



Stuart Forster

Harmonizations & Descants

Set 1

Hymn Intonations
Preludes
& Free Harmonizations

Volume XIX

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Preludes
& Free Harmonizations

Virginia Schaap, editor

Stuart Forster

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Contents

ABBOT'S LEIGH	4
BESAÇON CAROL.....	6
BIRMINGHAM	7
DARWALL'S 148 TH	8
DULCE CARMEN	9
GOPSAL.....	10
HANOVER	11
HEREFORD	12
KING'S LYNN	14
LAUDATE DOMINUM	16
LITTON	17
LOBE DEN HERREN.....	18
NUN DANKET ALLE GOTT.....	20
ORA LABORA	22
REGENT SQUARE.....	23
RENDEZ À DIEU	24
RUSTINGTON	26
ST. ANNE	28
ST. DENIO.....	29
SLANE.....	30
WINCHESTER NEW	31
WINCHESTER OLD	32
WOODLANDS	33

Reproducible descants..... 34



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A lifelong love of descants began when, as a nine-year-old, I first heard the soaring arrangement of *ADESTE FIDELES* by Sir David Willcocks. The word-painting, the countermelody, and the thrilling harmony breathed extraordinary life into a carol known seemingly forever. Finding ways to enhance congregational song and, in the process, highlighting the meaning of profound theological poetry has channeled my enthusiasm for arranging hymn tunes and playing the organ ever since.

Hymn tunes, like the organ, have become part of my identity. Many years of preparing for services have gradually molded the way in which I combine the dual roles of accompanying the hymns and leading the congregation. In the fine details of crafting an accompaniment, harmony, articulation, and the simultaneous movement of multiple voices (“voice leading,” in organists’ jargon) each play a role—sometimes subtle, often dynamic—in creating forward momentum, binding a congregation together while energizing the overall shape of a hymn, especially in the critical final stanza that lingers in the air after the last chord dies away.

I owe a great deal to numerous mentors—both teachers and friends—who have shared much of themselves with me as I polished this art form. Donald Holder, Peter Jewkes, Robert Lehman, and Walter Sutcliffe could each identify their own handiwork in these volumes. Recordings of the great George Thalben-Ball continue to provide inspiration decades later. And singing hymns in thousands of services has undoubtedly left me with stimulating impressions of the way in which countless others practise hymnody. This is a cumulative art form, as each generation takes cues from those who have paved the way with their own well-crafted ideas.

A great debt is owed to my choirs, who have gallantly tackled new arrangements as soon as I have composed them. In cases where the congregation needs very little melodic help from the choirs, arrangements of a few favorite hymns have gradually evolved into multi-part descants. These settings, with as many as five voice parts, create a wall of sound in the healthiest range for each voice, so that the enunciation of the text can strengthen the harmony provided by the organ. These arrangements present a sustained challenge that helps to keep the choir engaged in leading the congregation.

The timeless hymns of our tradition have the capacity to speak in a new voice to each successive generation. I hope that choirs and congregations near and far will feel energized and refreshed in encountering familiar hymns anew through these arrangements.

—Stuart Forster

ABBOT'S LEIGH

Cyril Taylor, 1942
Setting by Stuart Forster

Music © 1942, renewed 1970, this arr. © 2018 Hope Publishing Co.

5. Lord, — you bless with words — as - sur - - - ing;

The musical score is written in 3/4 time. The vocal line is on a single staff with lyrics. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves: a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a separate bass staff. The piano part features chords and a steady bass line.

Jeffrey Rowthorn *Lord, You Give the Great Commission*
Text © 1978 Hope Publishing Co.

28

power — us for the work of min - is - try.

ff

5

Tell Out, My Soul Song of Mary, para. Timothy Dudley-Smith *Repository of Sacred Music*, 1813
© 1962, Hope Publishing Co.

BIRMINGHAM
Setting by Stuart Forster

4. Tell out, my soul, the glo - ries of his word! Tell out, my

DARWALL'S 148TH John Darwall, 1770
Setting by Stuart Forster

Richard Baxter, 1681 *Ye Holy Angels, Bright*

4. My soul, bear thou thy part, triumph in God above: and

O Worship the King Robert Grant, 1833

William Croft, 1708 **HANOVER**
Setting by Stuart Forster

5. Frail chil - dren of dust, and fee - ble as frail, in thee do— we

The musical score is written in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of five staves. The first two staves are vocal lines (Soprano and Alto). The next two staves are piano accompaniment (Right and Left Hand). The fifth staff is a separate bass line. The lyrics are: "5. Frail chil - dren of dust, and fee - ble as frail, in thee do— we".

KING'S LYNN

English melody; adapt. R.V. Williams, 1906
Setting by Stuart Forster

3. Then let us praise the Fa - ther and wor - ship God the Son and
3. Tie in a liv - ing teth - er the prince and priest and thrall, bind

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of four staves. The top staff is the vocal line, with two verses of lyrics. The second staff is a vocal line, likely for a second voice. The third and fourth staves are the piano accompaniment, with the right and left hands respectively. The piano part features a steady bass line and chords that support the vocal melody.

Horatio B. Nelson, 1864 *By All Your Saints Still Striving*
G.K. Chesterton, 1906 *O God of Earth and Altar*

13

The musical score consists of four staves. The top staff is the vocal line, starting with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are: "scribe all power and glo - ry and praise to — God a - lone. up a liv - ing na - tion, a sin - gle — sword to thee." The second staff is a single melodic line, likely for a flute or violin. The third and fourth staves are the piano accompaniment, with the third staff being the right hand and the fourth staff being the left hand. The piano part features a steady accompaniment with chords and moving lines in both hands. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

scribe all power and glo - ry and praise to — God a - lone.
up a liv - ing na - tion, a sin - gle — sword to thee.

LAUDATE DOMINUM C. Hubert H. Parry, 1894. Henry W. Baker, 1875 *O Praise Ye the Lord*

Setting by Stuart Forster

4. O praise ye the Lord! Thanks - giv - ing and song to him be out -

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It features a vocal line with lyrics and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is 3/4. The piano part consists of a right-hand part with chords and a left-hand part with a rhythmic accompaniment. The lyrics are: "4. O praise ye the Lord! Thanks - giv - ing and song to him be out -".

LOBE DEN HERREN melody from Erneuerten Gesangbuch, 1665.

Setting by Stuart Forster

Sop. descant

4. Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me a -

Alto descant

4. Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me a -

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It consists of five staves. The first two staves are for vocal descants: Soprano and Alto. The third staff is a piano accompaniment for the right hand, and the fourth and fifth staves are for the left hand. The lyrics are: "4. Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me a -".

NUN DANKET ALLE GOTT

Johann Crüger, 1647

Setting by Stuart Forster

3. All praise and thanks to God the Fa - ther now be giv - en the

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It features a vocal line with lyrics and a piano accompaniment. The piano part consists of a right-hand part with chords and a left-hand part with a simple bass line. The lyrics are: "3. All praise and thanks to God the Fa - ther now be giv - en the".

Angels from the Realms James Montgomery, 1816 Henry T. Smart, 1866 **REGENT SQUARE**
Setting by Stuart Forster

4. Saints be - fore— the al - tar bend - ing, watch - ing long in hope and fear,

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It features a vocal line with lyrics and a piano accompaniment consisting of a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a separate bass line. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "4. Saints be - fore— the al - tar bend - ing, watch - ing long in hope and fear,". The piano accompaniment includes chords and melodic lines in both hands, with a prominent bass line.

RENDEZ À DIEU

melody attr. Louis Bourgeois, 1543
Setting by Stuart Forster

3. Riv - ers and seas and tor - rents roar - ing, hon - or the

The musical score consists of five staves. The top staff is a vocal line in G major, with lyrics: "3. Riv - ers and seas and tor - rents roar - ing, hon - or the". The second staff is a piano accompaniment in G major, featuring a treble and bass clef. The third and fourth staves are a grand piano accompaniment, with the third staff in treble clef and the fourth in bass clef. The fifth staff is a bass line in G major, in bass clef. The music is in 4/4 time and features a simple, homophonic setting of the melody.

4. Thou reign - est in glo - ry, thou - rul - est in light, thine an - gels a -

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It features a vocal line with lyrics and a piano accompaniment consisting of a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a separate bass line. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The lyrics are: "4. Thou reign - est in glo - ry, thou - rul - est in light, thine an - gels a -".

SLANE Irish ballad melody
Setting by Stuart Forster

Irish, ca. 700; vers. Mary Byrne, tr Eleanor H. Hull, alt. *Be Thou My Vision*

3. High King of heav - en, when vic - tory is won, may I reach—

The musical score consists of five staves. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef, 3/4 time, with lyrics: "3. High King of heav - en, when vic - tory is won, may I reach—". The second staff is a piano accompaniment in treble clef, 3/4 time. The third and fourth staves are piano accompaniment in bass clef, 3/4 time. The fifth staff is a separate bass line in bass clef, 3/4 time. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat).

On Jordan's Banks Charles Coffin, 1736

Musicalisches Handbuch, 1690

WINCHESTER NEW

Setting by Stuart Forster

5. All praise, e - ter - nal — Son, — to thee, whose ad - vent doth thy

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is on a single staff with lyrics underneath. The piano accompaniment is on two staves (treble and bass clef). The piano part features a steady bass line and chords that support the vocal melody. The lyrics are: "5. All praise, e - ter - nal — Son, — to thee, whose ad - vent doth thy".

WINCHESTER OLD

melody *The Whole Book of Psalms*, 1592

Nahum Tate, 1700

While Shepherds

Setting by Stuart Forster

6. "All — glo - ry to God — on — high, on earth be peace;

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of five staves. The top staff is the vocal line, followed by a piano accompaniment consisting of a right-hand treble clef staff and a left-hand bass clef staff. The lyrics are placed below the vocal line. The score includes various musical notations such as rests, eighth notes, quarter notes, and chords.

