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**RALPH VAUGHAN  
WILLIAMS SOCIETY**

*Dedicated to widening the knowledge, understanding and  
appreciation of the music and life of Ralph Vaughan Williams*

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RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS



ALBION RECORDS

*An Oxford*  
**CHRISTMAS**

Chapel Choir of the Royal Hospital Chelsea  
William Vann *director*  
Joshua Ryan *organ*

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)  
 Arrangements from The Oxford Book of Carols

1	<b>Sussex Mummers' Carol</b>	4'55
2	<b>Hereford Carol</b> Solo: Tom Castle	2'46
3	<b>A Virgin Most Pure</b> Solo: Eloise Irving	6'00
4	<b>Sussex Carol (Second Tune)</b> Solo: Angus McPhee	2'10
5	<b>Gloucestershire Wassail</b> Solos: Leah Jackson, Jonathan Hanley	1'40
6	<b>The Salutation Carol</b> Solos: Eloise Irving, Jonathan Beatty	2'53
7	<b>The Bellman's Song (Third Tune)</b> Solo: Angus McPhee	3'00
8	<b>Job (Come All You Worthy Christian Men – Third Tune)</b>	3'08
9	<b>This Endris Night</b> Solo: Angus McPhee	3'49
10	<b>Sussex Carol (First Tune)</b>	1'43
11	<b>Coverdale's Carol</b>	2'35
12	<b>Song of the Crib</b> Solos: Katy Hill, Jonathan Hanley, Adrian Horsewood	4'29
13	<b>Children's Song of the Nativity</b> Solo: Katy Hill	2'06

14	<b>If Ye Would Hear the Angels Sing</b> Solo: Katy Hill	2'33
15	<b>Quem Pastores - Shepherds Left Their Flocks A-Straying</b>	1'26
16	<b>The Bellman's Song (Second Tune)</b> Solo: Eleanor Minney	2'27
17	<b>Joseph and Mary</b> Solo: Thomas Stoddart	3'31
18	<b>Job (Come All You Worthy Christian Men – Fourth Tune)</b>	2'39
19	<b>The Seven Virgins</b> Solos: Jenni Harper and Jonathan Hanley	4'21
20	<b>Psalm of Sion</b> Solo: Katy Hill	2'59
21	<b>O My Dear Heart</b>	3'53
22	<b>God Bless the Master of This House</b>	3'09

*Total playing time: 68'12*

All the carols were arranged by Ralph Vaughan Williams, with the exception of track 14, which was adapted and arranged jointly by Martin Shaw and Ralph Vaughan Williams.

**William Vann**, director  
**Joshua Ryan**, organ (tracks 1, 3-4, 10-13, 15-18)

**Choir of the Chapel of the Royal Hospital Chelsea**  
 Eloise Irving, Leah Jackson, Katy Hill, Jenni Harper, Helen Ashby, Kate Ashby, Esther Mallett (sopranos), Rosemary Clifford, Clara Kanter, Charlie Morris, Emma Ashby, Eleanor Minney (altos), Jonathan Beatty, Jonathan Hanley, Tom Castle, Joseph Doody, Simon Wall (tenors), Adrian Horsewood, Angus McPhee, Thomas Stoddart, James Arthur, Nathan Harrison, Nicholas Ashby (basses)

**Nicholas Tall**, registration assistant

## AN OXFORD CHRISTMAS

This recording takes its title from *The Oxford Book of Carols* of 1928 (OBC), from which 20 of these Vaughan Williams arrangements (with one joint contribution from Martin Shaw) were largely taken. The final two tracks were published by Oxford University Press at a later date. It is a companion recording to ALBCD035 *Vaughan Williams Christmas*, released in 2016, which includes more arrangements as well as original carols written by Vaughan Williams.

### Background to *The Oxford Book of Carols*

In the decade before the outbreak of the Second World War, the Christmas carol was increasingly defined by the repertoire of *OBC*, published in 1928. *OBC* was the brainchild of Reverend Percy Dearmer. Dearmer was a socialist, high-church Anglican liturgist who believed that music should be at the core of Christian worship. Dearmer was the author of *The Parson's Handbook*, published in the concluding months of the 19th century:

The parson should beg his people to discourage small boys from begging in Advent under the pretext of singing carols – if it can be called singing. It is really a sin to give pence to children for degrading themselves and dishonouring sacred things. Perhaps the best remedy is for members of the congregation or the choir themselves to sing carols in the streets.

In 1901, Percy Dearmer became Vicar of St Mary the Virgin, Primrose Hill (above the north-western corner of Regent's Park in London). Seven years later, on the recommendation of Ralph Vaughan Williams, Dearmer appointed the becloaked, sombrero-wearing Martin Shaw as his organist. Dearmer and Shaw were united in their profound dislike of sentimental 19th-century music. In particular, Dearmer and

Shaw scorned many Victorian hymn tunes, Shaw likening them to 'overripe bananas':

This was typical of the taste of the 'seventies [1870s], when churchgoers could apparently fix their mind on the highest thing of all, and at the same time cheerfully submit to whatever banality in the shape of chant, hymn, anthem, or service, might be produced by those who were supposed to guard the traditions of ecclesiastical song.

In order to weed out such Victoriana, Martin Shaw had been engaged to conduct research into some old English melodies by the musical editor of *The English Hymnal*, Ralph Vaughan Williams. *The English Hymnal* was published in 1906 as an alternative to *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. Vaughan Williams had been visited by Dearmer two years earlier. As Vaughan Williams recalled:

I was sitting in my study in Barton Street, Westminster, when a cab drove up to the door and 'Mr Dearmer' was announced. I just knew his name vaguely as a parson who invited tramps to sleep in his drawing-room; but he had not come to me about tramps. He went straight to the point and asked me to edit the music of a hymn book.

Vaughan Williams didn't acquiesce immediately. But when he eventually agreed to act as musical editor of *The English Hymnal*, he did so with opinionated fervour:

While trying to include all the good tunes, I did my best to eliminate the bad ones. This was difficult, because I was not entirely my own master. My committee insisted that certain very popular tunes should be retained. The climax came when my masters declared that I must myself write a fulsome letter to a prominent ecclesiastic asking for leave to print

his horrible little tune. My committee and I finally settled our quarrel with a compromise by which the worst offenders were confined in an appendix at the end of the book which we nicknamed the 'Chamber of Horrors'.

The meeting between Percy Dearmer and Ralph Vaughan Williams in 1904 was crucial to the history of the carol in the 20th century. Without that meeting, Vaughan Williams wouldn't have been engaged as musical editor of *The English Hymnal*, and without the success of that venture Vaughan Williams wouldn't have worked on *OBC*. So it's all the more surprising that Vaughan Williams initially turned down the offer to work on *The English Hymnal*. But Dearmer knew exactly how to goad Vaughan Williams into accepting the assignment: Dearmer told Vaughan Williams that if he didn't take the job, then Henry Walford Davies would jump at the chance. Although Walford Davies was three years older than Vaughan Williams, the young men had entered the Royal College of Music together as students in 1890. After two years Vaughan Williams had left to study in Cambridge, and when he returned to the RCM in 1895 to study with Parry and Stanford, Vaughan Williams found that their star pupil – Walford Davies – had been given the job of teacher of counterpoint at the institution. This was the raw nerve that Dearmer knowingly prodded nine years later. As Vaughan Williams recalled:

The final clench was given when I understood that if I did not do the job it would be offered to a well-known church musician with whose musical ideas I was very much out of sympathy.

It is easy to be out of sympathy with someone's ideas when they gain preferment. However, there's no doubt that Vaughan Williams did a better job as a compiler of hymn tunes than Walford Davies would have done. As Martin Shaw observed:

If the conventional parson and organist had been in charge of *The English Hymnal* it would have been another and possibly a feebler version of *Ancient and Modern*. But by a rare stroke of luck Dearmer and Vaughan Williams were the two men in all England who were best fitted for the work, and it is not too much to say that not merely the rebirth of English Hymnody but in great measure the revival of English Church music is due to them.

In 1904, Walford Davies was Organist of London's Temple Church and would have seemed the more obvious choice to co-edit a hymnal. But the freshness that Vaughan Williams brought to the project through his love of folk song and his dislike of Victoriana opened a door onto a new world of carolling that Walford Davies could never have unlocked.

In 1908, when Martin Shaw became organist at Percy Dearmer's church of St Mary the Virgin, Primrose Hill, the two English musical nationalists began to hatch plans for the publication of the *English Carol Book*. Tribute was paid to the excellence of George Woodward's *Cowley Carol Book*, while making it clear that the *English Carol Book* was to be 'on different lines'. Woodward had favoured the introduction of foreign tunes into the English carol repertory. Dearmer and Shaw wanted to assert the Englishness of their collection:

The founding of the Church Music Society, the Folk-Song Society, and the Summer School of Church Music, and the appearance of *The English Hymnal*, are welcome signs of a new era. It is with the hope, then, that the time is ripe for an attempt to be made to present our national Carols in a manly and fitting way that the present collection is offered to the public.

And Dearmer and Shaw did indeed keep things manly. The only female associated with the *English Carol Book* was Miss Nan Knowles, who was engaged to offer 'clerical help'. The *English Carol Book* was a passive-aggressive collaboration; Percy Dearmer and Martin Shaw had a point to prove. Their disdain for Victoriana made them picky, and they published a slim volume, each piece of which they felt able to justify on grounds of reserved beauty.

The carol flourished in the spring soil of the early-20th century as effectively as it had in the autumn marl of late-Victorian England. But the precepts were different. The new harmonies were cleaner; more modal. The vocal writing was fresher; more agile. The eye of the beholder had changed radically. And the First World War further accelerated the process of radicalisation. In 1919 there was a pressing national need for the publication of a second series of the *English Carol Book*. The second series contained music by respected composers such as Ralph Vaughan Williams, John Ireland, Rutland Boughton, and Sydney Nicholson. Nicholson's star, in particular, was in the ascendant since he'd recently edited the 1916 Supplement of *Hymns Ancient & Modern* and had just been appointed Organist of Westminster Abbey. But none of the new music in either series of the *English Carol Book* has passed into the canon, in spite of the fact that much of it was re-published in *OBC* in 1928.

Percy Dearmer, Martin Shaw, and Ralph Vaughan Williams published the hymnal *Songs of Praise* in 1925. This collection of hymns was designed to be 'national in character' and was especially successful in schools. So by the mid-1920s, this trio of Anglophile reformers was properly in its stride. And in 1928 they created one of the most significant carol publications of all time: *The Oxford Book of Carols*. This

was a substantial collection of over 200 carols, and almost every carol was accompanied by a short, informative commentary. Carol singing was in the air.

*The Oxford Book of Carols* was organised into five sections:

- Part I – Traditional carols with their proper tunes
- Part II – Traditional carol tunes set to other traditional texts
- Part III – Traditional carols with modern words
- Part IV – Traditional words to modern tunes
- Part V – Carols by modern writers and composers

A seven-number Appendix followed – Additional folk tunes proper to material in Part I.

This album includes six of the seven tunes in the Appendix; where we give numbers for tunes they refer to later editions when the Appendix was consolidated with Part I; otherwise the original numbering for carols was retained.

Not only was *OBC* thought-provoking in its organization, but its selection covered far more than just material for December. Certainly there were carols for Advent, Christmas Eve (both sacred and secular) and Christmas, but also for Epiphany, Candlemas, Lent, Passiontide, Easter, Ascension, Whitsun and Trinity. Seasonal carols for spring, May, summer, harvest, autumn and winter were joined by a selection of Nativity carols that were also appropriate for general use, carols for saints' days and dedication festivals, and carols 'suitable for use in procession'. And there were a number of general carols, some of which were labelled cradle songs, medieval, legendary and carols of praise.

The excellence of *OBC* depended not on one particular feature, but on the whole package. Its size – a handbook of 5 x 7 inches and 1¼ inches thick – simultaneously gave it gravitas and logistical propriety. It could be stored conveniently in choir libraries, it looked and felt more like a reference work than a carol pamphlet, and it fitted on the music desks of choir stalls more snugly than many other anthologies – that was quite an achievement for a book that contained over 200 carols. In contrast to the *English Carol Book*, *OBC* had real breadth of provenance: Russian, Finnish, Swedish, Danish, German, Austrian (including the Tyrol), Dutch and Flemish, French (including carols from Alsace, Anjou, and Béarn), Spanish (including Basque), Irish, Welsh and English (including the Isle of Man). Scots had every reason to feel marginalised. Many of the carols were anonymous, but there were also a goodly number whose composers were known. Continental music was represented by Samuel Scheidt, Peter Cornelius, Gounod, Brahms, and Tchaikovsky (all dead). Among the long-dead English composers were Thomas Ravenscroft, Thomas Arne, and R. J. S. Stevens, whose music sat side-by-side with the recently deceased Arthur Brown and the shortly to be deceased Peter Warlock. And, in chronological order of birth, there was music by Gustav Holst, Sydney Nicholson, Rutland Boughton, Harry Farjeon, and John Ireland (all born in the 1870s), as well as the younger R. O. Morris, Armstrong Gibbs, and Edmund Rubbra (the only composer to be born in the 20th century). The offerings from the musical compilers of *OBC*, Ralph Vaughan Williams and the brothers Martin and Geoffrey Shaw, were also very fine indeed.

As well as the well-judged size of *OBC* and the breadth of its contents (both in terms of usefulness and origin), the history and context of most of the carols was

given in the form of pithy notes at the foot of each carol. Most memorably, the book's preface was a masterpiece of prose, which verged on polemic and was sometimes tinged with purple. From its opening sentence: 'Carols are songs with a religious impulse that are simple, hilarious, popular, and modern', the reader was taken by the scruff of the neck and preached at, entertainingly and potently. And at the end of the volume there was a suggestion for the format of carol services, which might be held in church on every Sunday afternoon of the year: Dearmer was prepared to practise what he preached.

1928 was the *annus mirabilis* of the carol. Not only was *OBC* published, but the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols was broadcast from the chapel of King's College, Cambridge for the first time. The King's Carol Service has become a global phenomenon, and its repertoire over the years has relied heavily on the late-Victorian *Christmas Carols New & Old* and the modern *Carols for Choirs*. In between those multi-volume series, the inter-War *Oxford Book of Carols* shone as a beacon of experimentation within tradition. And it is that ritualised innovation that made *OBC* what it remains today: a visionary musico-poetic collection of the most profoundly partisan nature.

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The carols on this album are largely arrangements from *The Oxford Book of Carols*, with two exceptions that were published by Oxford University Press at a later date.

OBC's preface tells us that: 'Variety in the method of singing is even more important than with hymns, and the verses should never be sung straight through all in the same way.' It is in this spirit that the choir's director, William Vann, has prepared the carols for this recording.

#### 1 SUSSEX MUMMERS' CAROL (OBC 45)

This carol, remembering Christ's Passion, was collected by Lucy Broadwood between 1876 and 1881 in her own neighbourhood of Horsham. OBC suggests that it could be sung in Lent, despite the link with mummering or mumming – which was generally a Christmas activity involving visits to houses in disguise, to have a merry time with friends and neighbours.

O mortal man, remember well,  
When Christ our Lord was born,  
He was crucified between two thieves,  
And crownèd with the thorn.

O mortal man, remember well  
When Christ died on the rood,  
'Twas for our sins and wicked ways  
Christ shed His precious blood.

O mortal man, remember well,  
When Christ was wrapped in clay,  
He was taken to a sepulchre  
Where no man ever lay.

God bless the mistress of this house  
With gold chain round her breast;  
Where e'er her body sleeps or wakes,  
Lord, send her soul to rest.

God bless the master of this house  
With happiness beside;  
Where e'er his body rides or walks,  
Lord Jesus be his guide.

God bless your house, your children too,  
Your cattle and your store;  
The Lord increase you day by day,  
And send you more and more.

#### 2 HEREFORD CAROL (OBC 7)

This carol had previously been published by Stainer & Bell under the title *The Angel Gabriel* as one of *Twelve Traditional Herefordshire Carols* (1920) – all of which are performed by Derek Welton (bass) with Iain Burnside (piano) on ALBCD013 *On Christmas Day*. The text was an assembly from three Herefordshire sources, while the tune was sung to Vaughan Williams and Mrs Ella Leather (1874–1928) by Mr W Hiron at Dilwin, near Weobley, in or around 1909.

Come all you faithful Christians  
That dwell here on earth,  
Come celebrate the morning  
Of our dear Saviour's birth.  
This is the happy morning,  
This is the blessed morn:  
To save our souls from ruin,  
The Son of God was born.

Behold the Angel Gabriel,  
In scripture it is said,  
Did with his holy message  
Come to the virgin maid:  
'Hail blest among all women!'  
He thus did greet her then,  
'Lo, thou shalt be the mother  
Of the Saviour of all men'.

Her time being accomplished,  
She came to Bethlehem,  
And then was safe delivered  
Of the Saviour of all men.  
No princely pomp attended him,  
His honours were but small;  
A manger was his cradle;  
His bed an ox's stall.

Now to him that is ascended  
Let all our praises be;  
May we his steps then follow,  
And He our pattern be;  
So when our lives are ended,  
We all may hear him call,  
'Come souls, receive the Kingdom,  
Prepared for you all'.

#### 3 A VIRGIN MOST PURE (OBC 4)

The words of this carol were taken from Davies Gilbert's *Some Ancient Christmas Carols*, 1822, but a printed version can be found from as early as 1734. Vaughan Williams arranged this, originally in the Appendix of OBC but consolidated with

two other tunes arranged by Martin Shaw in later editions. Mr Samson Bates (a widower aged 76, living with his spinster daughter) had sung the tune and several others to Cecil Sharp at The Trench, near Telford, Shropshire, on 19 December 1911. Samson began as a miner, later becoming a foundry worker.

A virgin most pure, as the Prophets do tell,  
Hath brought forth a baby, as it hath befell,  
To be our Redeemer from death, hell and sin,  
Which Adam's transgression had wrapped us in.

*And therefore be merry, set sorrow aside;  
Christ Jesus our Saviour was born on this tide.*

At Bethlem in Jewry a city there was,  
Where Joseph and Mary together did pass,  
And there to be taxed, with many one mo',  
For Caesar commanded the same should be so.

But when they had entered the city so fair,  
A number of people so mighty was there,  
That Joseph and Mary, whose substance was small,  
Could find in the inn there no lodging at all.

Then were they constrained in a stable to lie,  
Where horses and asses they used for to tie;  
Their lodging so simple they took it no scorn,  
But against the next morning our Saviour was born.

The King of all kings to this world being brought,  
Small store of fine linen to wrap him was sought,  
And when she had swaddled her young son so sweet,  
Within an ox manger she laid him to sleep.

Then God sent an angel from Heaven so high,  
To certain poor shepherds in fields where they lie,  
And bade them no longer in sorrow to stay,  
Because that our Saviour was born on this day.

Then presently after the shepherds did spy  
A number of angels that stood in the sky;  
They joyfully talked and sweetly did sing,  
To God be all glory, our Heavenly King.

#### 4 SUSSEX CAROL (OBC 24, SECOND TUNE)

This tune for the Sussex Carol, originally one of those in the Appendix to OBC, was noted by Dr. James Culwick in 1904 – who remembered his mother singing it 40 years earlier. When she heard it, in Dublin, there had been about ninety verses, sung by a 'strong, rough and deep bass voice' over the course of nearly an hour.

On Christmas night all Christians sing,  
To hear the news the angels bring,  
News of great joy, news of great mirth,  
News of our merciful King's birth.

When sin departs before his grace,  
Then life and health come in its place;  
Angels and men with joy may sing,  
All for to see the new-born King.

Then why should men on earth be so sad,  
Since our Redeemer made us glad,  
When from our sin he set us free,  
All for to gain our liberty?

All out of darkness we have light,  
Which made the angels sing this night:  
'Glory to God and peace to men,  
Now and for evermore. Amen'.

#### 5 GLOUCESTERSHIRE WASSAIL (OBC 31)

'Wassail' comes from the Anglo Saxon *Wæs þu hæþ* – 'be thou hale', in good health. It is a greeting rather than a toast, and has come to be associated with singing from

door to door and offering gifts in exchange for a drink from the wassail bowl. Despite the name, this *Gloucestershire Wassail* was sung to Vaughan Williams by an unknown singer in Pembridge, Herefordshire, in August 1909.

Wassail, wassail, all over the town!  
Our toast it is white, and our ale it is brown,  
Our bowl it is made of the white maple tree;  
With the wassailing bowl we'll drink to thee.

So here is to Cherry and to his right cheek,  
Pray God send our master a good piece of beef,  
And a good piece of beef that may we all see;  
With the wassailing bowl we'll drink to thee.

And here is to Dobbin and to his right eye,  
Pray God send our master a good Christmas pie,  
And a good Christmas pie that may we all see;  
With our wassailing bowl we'll drink to thee.

So here is to Broad May and to her broad horn,  
May God send our master a good crop of corn,  
And a good crop of corn that may we all see;  
With the wassailing bowl we'll drink to thee.

And here is to Fillpail and to her left ear,  
Pray God send our master a happy new year,  
And a happy new year as e'er he did see;  
With our wassailing bowl we'll drink to thee.

*Cherry and Dobbin are horses. Broad May and Fillpail are cows.*

#### 6 THE SALUTATION CAROL (OBC 36)

The Salutation is an old name for the Annunciation, so this carol tells the story of the Angel Gabriel's message to the Virgin Mary that she is to bear a child who is to be 'second in deity', an element of the Holy Trinity. This fifteenth century carol was in Richard Hill's *Commonplace Book*, which included a collection of carols transcribed in about 1504. Hill (or Hilles) was a London businessman.

*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell! This is the salutation of th'angel Gabriel.*

Tidings true there be come new, sent from the Trinity  
By Gabriel to Nazareth, City of Galilee.  
'A clean maiden, a pure virgin, by her humility  
Shall now conceive the Person second in Deity.'

'Hail, virgin celestial, the meek'st that ever was!  
Hail, temple of the Deity! Hail, mirror of all grace!  
Hail, Virgin pure! I thee ensure, within a little space  
Thou shalt conceive, and him receive that shall bring great solace.'

Then bespake the Maid again and answered womanly,  
'Whate'er my Lord commandeth me I will obey truly.'  
With '*Ecce sum humillima ancilla Domini;*  
*Secundum verbum tuum,*' she said, '*Fiat mihi.*'

*The Latin text in the last verse translates as: 'Lo, I am the most humble handmaid of the Lord. According to your word,' she said, 'be it done unto me.'*

#### 7 THE BELLMAN'S SONG (OBC 46, THIRD TUNE)

OBC reports that the text of this carol is 'common in the old broadsides, and some of its verses have strayed into other folk-carols.' The third verse (only) is based on a stanza from *A Song by F.B.P. to the tune of Diana* (c. 1593) – a rather free versification of *Speculum Peccatoris* (see track 20 below). The title brings to mind the tolling of the bell as we come to our last resting place. There are three tunes for it in OBC, the first arranged by Martin Shaw, and two more by Vaughan Williams, both of them originally in the Appendix. This Vaughan Williams arrangement is of a tune collected in 1897 by Godfrey Arkwright (1864-1944), a friend of Lucy

Broadwood and bibliographer of 16th to 18th century music. Vaughan Williams had first harmonised the tune (which he called *Newbury*) for *The English Hymnal* of 1906.

The moon shines bright and the stars give a light A little before it was day. Our Lord, our God he called on us, And bid us awake and pray.	The fields were green as green could be, When from his glorious seat Our Lord, our God, he watered us With his heavenly dew so sweet.
Awake, awake, good people all; Awake, and you shall hear, Our Lord our God died on the cross For us whom he loved so dear.	And for the saving of our souls Christ died upon the cross; We ne'er shall do for Jesus Christ As he hath done for us.
O fair, O fair Jerusalem, When shall I come to thee? When shall my sorrows have an end, Thy joy that I may see?	The life of man is but a span And cut down in its flower; We are here today, and tomorrow are gone, The creatures of an hour.

#### 8 JOB (COME ALL YOU WORTHY CHRISTIAN MEN – OBC 60, THIRD TUNE )

Hymn tunes are given names and can be traced from one hymn book to another. Similarly, the words of folk songs have been indexed (by Steve Roud) so that variants can be identified without too much ambiguity. Folk tunes have no index and are identified by linking them to a text. Since one text may have many tunes, this is a source of some confusion, illustrated by this example. Martin Shaw arranged two tunes for this well-known carol in OBC, one of which is the tune most familiar to us as the opening theme of *Five Variants of Dives and Lazarus*, or the hymn tune *Kingsfold*. The song *Dives and Lazarus* also appears in OBC, arranged by Vaughan Williams to a different tune altogether. For *Job*, this album uses the two tunes arranged for it by Vaughan Williams which were originally tucked away in the Appendix.

The first of these is one of the tunes collected by Percy Merrick from the Sussex farmer Henry Hills between 1899 and 1901. More details of these can be found in the notes for ALBCD042 *Folk Songs Volume 1*. Hills remembered it being sung at Christmas time at Lodsworth, Sussex, many years earlier. This moralising tale brings the New Testament parable of Lazarus (with no mention of Dives) into the Old Testament story of Job:

Come all you worthy Christian men that dwell upon this land,  
Don't spend your time in rioting; remember you're but man.  
Be watchful for your latter end; be ready for your call.  
There are many changes in this world; some rise while others fall.

Now, Job he was a patient man, the richest in the East:  
When he was brought to poverty, his sorrows soon increased.  
He bore them all most patiently; from sin he did refrain;  
He always trusted in the Lord; he soon got rich again.

Come all you worthy Christian men that are so very poor,  
Remember how poor Lazarus lay at the rich man's door,  
While begging of the crumbs of bread that from his table fell.  
The Scriptures do inform us all that in heaven he doth dwell.

The time, alas, it soon will come when parted we shall be;  
But all the difference it will make is in joy and misery.  
And we must give a strict account of great as well as small.  
Believe me, now, dear Christian friends, that God will judge us all.

#### 9 THIS ENDRIS NIGHT (OBC 39)

A fifteenth century record of this survives in the Advocates Library Edinburgh, and it is also recorded in Richard Hill's book (see track 6: *The Salutation Carol*). 'This endris night' means roughly 'the other night' or 'a few nights ago.'

This endris night I saw a sight, a star as bright as day,  
And ever among, a maiden sung, 'Lullay, by by, lullay.'

This lovely lady sat and sang, and to her child did say,  
'My son, my brother, father dear, why liest thou thus in hay?'  
'My sweetest bird, thus 'tis required, though I be king veray,  
But nevertheless I will not cease to sing *By by, lullay*.'

The child then spake in his talking, and to his mother said:  
'Yea, I am known as heaven-king, in crib though I be laid:  
For angels bright down to me light: thou knowest 'tis no nay;  
And for that sight thou may delight to sing, *By by, lullay*.'

'Now, sweet son, since thou art a king, why art thou laid in stall?  
Why dost not order thy bedding in some great kinges hall?  
Methinks 'tis right that king or knight should lie in good array.  
And then among, it were no wrong to sing *By by, lullay*.'

#### 10 SUSSEX CAROL (OBC 24, FIRST TUNE)

Both the melody and the text were provided to Vaughan Williams by Mrs Harriet Verrall of Monks Gate, Sussex, on 24 May 1904. This popular tune is now widely known as *Sussex Carol*, the name given to the text by OBC, though versions were found in other counties and the text can be traced back to the Irish bishop Luke Wadding's *Small Garland of Pious and Godly Songs* (1684). The version in OBC differs from the unaccompanied version included by Stainer & Bell in 1919 in *Eight Traditional English Carols*.

See track 4 above for the text of this carol.

#### 11 COVERDALE'S CAROL (OBC 131)

Mrs Esther Smith sang *On Christmas Day* to Mrs Leather and Vaughan Williams in September 1912; OBC described it as 'the strange carol or song about the farmer who ploughed on Christmas Day.' They substituted a translation of *Gelobet seist du Jesu Christ* from Coverdale's *Goostly Psalmes and Spirituall Songs*, 1546.

Now blessed be thou, Christ Jesu,  
Thou art man born, and this is true:  
With our poor flesh and our poor blood,  
Was clothed that everlasting Good.

Eternal light doth now appear  
Unto the world both far and near;  
It shineth clear even at midnight,  
Making us children of his light.

The Lord Christ Jesus, God's son dear,  
Was once a guest and stranger here,  
Us for to bring from misery,  
That we might live eternally.

Into this world right poor came he,  
To make us rich in his mercy;  
Therefore would he our sins forgive,  
That we with him in heav'n might live.

All this he did for us freely,  
For to declare his great mercy.  
All Christendom be merry therefore,  
And give him thanks for evermore.

12 SONG OF THE CRIB (OBC 77)

The text comes from a mystery play found in a manuscript of around 1500 at Leipzig University; the translator was Percy Dearmer, using his nom-de-plume of 'N.S.T.' The tune is from the *Mainzer Cantual*, 1605, first harmonised by Vaughan Williams for *The English Hymnal* in 1906.

'Joseph dearest, Joseph mine,  
Help me cradle the child divine;  
God reward thee and all that's thine  
In paradise,' so prays the mother Mary.

'Gladly dear one, lady mine  
Help I cradle this child of thine;  
God's own light on us both shall shine  
In paradise,' as prays the mother Mary.

*He came among us at Christmas-tide,  
At Christmas-tide in Bethlehem;  
Men shall bring him from far and wide  
Love's diadem: Jesus, Jesus;  
Lo, he comes, and loves, and saves, and frees us.*

Peace to all that have goodwill!  
God, who heaven and earth doth fill,  
Comes to turn us away from ill,  
And lies so still, within the crib of Mary.

All shall come and bow the knee,  
Wise and happy their souls shall be.  
Loving such a divinity,  
As all may see in Jesus Son of Mary.

Now is born Emmanuel,  
Prophesied once by Ezekiel,  
Promised Mary by Gabriel,  
Ah, who can tell thy praises, Son of Mary.

Thou my lazy heart hast stirred,  
Thou, the Father's eternal Word,  
Greater than aught that ear hath heard,  
Thou tiny bird of love, thou Son of Mary.

Sweet and lovely little one,  
Thou princely, beautiful, God's own Son,  
Without Thee all of us were undone;  
Our love is won by thine, O Son of Mary.

Little man, and God indeed,  
Little and poor, thou art all we need;  
We will follow where thou dost lead,  
And we will heed our brother, born of Mary.

13 CHILDREN'S SONG OF THE NATIVITY (OBC 142)

The poem is by Francis Alice Chesterton, née Blogg (1869–1938). She was an author of songs, verse and school drama, but also acted as amanuensis and manager for her husband, Gilbert K Chesterton. Every year she would write a poem for their Christmas card, and many of these have been published; this is the poem for Christmas 1917. Vaughan Williams first adapted a traditional tune for *Songs of Praise* (1925) calling it *Stowey* and setting it to 'When a knight won his spurs, in the stories of old'. Cecil Sharp collected the tune from Robert Dibble of Bridgwater, Somerset, on 15 August 1905, sung to the words of *Sweet Europe*: As I walked out one May morning in Spring, to hear the birds whistle and the Colly bird sing ...

How far is it to Bethlehem?  
Not very far.

Shall we find the stable room  
Lit by a star?

Can we see the little child,  
Is he within?

If we lift the wooden latch  
May we go in?

May we stroke the creatures there,  
Ox, ass, or sheep?

May we peep like them and see  
Jesus asleep?

If we touch his tiny hand  
Will he awake?

Will he know we've come so far  
Just for his sake?

Great kings have precious gifts,  
And we have naught,  
Little smiles and little tears  
Are all we brought.

For all weary children  
Mary must weep.  
Here, on his bed of straw  
Sleep, children, sleep.

God in his mother's arms,  
Babes in the byre,  
Sleep, as they sleep who find  
Their heart's desire.

14 IF YE WOULD HEAR THE ANGELS SING (OBC 134)

The words are by Dorothy 'Dora' Greenwell (1821–1882); she published several volumes of poetry as well as essays on women's education and suffrage, and attacking the slave trade. Ralph Vaughan Williams and Martin Shaw together adapted a tune from the setting of Psalm 135 in *Souter liedekens ghemaect ter eeren Gods* (Antwerp, 1539 – see *opposite*) to fit the poem.

If ye would hear the angels sing  
'Peace on earth and mercy mild,'  
Think of him who was once a child,  
On Christmas Day in the morning.

If ye would hear the angels sing,  
Rise, and spread your Christmas fare;  
'Tis merrier still the more that share,  
On Christmas Day in the morning.

*Rise and bake your Christmas bread:*  
*Christians, rise! the world is bare,*  
*And blank, and dark with want and care,*  
*Yet Christmas comes in the morning.*

If ye would hear the angels sing,  
Rise, and light your Christmas fire:  
And see that ye pile the logs still higher  
On Christmas Day in the morning.

*Rise, and light your Christmas fire;*  
*Christians, rise! the world is old,*  
*And Time is weary, and worn, and cold,*  
*Yet Christmas comes in the morning.*

If ye would hear the angels sing,  
Christians! see ye let each door  
Stand wider than it e'er stood before,  
On Christmas Day in the morning.

*Rise, and open wide the door;*  
*Christians, rise! the world is wide,*  
*And many there be that stand outside,*  
*Yet Christmas comes in the morning.*

*S*ijt doch belydē met melodijē Den heer/  
wāt hy is alsoe goet. En God der godē tallē tījē Danct  
en loeft in uwen moet. Gewich zjijn genade sal dueren  
Gewich en tot allen vzen

15 **QUEM PASTORES - SHEPHERDS LEFT THEIR FLOCKS A-STRAYING (OBC 79)**

The first edition of OBC supplied the words in Latin, advising that the English translation could be found in *The English Hymnal* and *Songs of Praise*, from which Vaughan Williams's harmony was also taken. Later editions included Imogen Holst's English translation, given below. The melody, attributed to the 14th century, is found in *The Hymnbook of Valentin Triller* (Wrocław 1555).

Shepherds left their flocks a-straying,  
God's command with joy obeying,  
When they heard the angel saying:  
'Christ is born in Bethlehem.'

Wise Men came from far, and saw him,  
Knelt in homage to adore him;  
Precious gifts they laid before him:  
Gold and frankincense and myrrh.

Let us now in every nation  
Sing his praise with exultation.  
All the world shall find salvation  
In the birth of Mary's Son.

16 **THE BELLMAN'S SONG (OBC 46, SECOND TUNE)**

Vaughan Williams arranged this tune noted by Lucy Broadwood from 'Three gipsy men called Goby' in Capel, Surrey, 1893, and published in the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society* in 1902.

See track 7 above for the words of this carol

17 **JOSEPH AND MARY (OBC 115)**

The gipsy Mrs Esther Smith (Eliza Smith in the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, but we think she was Esther) sang *There is a Fountain of Christ's Blood* to Mrs Leather's phonograph at Weobley in October 1908 and Vaughan Williams transcribed it later. The editors of OBC thought this was 'full of the rather

unpleasant imagery which is characteristic of the 18th century evangelistic verse'. The words substituted by them here are 'traditional' but no tune has come down with them; they come from William Sandys's *Christmas Carols, Ancient and Modern* but probably go back to the 14th or 15th century.

O, Joseph being an old man truly,  
He married a virgin fair and free;  
A purer virgin could no man see  
Than he chose for his wife and his dearest dear.

They lived both in joy and bliss;  
But now a strict commandment is,  
In Jewry-land no man should miss  
To go along with his dearest dear

Unto the place where he was born,  
Unto the Emperor to be sworn,  
To pay a tribute that's duly known,  
Both for himself and his dearest dear.

And when they were to Bethlehem come,  
The inns were filled, both all and some;  
For Joseph entreated them, every one,  
Both for himself and his dearest dear.

Then they were constrained presently  
Within a stable all night to lie,  
Where they did oxen and asses tie,  
With his true love and his dearest dear.

The king of all power was in Bethlehem born,  
Who wore for our sakes a crown of thorn.  
Then God preserve us both ev'n and morn  
For Jesus' sake, our dearest dear.

18 **JOB (COME ALL YOU WORTHY CHRISTIAN MEN – OBC 60, FOURTH TUNE)**

This tune was sung to Vaughan Williams by Mr and Mrs Peter and Harriet Verrall at Monk's Gate near Horsham, Sussex, on 7 October 1904. It was associated with the song called *The Murder of Maria Martin in the Red Barn*. When published in the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society* in 1905 it was grouped with several other tunes for Job. It is certainly one of the 'Variants' to be found in *Five Variants of Dives and Lazarus* (1939).

See track 8 above for the words of this carol.

19 THE SEVEN VIRGINS (OBC 43)

This is another of the *Twelve Traditional Carols from Herefordshire* published by Stainer & Bell for Mrs Leather and Vaughan Williams in 1920. Both the melody (sung by Mrs Whatton and Mrs Loveridge of Dilwyn, Herefordshire) and the text were adapted in this new arrangement for OBC. The folk singer A L Lloyd wrote that this spring-time ballad-carol tells a story based on the apocryphal gospels, concerning a trip made by Mary to see her son at Calvary, as one of seven virgins; he drew a comparison between the carol and illustrations of the trees of death and of life in an illuminated psalter.

All under the leaves, the leaves of life,  
I met with virgins seven,  
And one of them was Mary mild,  
Our Lord's mother from heaven.

'O what are you seeking, you seven fair maids,  
All under the leaves of life?  
Come tell, come tell me, what seek you,  
All under the leaves of life?'

'We're seeking for no leaves, Thomas,  
But for a friend of thine;  
We're seeking for sweet Jesus Christ,  
To be our guide and thine.'

'Go you down, go you down to yonder town,  
And sit in the gallery,  
And there you'll find sweet Jesus Christ,  
Nailed to a big yew tree.'

So down they went to yonder town,  
As fast as foot could fall,  
And many a grievous bitter tear  
From the virgins' eyes did fall.

'O peace, mother, O peace, mother,  
Your weeping doth me grieve;  
O I must suffer this,' he said,  
'For Adam and for Eve.'

Then he laid his head on his right shoulder,  
Seeing death it struck him nigh:  
'The Holy Ghost be with your soul,  
I die, mother dear, I die.'

O the rose, the rose, the gentle rose,  
And the fennel that grows so green,  
God give us grace, in every place,  
To pray for our King and Queen.

Furthermore for our enemies all  
Our prayers they should be strong.  
Amen, Good Lord! your charity  
Is the ending of my song.

20 PSALM OF SION (OBC 132)

In 1585 W Prid published *The glasse of vaine-glorie* – a translation of *Speculum Peccatoris*, a book doubtfully attributed to St. Augustine of Hippo. The real originator of a much later manuscript could have been one of the 'church fathers' of the 4th or 5th century, who would have regarded Jerusalem as the Queen of the Mother Church. The poem that Prid called the *Psalm of Sion* inspired a number of broadsides and several modern hymns, paraphrasing it. The carol below is a 'literal' selection of six of its forty-four stanzas.

Vaughan Williams found a tune for it in one of his favourite copyright-free hunting grounds: William Chappell's *Popular Music of Olden Times* (1856). Chappell links it to a number of songs, including *In Pescod [or Peascod] Time*, depicting rustic life in the season for harvesting peas. The tune was popular towards the end of the 16th century and is to be found in both Queen Elizabeth's and Lady Neville's Virginal Books. With Vaughan Williams's harmony it was called *St. Austin* and set to a hymn more loosely derived from the *Psalm of Sion* in *The English Hymnal*.

O Mother dear, Jerusalem,  
Jehovah's throne on high,  
O sacred city, queen and wife  
Of Christ eternally!

O comely queen, in glory clad,  
In honour and degree;  
All fair thou art, exceeding bright,  
No spot there is in thee.

Thy part, thy shape, thy stately grace,  
Thy favour fair in deed,  
Thy pleasant hue and countenance,  
All others doth exceed.

O then thrice happy, should my state  
In happiness remain,  
If I might once thy glorious seat  
And princely place attain,

And view thy gallant gates, thy walls,  
Thy streets and dwellings wide,  
Thy noble troop of citizens  
And mighty King beside.

He is the King of Kings, beset  
Amidst his servants' right;  
And they his happy household all  
To serve him day and night.

O mother dear, Jerusalem,  
The comfort of us all,  
How sweet thou art and delicate;  
No thing shall thee befall!

#### 21 O MY DEAR HEART

*Balulalow* (*O my deir hert*) was published by the Dundee-based brothers John, James and Robert Wedderburn under the title *Ane Sang of the Birth of Christ* in 1567. It is a translation of Luther's 1535 Christmas Eve carol *Vom Himmel hoch da komm ich her*. Ursula Wood (later Ursula Vaughan Williams), who was a distinguished poet, wrote the words below 'after Wedderburn.' Vaughan Williams made a free adaptation of an 'old German tune' to accompany it. This carol was published in 2009, with an introduction by Hugh Cobbe - dating it, from correspondence between Vaughan Williams and Wood, to March 1943.

The carol begins with *Balulalow*, which is interwoven with the text throughout.

My soul and life stand up and see  
Who lies here in a crib of tree;  
What babe is that, so good and fair?  
It is Christ, God's own Son and heir.  
O my dear heart, young Jesus sweet.

This is the Lord Christ, God and man;  
He will do for you what he can;  
He comes to save us from distress;  
How can we thank his gentleness?  
O my dear heart, young Jesus sweet.

And were the world ten times so wide,  
Clad over with gold and stone of pride,  
Unworthy were it yet to Thee,  
Beneath thy feet a stool to be.  
O my dear heart, young Jesus sweet.

Glory to God eternally,  
Who gave his only Son for me;  
The angels' joy is for to hear  
The gracious gift of this new year.  
O my dear heart, young Jesus sweet.

#### 22 GOD BLESS THE MASTER OF THIS HOUSE

This more elaborate unaccompanied arrangement of the concluding three verses of the *Sussex Mummers' Carol* (track 1) was published in 1956.

God bless your house, your children too, your cattle and your store;  
The Lord increase you day by day, and send you more and more.

*Background to The Oxford Book of Carols by Jeremy Summery  
Other notes by John Francis*

**William Vann** *pianist and musical director*

A multiple prize winning and critically acclaimed conductor and accompanist, William Vann is the Director of Music at the Royal Hospital Chelsea. Born in Bedford, he was a Chorister at King's College, Cambridge and a Music Scholar at Bedford School. He read Law and took up a choral scholarship at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, where he was taught the piano by Peter Uppard, and studied piano accompaniment at the Royal Academy of Music with Malcolm Martineau and Colin Stone. He is a Trustee of the Ralph Vaughan Williams Society, an Associate of the RAM, a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists, a Samling Artist, a Freeman of the Worshipful Company of Musicians, the Chairman of Kensington and Chelsea Music Society, the Artistic Director of Bedford Music Club, a conductor and vocal coach at the Dartington and Oxenford International Summer Schools, the founder and Artistic Director of the London English Song Festival and the Musical Director of Dulwich Choral Society.

**Joshua Ryan** *organ*

Joshua Ryan ARCO obtained a Bachelor of Music (Honours First Class) from The University of Sydney, together with numerous academic prizes and scholarships, including the prestigious University Medal. He is now a postgraduate organ student at the Royal Academy of Music, where he studies with Professor David Titterton. He is currently Organ Scholar at the Royal Hospital Chelsea, and has previously held positions at St Michael's, Croydon, and at St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney. Joshua also studies harpsichord with James Johnstone and Pawel Siwczak, and choral conducting with Patrick Russill. He has been involved in premiering new organ works by composer Morgan Hayes, as part of the Academy's

bicentenary celebrations. In recognition of his outstanding achievements at the Academy, he was awarded a Diploma of the Royal Academy of Music (DipRAM).

**Chapel Choir of the Royal Hospital Chelsea**

The Royal Hospital Chelsea is the home of the famous Chelsea Pensioners, who are all retired soldiers of the British Army. Founded in 1682 by King Charles II for "the relief and succour" of veterans, it admitted its first Chelsea Pensioners in 1692, among them some who were injured at the Battle of Sedgemoor. Designed by Sir Christopher Wren, the Royal Hospital is one of the most visually stunning landmarks in London, sitting beside the River Thames opposite Battersea Park. The Chapel Choir of the Royal Hospital is one of the finest professional church choirs in the UK, whose primary purpose is to sing at the Sunday morning Matins service in the Wren Chapel (a service open to the general public). Members regularly sing with many of the world's leading consort groups, such as The Sixteen, Tallis Scholars, Stile Antico and Monteverdi Choir and also work in the fields of opera, conducting, teaching and music journalism. Its twelve singers, occasionally enlarged for occasions such as this recording, are chosen not only for their skill at choral singing but also for a high standard of solo ability and general musicianship. Commenting on ALBCD034 *Earth and Sky*, John Quinn of MusicWeb International wrote: 'The standard of singing is consistently very high and one thing that pleased me greatly was the choir's excellent diction. Perhaps most important of all, at all times they engage with the music; the performances are always committed.'



### With thanks

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### Production credits

Musical director and arranger: William Vann Producer: Andrew Walton  
 Engineer: Deborah Spanton Assistant Engineer: Lauren Cave  
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