruple meter in which Billings sets it (see Example 28).

Example 28: "Blessed is He That Considereth the Poor," NEPS, mm. 138-140

The image shows a musical score for four staves, likely representing a choir setting. The music is in quadruple meter (4/4), indicated by the 'C' time signature. The lyrics 'A - men, A - men.' are written below the staves. The notation includes various note values and rests, with some notes beamed together. The staves are arranged vertically, and the lyrics are aligned with the corresponding notes.

Section "F" in *Blessed II* is all set in duple meter and even the opening fugal section works consistently well with this meter. The last eleven measures of *Blessed II* move very slowly, but the fullest sounds of a choir performing these last measures make it a very appropriate ending to the anthem.

The sections that appear independently within each anthem conform to the general characteristics of the anthem in which they appear. Sections "Ia" and "Ib" in *Blessed I* both have settings in triple meter that do not work well with the text. Sections "IIa" and "IIb" in *Blessed II* both have very natural settings of the text in duple meter.

The final subject to discuss on the topic of meter and rhythm is Billings's use of rhythmic patterns. In general, Billings appears to use a great deal of creativity in the rhythmic patterns of *Blessed I*. A variety of dotted rhythms and an abundance of triplets and sixteenth notes make the rhythmic component of this anthem very exciting. Some of the tempos in *Blessed I* are quite fast, however, making several rhythmic passages difficult to execute. In *Blessed II*, Billings continues to use dotted rhythms to create energy and intensity. Overall, however, the rhythms found in *Blessed II* are less elaborate, which in turn makes them easier to perform and, therefore, more effective musically.

By now the significance of the metrical and rhythmical changes from *Blessed I* to *Blessed II* should be clear. *Blessed I* is primarily set in triple meter, although much of it works best in duple meter. *Blessed II* is primarily set in duple meter. *Blessed I* contains elaborate rhythms which may be a challenge to perform well. *Blessed II* simplifies the rhythms, but maintains its rhythmic drive with dotted rhythms. *Blessed I* shows an immature understanding of meter and rhythm, while *Blessed II* demonstrates command of this important feature of music.

Melody

Although I did not include an overview of the melodies used in all Billings's anthems, there are two important features worthy of mention regarding the use of melody in *Blessed II*. First of all, Billings uses melody as a

unifying feature. Second, Billings displays a fondness for melodic sequence. These two features demonstrate development in Billings's work as a composer.

The melody used by the tenor voice to begin *Blessed II* returns in the soprano voice in m. 60. The corresponding spots in *Blessed I* make use of two different melodies. The anthems on the whole, being through-composed, tend to lack unity, so the use of an identical melodic phrase in the two different areas of *Blessed II* is important in tying together the entire anthem.

Not only does Billings use the recurrence of a melodic idea to unite *Blessed II*, but he also uses the compositional technique of melodic sequence to perform a similar task. Melodic sequence is found in the tenor voice on two occasions in this anthem. The first occurs in mm. 124-128 and is repeated in mm. 130-134 (see Examples 29a-b).

Example 29a: "Blessed is He that Considereth the Poor," PSA, mm. 124-128



Example 29b: "Blessed is He that Considereth the Poor," PSA, mm. 130-134



Each stage of the sequence is two measures long. Though many sequences are found with stepwise movement between the stages, this one repeats the motive a perfect fourth above the original statement. The second sequence found in the tenor voice is in mm. 156-159 (see Example 30).

Example 30: "Blessed is He that Considereth the Poor," PSA, mm. 156-159



The stages of this sequence are also two measures long, but the second stage of this sequence appears in typical fashion—one step above the first stage. Melodic sequence involving all four voices simultaneously is also found in *Blessed II*. This happens in mm. 178-188, where the final three proclamations of "Amen" are heard (see Example 31).

Example 31: "Blessed is He that Considereth the Poor," PSA, mm. 178-188

A - men, A - men, A - men.

A - men, A - men, A - men.

A - men, A - men, A - men.

A - men, A - men, A - men.

Each statement of "Amen" is a new stage of the sequence, and each stage rises by step. The third stage of the sequence is skipped, however, producing the interval of a third between the last two stages. It is also interesting to note here that the soprano and alto voices switch parts on the final stage of the sequence. In addition, each stage of the sequence represents a IV-V-I harmonic motion within the local keys of IV, ii and I. Billings's use of melodic sequence results in a composition that has melodic and harmonic direction and is internally unified – a feature that is not found in *Blessed I*.

Harmony

Several of the harmonic features found in *Blessed I* and *Blessed II* are very similar, yet there are a few significant changes that are made in the later anthem. The similarities that exist involve the most frequently used harmonies and the types of cadences that appear. The major changes that occur in *Blessed II* involve

the use of accidentals and their resulting harmonies. Let us now look in detail at the element of harmony as it appears in *Blessed I* and *Blessed II*.

The prevailing harmonies in both anthems are, as one would expect, the tonic and the dominant. The next most common harmonies found are ii, IV and vi in major, but they do not carry a strong predominant function as they would in most eighteenth-century music. In *Blessed I*, these harmonies most often appear as passing or neighboring harmonies. They are found more frequently with a predominant function in *Blessed II*, although not exclusively. Occasionally a iii chord appears in *Blessed I*, but only as a passing or neighboring harmony, usually involving motion to or from IV. In *Blessed II*, vii° is more frequent. Overall, the diatonic harmonies used in these two anthems do not change much.

The most common type of cadence found in these two anthems is the authentic cadence. The labeling of these cadences as perfect or imperfect may be debatable because the soprano voice rarely ends these cadences on the tonic. The tenor voice almost always does end on the tonic, however, and in Billings's music, the tenor voice in four-part texture always carries the essential melodic line. Half cadences also appear quite frequently, and deceptive harmonic motion occurs, but never at a cadence point.

The most significant change of harmony that happens from *Blessed I* to *Blessed II* involves the addition of accidentals. Only one accidental is used in *Blessed I*, which also happens to be the only accidental that appears in all of NEPS. On the contrary, accidentals are quite common in *Blessed II*.

The one accidental found in *Blessed I* occurs in section "Ib," which is written in C minor (or C aeolian, if you consider the overall lack of accidentals). Here, a B natural appears in m. 91 as part of a melodic solo in the soprano. B natural is the leading tone in C minor, but it never occurs as part of a triad – it only appears for a melodic purpose. Because there are no other B naturals, the resulting harmonies in C minor include v and VII. There is, therefore, no true dominant function in the minor portions of *Blessed I*, aside from the implied harmony that the altered melodic note presents.

Many accidentals appear in *Blessed II*, and the purpose of each varies slightly. One sharp is used as part of a solo melody, creating a leading tone to the dominant scale degree (mm. 3 and 62). In a similar manner, a sharp is used later in a fugal section for the same purpose (m. 140). Sharps are also used as chromatic neighbor tones (mm. 45 and 121). Secondary dominants, such as V/V (mm. 152, 173 and 179) and V/vi (m. 183), also appear occasionally as a result of added accidentals. The most frequent use of accidentals comes in mm. 94-112, where the anthem is in the key of E minor. In this portion of the anthem, D sharp is used frequently to produce a dominant triad – a harmony that simply is not found in Billings's compositions until after *NEPS*. Perhaps the most interesting use of accidentals is to produce a major triad within the context of a minor key. In m. 112, Billings uses a Picardy third to end a section that was in a minor key. By doing this, he is able to avoid cadencing on a minor triad and still use a complete triad. The varied use of accidentals in *Blessed II* not only shows an

advanced understanding of harmony by Billings, but it also creates an aurally pleasing musical composition.

CONCLUSIONS

A detailed study of the anthems written by William Billings makes it clear that many changes occurred in his compositional style. Each of his successive publications displays continued efforts to become a respectable musician. Advancing musical understanding can be seen in the repertoire of texts that Billings uses, the formal design, the metrical organization and rhythmic patterns, and the harmonic language in his anthems.

The texts Billings uses provide an example of how he kept experimenting with different ideas, eventually settling on a certain style that consistently appears in his later anthems. His earliest anthems were completely sacred, as the very definition of an anthem suggests, and they were also taken directly from the ultimate sacred source, the Bible. As time went on, Billings expanded his range of sources and added non-Biblical sacred texts. Later he went beyond the limits of sacred texts and used non-sacred texts from other sources, such as poems or even Billings's own writing. At a certain point, this experimentation with texts subsided, and Billings settled back into a pattern of using purely sacred texts, originating both from the Bible and from other religious sources.

The overall form of the anthems did not change drastically from *NEPS* to *CH*. In general, the anthems are through-composed. There are slight variances, however, which show compositional development by Billings. The earlier

anthems, for example, tend to be more disjunct. The later anthems seem to have more unifying features.

One of the most obvious compositional changes in Billings's writing relates to meter, particularly to the relationship meter has to text. In his earlier anthems, Billings struggles to match meter and text in a convincing manner. Not only do strong syllables often fall on weak beats and *vice versa*, but several passages are very awkward metrically. For example, several texts that clearly fit in duple meter have been set in triple meter. In his later anthems, Billings sets the texts in a much more natural way, showing his clear understanding of the responsibility of meter.

Rhythm appears in Billings's anthems in much the same way that the texts do. Early on, he experiments with rhythm, involving several complicated passages in his first few publications. Once he tried all he could with rhythmic patterns, he settled with simplified patterns that enhance, rather than detract from, the text. Rhythmic energy in Billings's music comes from his frequent use of dotted rhythms, a feature that he established early in his writing practice.

Harmony is the final area where much advancement can be noted. This advancement was most clearly seen in his use of certain tonal sonorities. In his earliest works, Billings uses diatonic chords exclusively. He does not even use the leading tone in minor, which results in a reflection of medieval modal sonorities. Beginning with Billings's second publication, leading tones are added, producing the dominant harmony in minor. The second publication also

introduces chords with secondary functions. This not only adds to his harmonic vocabulary, but it expands the variety of moods available through sound. Later yet, Billings uses borrowed chords, including the Picardy third, a major tonic in a minor key.

The anthems of William Billings help define him as a composer. His early anthems show his inexperience as a musician. Each successive volume of music he published displays at least one area where he shows musical progress. It is clear that Billings developed in many ways as a composer—a composer of whom Americans should be proud.

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A

Blessed is He That Considereth the Poor

from *The New-England Psalm-Singer*

1 *Largo* [$\sigma = 90$] [$\sigma = 90$]

the Lord shall de -

the Lord shall de -

upper part soft

Bless - ed is he that con - sid - er - eth the Poor; the Lord shall de -

the Lord shall de -

5

liv - er him, the Lord shall de - liv - er him, the Lord shall de - liv - er him, in the Time of

liv - er him, the Lord shall de - liv - er him, the Lord shall de - liv - er him, in the Time of

liv - er him, the Lord shall de - liv - er him, the Lord shall de - liv - er him, in the Time of

liv - er him, the Lord shall de - liv - er him, the Lord shall de - liv - er him, in the Time of

9

Trou- ble. that con- sid- er- eth the Poor,

Trou- ble.

Trou- ble. Bless- ed is he

Trou- ble. Bless- ed is he that con- sid- er- eth the Poor,

13 *Forte*

the Lord will pre- serve him and keep him a- live, the Lord will pre-

the Lord will pre- serve him and keep him a- live, the Lord will pre-

the Lord will pre- serve him and keep him a- live, the Lord will pre-

the Lord will pre- serve him and keep him a- live, the Lord will pre-

16

serve him and keep him a- live.

serve him and keep him a- live.

serve him and keep him a- live.

serve him and keep him a- live.

And thou wilt not de- liv- er

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20

And thou wilt

And thou wilt not de - liv - er him in - to the Will of his

him in - to the Will of his En - e - mies,

24

And thou wilt not de - liv - er him in - to the

not de - liv - er him in - to the Will of his En - e - mies, de - liv -

En - e - mies, de - liv - er him, de - liv - er him

And thou wilt not de - liv - er him in - to the

27

[♩ = 90]

Will of his En - e - mies, his En - e - mies. for

er him in - to the Will of his En - e - mies.

in - to the Will of his En - e - mies. Bless - ed are the Mer - ci - ful,

Will of his En - e - mies, his En - e - mies.

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31

Maestoso (♩ = 120)

they shall ob-tain Mer-cy, bless-ed are the Mer-ci-ful for they shall ob-tain Mer-cy.

bless-ed are the Mer-ci-ful for they shall ob-tain Mer-cy.

bless-ed are the Mer-ci-ful for they shall ob-tain Mer-cy. Fol-low

bless-ed are the Mer-ci-ful for they shall ob-tain Mer-cy.

36

and Char-i-ty, but the great-est

Hope, but the great-est

af-ter Char-i-ty, but the great-est

there is Faith, but the great-est

42

[♩ = 60]

of these is Char-i-ty.

of these is Char-i-ty.

of these is Char-i-ty.

of these is Char-i-ty.

[lower] part soft

Bless-ed is he that con-sid-er-eth the Poor,

47 [♩ = 80]

the Lord shall strength - en him up - on the Bed of Lan - guish - ing

the Lord shall strength - en him up - on the Bed of Lan - guish - ing Bless -

the Lord shall strength - en him up - on the Bed of Lan - guish - ing

the Lord shall strength - en him up - on the Bed of Lan - guish - ing

[lower] part soft

51 [♩ = 80]

the Lord shall strength - en him, shall strength - en him, shall

ed is he that con - sid - er - eth the Poor, the Lord shall strength - en him, shall strength - en him, shall

the Lord shall strength - en him, shall strength - en him, shall

the Lord shall strength - en him, shall strength - en him, shall

55

strength - en him, shall strength - en him, shall strength - en him up - on the Bed of Lan - guish -

strength - en him, shall strength - en him, shall strength - en him up - on the Bed of Lan - guish -

strength - en him, shall strength - en him, shall strength - en him up - on the Bed of Lan - guish -

strength - en him, shall strength - en him, shall strength - en him up - on the Bed of Lan - guish -

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58 **Affettuoso**

ing and the Lord heard him,

ing

ing The poor Man cried,

ing and

63 **Adagio** [♩ = 60]

de - liv -

de - liv -

de - liv -

de - liv -

de - liv - er'd him from all his Trou- ble, de - liv -

68 **Vigorouso** [♩ = 120]

er'd him out of all his Trou- ble.

er'd him out of all his Trou- ble.

er'd him out of all his Trou- ble.

er'd him out of all his Trou- ble.

er'd him out of all his Trou- ble. Come ye

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72

Bless-ed of my Fath-er in-her-it the King-dom pre-par-ed for you from the

77

Come ye Bless-ed of my Fath-er in-her-it the King-dom pre-par-ed for you
her-it the King-dom pre-par-ed for you from the Foun-da-tion of the World,

81

her-it the King-dom pre-par-ed for you, for you, from
from the Foun-da-tion of the World, from
tion of the World, from
in-her-it the King-dom pre-par-ed for you, from

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85 Languissant

the Foun - da - tion of the World

the Foun - da - tion of the World

the Foun - da - tion of the World. For

the Foun - da - tion of the World.

89

and ye gave me Meat;

and I was a - thirst - y

I was an - hun - ger - ed

94 Presto [♩ = 146]

For I was an - hun - ger - ed and ye gave me Meat; and

For I was an - hun - ger - ed and ye gave me Meat; and

For I was an - hun - ger - ed and ye gave me Meat; and

and ye gave me Drink. For I was an - hun - ger - ed and ye gave me Meat; and

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98 ♩ = 60

I was a-thirst - y and ye gave me Drink.

I was a-thirst - y and ye gave me Drink.

I was a-thirst - y and ye gave me Drink. Bless - ed

I was a-thirst - y and ye gave me Drink. Bless - ed be the Lord

102

Bless - ed be the Lord God of Is - ra -

Bless - ed be the Lord God of Is - ra - el from Ev - er - last - ing to Ev - er -

be the Lord God of Is - ra - el from Ev - er - last - ing

God of Is - ra - el from Ev - er - last - ing us - to Ev - er - last - ing, A - men

106

el, from Ev - er - last - ing to Ev - er - last -

last - ing, to Ev - er - last - ing, A - men and A - men,

to Ev - er - last - ing,

and A - men, from Ev - er - last - ing to Ev - er - last -

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110

ing, A - men, from Ev - er - last - ing to Ev - er - last -

A - men, A - men, from Ev - er - last - ing to Ev - er - last - ing,

A - men, A - men and A - men, from Ev - er - last - ing to Ev - er - last -

ing, A - men and A - men, from Ev - er - last - ing, A - men, A -

117

ing, A - men and A - men. Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, A -

A - men and A - men. Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, A -

ing, A - men, A - men. Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, A -

men, A - men. Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, A -

122

men. Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, A - men.

men. Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, A - men.

men. Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, A - men. Bless - ed

men. Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, A - men. Bless - ed

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127

Bless-ed be the Lord God of

Bless-ed be the Lord God of Is-ra-el from Ev-er-last-ing.

be the Lord God of Is-ra-el from Ev-er-last-ing.

be the Lord God of Is-ra-el from Ev-er-last-ing.

131

Is-ra-el from Ev-er-last-ing to Ev-er-last-ing.

from Ev-er-last-ing to Ev-er-last-ing, praise ye the

ing to Ev-er-last-ing.

ing to Ev-er-last-ing.

135

Grave [♩ = 60] Adagio [♩ = 60] Forte

ing. A-men and A-men. A-men, A-men.

Lord, A-men and A-men. A-men, A-men.

ing. A-men and A-men. A-men, A-men.

ing. A-men and A-men. A-men, A-men.

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APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B

Blessed is He that Considereth the Poor

from The Psalm-Singer's Amusement

1 [♩ = 60]

the Lord will de - liv - er him,
the Lord will de - liv - er him,
Bless - ed is he that con - sid - er - eth the Poor: the Lord will de - liv - er him,
the Lord will de - liv - er him,

7

the Lord will de - liv - er him, the Lord will de - liv - er him
the Lord will de - liv - er him, the Lord will de - liv - er him
the Lord will de - liv - er him, the Lord will de - liv - er him
the Lord will de - liv - er him, the Lord will de - liv - er him

Detailed description: The image shows a musical score for a four-part setting of a Psalm. It consists of two systems of four staves each. The first system begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a tempo marking of [♩ = 60]. The music is written in a homophonic style with clear vocal parts. The lyrics are printed below the staves, with some words hyphenated across measures. The second system continues the piece, starting at measure 7. The notation includes various note values, rests, and bar lines. The lyrics are repeated in a similar pattern to the first system.

13

in the Time of Trou-ble. the

in the Time of Trou-ble. the

in the Time of Trou-ble. the

in the Time of Trou-ble. Bless-ed is he that con-sid-er-eth the Poor: the

19

Lord will pre-serve him, and keep him a-live, the Lord will pre-serve him, and

Lord will pre-serve him, and keep him a-live, the Lord will pre-serve him, and

Lord will pre-serve him, and keep him a-live, the Lord will pre-serve him, and

Lord will pre-serve him, and keep him a-live, the Lord will pre-serve him, and

25

keep him a-live, live. And thou wilt not de-

keep him a-live, live. And thou wilt not de-

keep him a-live, live. And thou wilt not de-

keep him a-live, live. And thou wilt not de-

31

And thou wilt not de -

And thou wilt not de - liv - er him de - liv - er him, de -

liv - er him in - to the Will of his En - em - ies, de - liv - er him, de -

En - em - ies, de - liv - er him in - to the Will of his

35

liv - er him in - to the Will of his En - em - ies.

liv - er him in - to the Will of his En - em - ies.

liv - er him in - to the Will of his En - em - ies.

En - em - ies, in - to the Will of his En - em - ies.

Piano

Bless - ed are the

Bless - ed are the

40

Mer - cy. Bless - ed are the Mer - ci - ful, the

Mer - cy. Bless - ed are the Mer - ci - ful, the

Mer - ci - ful, for they shall find. Mer - cy. Bless - ed are the Mer - ci - ful, the

Mer - ci - ful, for they shall find. Mer - cy. Bless - ed are the Mer - ci - ful, the

Forse

45

Mer-ci-ful: for they shall find Mer-cy. Fol-low af-ter Char-i-ty.

51

there is Faith, Hope, and Char-i-ty; but the Great-est of these is

55

Char-i-ty, is Char-i-ty, is Char-i-ty, but the Great-est of these is Char-i-ty.

60

Bless - ed is he that con - sid - er - eth the Poor: the Lord shall strength-en him, - shall

the Lord shall strength-en him, shall

the Lord shall strength-en him, shall

the Lord shall strength-en him, shall

66

strength-en him, shall strength - en - him, shall strength-en him up - on the Bed of Lan - guish - ing

strength-en him, shall strength - en him, shall strength-en him up - on the Bed of Lan - guish - ing

strength-en him, shall strength - en him, shall strength-en him up - on the Bed of Lan - guish - ing

strength-en him, shall strength - en him, shall strength-en him up - on the Bed of Lan - guish - ing

71

He that giv - eth to the Poor, he that giv - eth to the - Poor he -

He that giv - eth to the Poor he lend - eth - to the

He that giv - eth to the Poor, he that giv - eth to the -

He that giv - eth to the Poor

76

lend-eth to the Lord, he lend-eth to the Lord, he lend-eth to the
 Lord, he that giv-eth to the Poor he lend-eth to the
 Poor he lend-eth to the Lord, he lend-eth to the
 he lend-eth to the Lord, to the Lord, he lend-eth to the

81

Lord, and he will re-pay it, and he will re-pay it, re-pay it, and
 Lord, he lend-eth to the Lord, and he will re-pay it, and
 Lord, he lend-eth to the Lord, and he will re-pay it, and
 Lord, he lend-eth to the Lord, and he will re-pay it, re-pay it, and

87

he will re-pay it, re-pay it, re-pay it, and he will re-pay it.
 he will re-pay it, re-pay it, re-pay it, and he will re-pay it.
 he will re-pay it, re-pay it, re-pay it, and he will re-pay it.
 he will re-pay it, re-pay it, re-pay it, and he will re-pay it.

93

The poor — Man cry'd, and the Lord heard him and de -

The poor — Man cry'd, and the Lord heard him and de -

The poor — Man cry'd, and the Lord heard him and de -

The poor — Man cry'd, and the Lord heard him and de -

98

liv - er'd, and de - liv - er'd, and de - liv - er'd him from all his

liv - er'd, and de - liv - er'd, and de - liv - er'd him from all his

liv - er'd, and de - liv - er'd, and de - liv - er'd him from all his

liv - er'd, and de - liv - er'd, and de - liv - er'd him from all his

103

Trou - ble. A — Fa - ther to the — Fa - ther - less, the Wid - ow's God and

Trou - ble. A — Fa - ther to the — Fa - ther - less, the Wid - ow's God and

Trou - ble. A — Fa - ther to the — Fa - ther - less, the Wid - ow's God and

Trou - ble. A — Fa - ther to the — Fa - ther - less, the Wid - ow's God and

108

Guide, a Fa-ther to the Fa-ther-less, the Wid-ow's God and Guide.

Guide, a Fa-ther to the Fa-ther-less, the Wid-ow's God and Guide.

Guide, a Fa-ther to the Fa-ther-less, the Wid-ow's God and Guide.

Guide, a Fa-ther to the Fa-ther-less, the Wid-ow's God and Guide.

114

Pure Re-li-gion, pure Re-li-gion and un-de-fil-ed be-

Pure Re-li-gion, pure Re-li-gion and un-de-fil-ed be-

Pure Re-li-gion, pure Re-li-gion and un-de-fil-ed be-

Pure Re-li-gion, pure Re-li-gion and un-de-fil-ed be-

120

fore God and the Fa-ther to vis-it the

fore God and the Fa-ther to vis-it the

fore God and the Fa-ther is to vis-it the Wid-ow, to vis-it the

fore God and the Fa-ther to vis-it the

126

Wid-ow, to vis - it the Wid-ow and Fath - er - less, to—

Wid-ow, to vis - it the Wid-ow and Fath - er - less, to

Wid-ow, to vis - it the Wid-ow and Fath - er - less, and to keep him-self un - spot-ted, to

Wid-ow, to vis - it the Wid-ow and Fath - er - less, to

133

keep him-self un - spot-ted, to keep him - self un - spot - ted from the World

keep him-self un - spot-ted, to keep him - self un - spot - ted from the World

keep him-self un - spot-ted, to keep him - self un - spot - ted from the World

keep him-self un - spot-ted, to keep him - self un - spot - ted from the World

139

Bless - ed be the Lord God from

Bless - ed be the Lord God of Is - ra - el

Bless - ed be the Lord God of Is - ra - el from Ev - er -

Bless - ed be the Lord God of Is - ra - el from

144

Ev - er - last - ing to Ev - er - last - ing Praise

from Ev - er - last - ing to Ev - er - last - ing A -

last - ing to Ev - er - last - ing from Ev - er - last - ing

Ev - er - last - ing A - men, to

149

the Lord, A - men, Praise the Lord. And let all the Peo-ple say

men, A - men, Praise the Lord, A - men. let

to Ev-er - last - ing Praise the Lord, A - men. A - men,

Ev-er - last - ing. Praise the Lord, A - men, A - men, —

156

A - men, and let all the— Peo-ple say A - men, and let all the—
them say A - men, A -
and let all the— Peo-ple say, and let all the— Peo-ple say
A - men, A - men, and let all the—

[illegible]

166

and let all the Peo-ple say A - men, let them say, let them
A - men, and let all the Peo-ple say, let them say, let them
Peo-ple say A - men, let them say, let them
and let all the Peo-ple say, let them say, let them

172

The musical score consists of four staves, each representing a different voice part: Soprano (top), Alto, Tenor, and Bass (bottom). All parts are written in G major (one sharp, F#) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are printed below each staff. The melody is simple and homophonic, with all voices entering simultaneously on the first measure.

say A - men, Hal - le - lu - jah, let them say Hal - le - lu - jah,

say A - men, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, let them say

say A - men, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah,

say A - men, A - men, A - men,

178 *Swell*

A - men, A - men, A - men.

A - men, A - men, A - men.

A - men, A - men, A - men.

A - men, A - men, A - men.

A - men, A - men, A - men.

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