

**Cathedral music and the First World War:  
A view from the Archives of  
Durham, St Paul's, and York Minster**

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## **Abstract**

This thesis explores the impact of the First World War on English Cathedral music, both during the long four years and in its aftermath. Throughout this study, reference will be made specifically to three English cathedrals: York Minster, Durham and St Paul's. The examination will be carried out chronologically, in three parts: before the war (part one), during the war (part two) and after the war (part three). Each of these three parts consists of two chapters. Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 help to set the scene and offer context. In chapters 2- 5 there is a more focused and systematic investigation into the day-to-day administrative challenges that the Cathedrals faced, followed in each chapter by an assessment of the musical programme. Chapter 6 examines the long-term impact of the war on British cathedral music, especially in the centenary anniversary years.

The Great War is often perceived as a complete break with the past, yet it also represented an imaginative continuity of sorts. As such, 1914-18 can be seen as a period of twilight in a lot of senses. The war managed to bring the flirtation with modernism, which was undoubtedly happening at the beginning of the century, to at least a temporary halt. Through the examination of the archives of the three cathedrals, this thesis investigates how the world war left its mark on the musical life of this portion of English religious and music life, during and after the war, drawing national comparisons as well as showing the particulars of each cathedral.

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## **Author's Declaration**

I, Enya Doyle, declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and that I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other University. All sources are acknowledged as References.

## Introduction

In 1920 Herbert Antcliffe wrote an article for *The Musical Quarterly* entitled 'The effect of the War on English Choral Music'.<sup>1</sup> In this article he outlined his views on the impact of the First World War on the arts in England as he saw it at that point, two years after the Armistice had been signed in November 1918. Raising key issues from a post-war perspective, including both administrative and musical matters, his article offers an outline and scope for this thesis. Testing the validity of his statements, this thesis will explore the impact of the First World War on English Cathedral music, both during the long four years and in its aftermath.

The Great War is often perceived as a complete break with the past, yet it also represented an imaginative continuity of sorts. As such, the years of 1914-18 can be seen as a period of twilight in a lot of senses. The war had managed to bring the flirtation with modernism, which was undoubtedly happening at the beginning of the century, to at least a temporary halt. This led Edmond Gosse to refer to the war, in 1922, as 'purifier... the sovereign disinfectant that would clear the clogged channels of intellect.'<sup>2</sup>

Exploring the impact of the First World War one hundred years on is essential both from both cultural and academic standpoints. Interrogating the veracity of Antcliffe's concerns will allow us to elucidate the effects that the war had on a key facet that Antcliffe hones in on: The English Cathedral. Thomas Ripon wrote in 1922 that 'Church music is in real fact a branch of its own: it is not an appendage of the concert-hall or the opera-house: and where, as in England, it has a long and noble history it is worthy of special devotion and study.'<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Antcliffe, H. 'The Effect of the War on English Choral Music.' *The Musical Quarterly*, vol. 6, no. 3, 1920, 342–353.

<sup>2</sup> Gosse, E. 'War and Literature', *Edinburgh Review*, vol. 220, October 1914, 313.

<sup>3</sup> Ripon, T. 'Cathedral Music'. *Music & Letters* Vol. 3, No. 2 (Apr. 1922), 162-166., 166.

Throughout this study, reference will be made specifically to three English cathedrals. All three are unique in their own way, and whilst each individual Cathedral in England undoubtedly tells its own story, together the three chosen for this study aptly show the general trends of the time, as well as giving insights into their own separate situations. The selection acknowledges the vital importance of understanding London's musical activities by way of including St Paul's Cathedral, but also recognises the key role that York Minster played as the Christian nucleus in the North of England. Durham Cathedral acts as a source of key insight into a small city with a flourishing Cathedral music tradition. That the choice of cathedrals reflects the geographical length of England is not a coincidence either and it is hoped that this combination best reflects the national practices at the time.

The examination will be carried out chronologically, in three parts: before the war (part one), during the war (part two) and after the war (part three). Each of these three parts consists of two chapters. Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 help to set the scene and offer context. Chapter 1 provides a background into English Cathedrals, and contextualises the key issues with which the Church of England was dealing in the decades preceding the war. It will set the scene regarding the status of the Cathedral in the socio-cultural life of England at the turn of the twentieth century, including the daily life and role of the Cathedral and the theological themes that were prominent at that time. Chapter 1 will also provide the reader with a largely non-musical context for the remaining chapters. Through chapters 2- 5 there is a more focused and systematic investigation into the day-to-day administrative challenges that the musical management of the Cathedrals faced, followed in each chapter by an assessment of the musical programme. These chapters also survey how the Cathedrals, both specifically and more generally, represented themselves and the wartime ideals in musical terms. Chapter 2 sets up the musical structures and activities, noting the challenges that the cathedrals were already facing even before the war utterly perturbed its daily life.

Part Two separates the war years into two chronological phases, 1914-16 (Chapter 3) and 1916-1918 (Chapter 4). The challenges which faced the Cathedrals in

wartime and its aftermath that will be explored include: issues regarding the recruitment and retention of Lay clerks (Durham), Vicars Choral (St Paul's), Songmen (York Minster)<sup>4</sup> and choristers, and changes to service schedules. The thesis also examines more general patterns which affirm the resounding parallels in the experiences of cathedrals in Britain, especially true in times of crisis. These include the introduction of services which were specifically held in response to the war such as anniversary and memorial services, and National Days of Intercession. Chapters 2 - 5 also include insights into the actual musical choices of the cathedrals. There will be reference to the use of music which had been in existence in the cathedral repertoire for generations, new compositions, and hymnody. Through this, the thesis will assess how the cathedrals collectively used music to relate to the war effort and national opinion.

Chapter 5 deals with the immediate response in the post-war years and Chapter 6 gives a more long-term assessment of the war's effect on Cathedral music, looking at its influence in the centenary anniversary years as well as providing concluding comments. This final chapter pieces together this information and will establish what (if any) impact the war had on the musical life of the English Cathedrals.

There are limitations to carrying out archival research. In this thesis, they arise due to the fact that although there are records in most of the cathedrals in Britain, there is a disparity between what was included in each cathedral at the time and what has been preserved. This makes it harder to compare and establish the precise impact and to make a consistent comparison. This limitation could perhaps be circumvented in future studies through inclusion of more cathedral archives, which unfortunately was outside of the timescale and therefore scope of this thesis.

The chapter minutes are an 'official' documentation of the activities of the cathedrals for which they were written, which although helpful and in some cases

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<sup>4</sup> There is no uniformity in the institutional naming of the Altos, Tenors and Basses at the three cathedrals. Therefore, in addition to making reference to the titles given in each institution, I will group the ATB as 'musical men' 'singers' and '(members of the) back row'.

very telling, often do not paint the precise picture of the time, and certainly are not representative of the entire national feeling, or even that of the entire congregation at times. Furthermore, the nature of chapter minutes means that only the information that the respective committees would like people to read is included; this data is often vague and specifics are habitually left out as a matter of discretion.

Fortunately, at St Paul's Cathedral the Dean's diary gives a more unrestricted view of life at the Cathedral. Even then, it is selective and vague and some weeks and years are less forthcoming than others. This scantiness is due most probably to the fact that as a public figure he was aware that his diaries would be archived in the cathedral and this probably contributed to the fact that it does not include anything particularly critical or disparaging. It has nevertheless been a very useful tool for this research, despite being occasionally sparse and lacking in detail. Another limitation arises from the budgetary records from the cathedrals. The financial impact on English Cathedrals as a result of the war has been difficult to ascertain although reference to the financial situation included in the chapter minutes has been incorporated in this study.

It is pertinent to say from the outset that this thesis will not discuss the effect of the First World War on organ music in these Cathedrals or indeed organists.<sup>5</sup> Not including issues to do with organ music, and in no way intended to appear as an exhaustive study of cathedral music in the early twentieth century, this thesis instead seeks to explore the links between the core beliefs of the church, the war, the administrative and musical life and choices of English cathedrals. There will be no analysis of the music, but we will instead look at the message behind the music and the relevance of the choices, especially during and after the war.

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<sup>5</sup> However, this is included in works such as *Twentieth-Century Organ Music* edited by Christopher Anderson, *British Organ Music of the Twentieth Century* by Peter Hardwick, as well as Harvey Grace's 'Church and Organ Music. The Organist's Position.' *The Musical Times*, (vol. 58, no. 897, 1917), 498–502 and in some of the more general books mentioned throughout this study.

Whilst the majority of the research is extracted from primary research in the archives of the three cathedrals, throughout this thesis reference is made to secondary sources, particularly in the contextualising section which comes in part 1. World War I has commanded a simply enormous literature both during its tyranny and subsequently. Histories of Britain's role, the relationship between arts and the war, and cultural aspects of the conflict have all been addressed in some way. Although certain events changed the public tone, these will be alluded to in the understanding that most people will have a basic awareness of the events of World War One, and have the opportunity to follow this work up with broader works, if necessary. This thesis will not therefore provide a history of the First World War, as that is thoroughly covered by David Stevenson,<sup>6</sup> John Keegan,<sup>7</sup> and Michael Howard.<sup>8</sup>

1914 is frequently viewed as the tipping point for the secularisation of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Michael Snape's book *God and the British Soldier* highlights that the relationship between religion and contemporary British society seems paradoxical at first glance. This, the first full-length study of the Church of England and the First World War, appeared in 2014. Before this, there was very little except the valuable chapter in *The Church of England 1900-1965* (1966) by Roger Lloyd. *The Last Crusade: The Church of England in the First World War* (1974) was written by Albert Marrin. Theological implications of bereavement explored in Alan Wilkinson's landmark work *The Church of England and the First World War*<sup>9</sup> are particularly important in regard to the study which will come hereafter. As noted in Wilkinson's introduction, the references to the Church in most of the secular histories about this period are often brief and sometimes snide.

There is another interpretation of the religious situation which has been ascribed to spiritualist sightings of angels in "No Man's Land" or in the post-war fascination

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<sup>6</sup> Stevenson, D. *1914-1918: The History of the First World War* (London: Allen Lane, 2004).

<sup>7</sup> Keegan, J. *The First World War* (New York: A. Knopf, 1999).

<sup>8</sup> Howard, M. *The First World War: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

<sup>9</sup> Wilkinson, A. *The Church of England and the First World War* (London: SPCK, 1978).

with séances. Philip Jenkins moderates these extremes through a global examination of religion both before and after the war. While he does not dismiss secularisation as a trend within western Christianity, he contextualises the European response and suggests this secularisation was more the exception rather than the rule.<sup>10</sup> *The Great and Holy War: How World War I Became a Religious Crusade* by Philip Jenkins explores the role of religion, public and personal, during the years of World War I. What emerges from his study are new insights into the way religious consciousness changed during the twentieth century and how the pivotal period 1914–1918 connects intimately with contemporary realities. Jenkins writes that the Great War shaped how religions and global powers view each other today. Chapter 5 ‘Redemption in War’ in Adrian Gregory’s *The Last Great War* provides an examination of the role of religion in Britain during the first world war, stating the importance and relevance of religion and Christianity, and God in the world of war.

Many books and articles also look at specific places during the First World War, for example *Norfolk in the First World War* by Frank Meeres<sup>11</sup> which mentions the prominence of Norwich Cathedral in remembrance and Scott Lomax’s *The Home Front: Sheffield in the First World War*. Both books deal with a great array of other matters, but Lomax does note a great deal about the cathedral, especially upon the signing of the Armistice. For example, on p. 235 he says that the cathedral was full and many could not obtain admission. He also refers to the role of hymnody, stating in reference to the singing of ‘Onward Christian Soldiers’, ‘Although there was a happiness there was a noticeable element of sorrow and large sections of the congregation were in tears as they recalled lost ones.’<sup>12</sup>

These more specific World War I books need also to be considered alongside books and articles on cathedrals and specifically cathedral music at the turn of the

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<sup>10</sup> Jenkins, P. *The Great and Holy War: How World War I Became a Religious Crusade* (New York: HarperCollins, 2014).

<sup>11</sup> Meeres, F. *Norfolk in the First World War* (Chichester: Phillimore & Co Ltd, 2008).

<sup>12</sup> Lomax, S. *The Home Front: Sheffield in the First World War* (Croydon: Pen and Sword Military, 2014), 235.

century. It is worth noting too that much of the current music literature on post-war Britain focuses either solely or heavily on World War II, for example on the music of Benjamin Britten, or post-modernist music. In addition to documents in the British Library, works by Wilkinson<sup>13</sup> and Glenn Watkins<sup>14</sup> which deal with the Church of England and music respectively are informative, but even then, do not specifically focus on the impact of the war on English Church or Cathedral music.

Accepting and acknowledging the position the war occupied in the English musical scene gives it the deserved poignancy and prominence that is afforded to it in the other arts, particularly poetry. In terms of current literature on and around the triangulation of music, church and the First World War, there is not much directly relevant literature. Even RR Frost,<sup>15</sup> who does give a profound and admirable insight in the cathedral reforms from the early nineteenth century, seems to largely negate the role or impact of the First World War on cathedral reformation or musical output.

Even though a relationship between music and poetry began during the early stages of the fighting, and persisted through the following decades, Britain's modern memory of the First World War has been dominated by a handful of 'war poets' who fought in the trenches. Men at the front turned to paper to express their experiences. It is perhaps because of the mechanised nature of the war, the first of its kind, that poetry is, above the other arts, more commonly associated with the conflict, evoking sounds and sights for the reader to picture. Smith notes that war poetry 'challenged the government, the public, and even the armed forces to justify the death and suffering of millions.'<sup>16</sup> Poets like Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon are renowned for their recollections of the war.<sup>17</sup> The richness of this

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<sup>13</sup> Wilkinson, A. *The Church of England and the First World War* (London: SPCK, 1978).

<sup>14</sup> Watkins, G. *Proof Through the Night: Music and the Great War* (California: University of California Press, 2002).

<sup>15</sup> Frost, R. *English Cathedral Music and the BBC, 1922 to 1939* (King's College, London, PhD. 2011).

<sup>16</sup> Smith, R. *Poets of World War One* (London: Raintree, 2015), 5.

<sup>17</sup> See Stallworthy, J. *The war poems of Wilfred Owen* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1994) and Sassoon, S. *The war poems of Siegfried Sassoon* (London: Faber and Faber, 1983).

period of English literature means the first-hand experience is more often associated with poetry than any other art. It is true that there are numerous books about poets, and even in schools, pupils are taught about war poetry. Toby Thacker even notes that there is now a long and distinguished tradition of writing in the English language about how the war was imagined, and that this tradition had focussed initially on the poetry and literature which emerged from the war, but this has since fed in to a broader cultural history.<sup>18</sup>

Of course, there are some comprehensive histories written about specific English Cathedrals<sup>19</sup> which contain the war years, but usually only mention its impact in passing. Besides Robertson's *Sarum Close*, most of the histories contain only fleeting comments about the state of the choir as a result of the War. The situation of some Cathedrals and their choirs is also mentioned in biographies of eminent composers too but again only briefly.

Evidently, the long shadow of the Great War over Cathedrals, its choirs and its music deserves to be brought to the forefront of scholarship, not just merely in passing. Martin Thomas' 2015 book *English Cathedral Music and Liturgy in the Twentieth Century* helps in providing key backlighting to the musical life of the Cathedral in the First World War with his Chapter 1 exploring 'The Victorian Background' and Chapter 2 providing a background from 1900-1950 with pages 24 – 38 being of particular use. Chapter XIII, 'The Cathedral Choir' in Bernarr Rainbow's *The Choral Revival in the Anglican Church 1839-1872* also provides an excellent

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<sup>18</sup> Thacker, T. *British Culture and the First World War: Experience, Representation and Memory* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 1.

<sup>19</sup> E.g. in no specific order: I. Atherton, E. Fernie, C. Harper-Bill & H. Smith eds., *Norwich Cathedral: Church, City and Diocese, 1096–1996* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1996); M. Hobbs ed., *Chichester Cathedral: An Historical Survey* (Chichester: Phillimore & Co. Ltd, 1994); J. Crook ed., *Winchester Cathedral: Nine Hundred Years 1092–1993* (Chichester: Phillimore & Co. Ltd, 1993); P. Collinson, N. Ramsay & M. Sparks eds., *A History of Canterbury Cathedral* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); D. Owens ed., *A History of Lincoln Minster* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); D. Brown ed., *Durham Cathedral: History, Fabric and Culture* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2015); G.E. Aylmer & R. Cant eds., *History of York Minster* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977); D. Keene, A. Burns, and A. Saint. *St. Paul's* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004).

insight into the inherited life of the Cathedral choirs, looking at the attendance of the congregation, the trialling of choristers and the status of the choir in the Cathedral. Rainbow includes a section on page 256 on the 'high reputation' of the choir at Durham Cathedral amongst other Cathedrals which is particularly valuable for this study.

There are also plenty of articles on Cathedral music in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century in journals. Barrett's 'Music in Cathedrals' (1877) gives a great insight not only into the actual music in cathedrals, but also the trouble with undertaking academic work in this area, which although written 140 years ago, is still relevant today. For example, Barrett reveals the 'long-needed improvement in the use and management of our cathedrals'<sup>20</sup> which is also still relevant today. These articles provide a real insight into the life of the cathedrals, and importantly they suggest and allude to the changes that would have been happening in the cathedral despite the war, or had the war not happened.

Since the 1990s, there have been significant developments, as from different directions, historians of various types have revisited this terrain, and sought to challenge the lack of other experiences of the war other than the literary experience. In the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary years, it is important that we see the reflections of the war holistically, and therefore continue to give prominence to parts of the history which are lacking or non-existent. The section in Alan Simmond's book *Britain and World War One* entitled 'Music and words' largely deals with compositions by English composers but also gives mention to other relevant musical backdrops such as patriotic concerts, the Promenade Concerts, and most relevant to this thesis, the links between music and literature. In Vera Brittain's account of her wartime experiences, *Testament of Youth* (1933), she frequently refers to the heightened contextual significance that classical music, particularly choral music, held for her in wartime.<sup>21</sup> It is therefore important to see

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<sup>20</sup> Barrett, W.A. 'Music in Cathedrals'. *Proceedings of the Musical Association* 3<sup>rd</sup> Sess. (1876-1877). 84-89, 84.

<sup>21</sup> Brittain, V. *Testament of Youth* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1933).

the musical life of the cathedrals in the broader socio-political context. It is also important to see Antcliffe's work in the context of his own work. In 1920, he published 'Short studies in the nature of music' he states:

Music has a direct bearing on the life of the people, which even the most important of political events have not. And even on these latter music has not been without influence, and especially on that of war. He would be a bold man who would deny that music has played an important role in the Great War.<sup>22</sup>

It is clear then that Antcliffe (whose article I referenced at the beginning) is writing from a place where music is central to cultural understanding, and especially in times of crisis. For Antcliffe, and for many others like him, music has a clear and crucial role in society. Later, C.H. Moody wrote to *The Musical Times* about the 'Future of English Cathedral Music' (1931).<sup>23</sup> This and Nicholas Temperley's *Music of the English Parish Church*<sup>24</sup> provide key insight into the grander scale of the war and Church of England, and often touch upon the life of the cathedral during the war period. Temperley's section on the twentieth century begins on page 326 but the pages that come before are a real insight into the musical life of the Church of England before the turn of the century. The MA thesis by Kevin Fielden on the Church of England in the First World War provides an excellent introduction to the life of the Church more generally before the war including insights into demographics, divisions, hierarchies and church attendance before the war.<sup>25</sup> He notes that there was a divisive split in the war years, where during the first two years public opinion was positive, but especially with clergy exemptions from 1916 onwards, people became disenchanted and angry at the Church's practical engagement with the war effort.

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<sup>22</sup> Antcliffe, H. *Short studies in the Nature of Music* (London: Keegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co Ltd), 209.

<sup>23</sup> Moody, C.H. 'The Future of English Cathedral Music' *The Musical Times* Vol. 72, No. 1060 (Jun. 1, 1931), 526-527.

<sup>24</sup> Temperley, N. *The Music of the English Parish Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

<sup>25</sup> Fielden, K.C. 'The Church of England in the First World War' (East Tennessee State University, MA, 2005).

With regards to post-war considerations, Matthew Hoch's 'Modern English Church Music 1922 - present'<sup>26</sup> discusses the aftermath of World War I. Hoch refers to the Music in Worship report of 1922 and then discusses the rest of the century until the time of his writing. He also makes reference to hymnody. Thomas Ripon's 'Cathedral Music' article in *Music & Letters* 1922 also raises some important issues that were prevalent in the musical life of the cathedrals less than five years after the war had ended. The first issue that he raises is that of finance which led to the cancelling of services, and he notes the historical relevance of hymnody in the history of the Cathedral. When talking about the type of music that the cathedral choir were suited to, he says: 'a small choir, capable of solos, and of choral work in as many as eight parts, either unaccompanied or with organ accompaniment only'.<sup>27</sup> Ripon also talks about the 'national voice' of England, not whether we have one, but suggests that *if* we do have one, Cathedral music is at its heart. Another topic that Ripon raises is the value of the Cathedral choir school. This will not be discussed in the current thesis, but would be a useful continuation of the research that will be included in these pages.

John Keegan's statement that 'war's rancours are quick to bite and slow to heal'<sup>28</sup> is particularly pertinent when trying to understand the impact of World War I on the English musical tradition, not least the Cathedral, and helpfully provides a chronological case for exploring the impact of the First World War on English cathedral music. What had started as a summer holiday, lasted as a four-year inferno. In these centenary years, this thesis acknowledges the impact of the First World War on British cultural history, and serves as a reminder of the power of music for remembrance of this history. The war inserted itself into every aspect of life. As a result, the place of late Victorian and Edwardian classical musical, particularly that of the Cathedral and its time-honoured choral tradition can now be

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<sup>26</sup> Hoch, M. 'Welcome'. *Church Music & The Hymnal 1982*. (New York: Morehouse Publishing, 2015).

<sup>27</sup> Ripon, 'Cathedral Music', 163.

<sup>28</sup> Keegan, J. *The First World War* (New York: A. Knopf, 1999), 6.

positioned in the context of remembrance and development of the English musical style for the one hundred years that have ensued.

Thacker states that music has suffered from the long-standing perception of it as an abstract art form, one inexplicable without an adequate technical knowledge and vocabulary, and it has been left to a few courageous musicologists working more recently to try and redress this by placing works composed between 1914-1918 in social and political context.<sup>29</sup> However, it is also true, as Carl Dahlhaus wrote, that music histories tend to ignore topics relating to the church; for example hymnody, liturgy and the restoration of choral music. As well as this, he notes that the specialist, hermeneutic, historical studies tend to disregard the bigger works of that time since 'they have become less at home in the church than in the concert hall.'<sup>30</sup>

In 1915, Freud remarked that he was standing too close to the war to see it properly.<sup>31</sup> It is hoped that today, in the centenary years, a clearer image of the war, including its ghastly impact on every corner of British society and culture, can be portrayed. Moreover, it is hoped in particular that the impact of the First World War on the musical life of English Cathedrals can be understood. World War I created an emptiness where Edwardian culture had once been. But it is the precise nature of war to fill such vacuums with its own values, claims Hynes, ultimately making the prosecution of war the *only* value.<sup>32</sup> This idea is important to bear in mind when contemplating how exactly war permeated and disoriented the musical world of the English cathedrals in the chapters that follow.

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<sup>29</sup> Thacker, 128. Thacker suggests that the reader explore Foreman, L. *Oh, my horses! Elgar, the Music of England and the Great War* (Rickmansworth: Elgar Editions, 2001.)

<sup>30</sup> Dahlhaus, C. *Nineteenth-Century Music* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1992), 79.

<sup>31</sup> Sigmund Freud and others, *The Standard Edition Of The Complete Psychological Works Of Sigmund Freud*, 1st edn (London: Vintage, 2001), 275.

<sup>32</sup> Hynes, S. *A War Imagined: The First World War and English Culture* (New York: Atheneum, 1991), n.p.

**Part One:**  
**Before the Great War**

## **Chapter 1: Contextualising the Cathedral**

Looking broadly at religion, specifically Christianity in pre-war Britain, the main aim of this chapter is to provide a context for the Cathedrals to which the tumult and disaster of World War I was added. Focusing mostly on nineteenth-century practice, this chapter also mentions other segments of relevant Cathedral history. By presenting it in this manner, I aim to demonstrate how the study of the First World War and the Cathedral is as much about the preceding years and traditions as it is the wartime deeds of destruction. This will emphasise the importance of understanding the background of the cathedral before trying to ascertain the impact of the war on cathedral life and music in the following chapters.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Church of England was still the national church to a degree which was not matched during the Second World War and is even less the case at the time of writing. There has however been a discrepancy in scholarship surrounding nineteenth-century religion. A consensus cannot be reached on whether or not the British religious life was in a state of crisis and doubt. According to Smart, Clayton and Sherry 'hermeneutics and tradition, faith and history, projectionist and other reductionist accounts of religion, the limits of historical relativism and the nature of rationality, the possibility of a purely 'scientific' study of religion and the legitimacy of theological studies...' were 'either initially raised or significantly recast during the nineteenth century.'<sup>33</sup>

David Hempton claims that 'religion has been somewhere near the centre of political culture and national identity in the British Isles at least since the Reformation and probably long before that'.<sup>34</sup> The conviction that England had been awarded (by God) a specially privileged place in the world was no new belief in the nineteenth century and had perhaps been widespread by the middle of the eighteenth century. It was certainly a prevailing opinion after 1815 in the general

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<sup>33</sup> Smart et al. *Nineteenth Century Religious Thought in the West* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 1.

<sup>34</sup> Hempton, D. *Religion and Political Culture in Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1996, 155-172), 155-156.

relief at the successful conclusion to the Napoleonic wars. Wellington's assertion after Waterloo that 'the hand of Almighty God has been upon me this day' easily spiralled into the nation's belief that the victory was no accident or coincidence.<sup>35</sup>

In Protestantism, pietistic revivals were relatively common. In fact, Evangelical revivals appeared to be somewhat characteristic of Christianity in the nineteenth century, and in some largely Protestant countries the effects of modern Biblical scholarship on the churches was patent. Liberal or modernist theology was one consequence of this. There were four commissions throughout the nineteenth century, and three in the twentieth century which pondered the subject of changing worship practices.<sup>36</sup> The Ecclesiastical Commission (1835), the Oxford Movement, and the Diocesan Revival all played a key part in bringing the cathedral to the place that it occupied upon the outbreak of the war in 1914. Another movement worth mentioning is the more liberal Cambridge Movement. Beliefs associated with this movement included the idea that the medieval church was more adept to deal with the needs and ministry of the people than the church of the nineteenth century, particularly in terms of the aesthetics and liturgy. The movement was also a great promoter of high church ritual.

In the Church of England, the early twentieth century saw the apogee of Anglo-Catholic influence, which would be especially notable in the years after the First World War. In the early twentieth century when the Anglo-Catholic Movement was at its height, the Anglican Communion had hundreds of orders and communities. At the beginning of the twentieth century the church numbers were still rising, albeit not in anywhere near direct correlation with the rise in population, yet this rise in numbers was still positive.

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<sup>35</sup> Hinchliff, P. *God and History: Aspects of British Theology, 1875-1914* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1992), 19.

<sup>36</sup> Turner, G. *Cathedrals and Change in the Twentieth Century: Aspects of the life of the cathedrals of the Church of England with special reference to the Cathedral Commissions of 1925; 1958; 1992*. (University of Manchester, PhD, 2011), 7.

Linda Woodhead's book *Reinventing Christianity: Nineteenth-century Contexts*<sup>37</sup> allows for this discussion to be brought beyond the overriding view that the First World War followed and exacerbated a 'crisis of faith' in England. Instead she focusses on the relationship between Christianity and the secularised world, looking not at whether the Church was in crisis but instead how it dealt with its own reimagining in this world: how it reasoned with the reassertion of tradition in the Church. Woodhead also looks at the upsurge of issues that were to be decisive in the twentieth century such as feminist theology. Wolffe in "*Anglicanism*" in *nineteenth-century England* notes the change from Tractarianism to Evangelical theology.<sup>38</sup> He suggests that in the mid-nineteenth century 'antagonism to Catholicism in both Roman and Anglican forms undoubtedly led to stronger definitions of Evangelical belief on the nature of authority, salvation, and the Sacraments'.<sup>39</sup> Welch also attests that 'the whole of the nineteenth century may be seen as a struggle to affirm the humanity of Jesus'.<sup>40</sup>

It is for these reasons that Knight suggests that 1800 - 1870 was the most 'rapid, dramatic and enduring' period of transformation that the Church had gone through since the Reformation.<sup>41</sup> According to Callum Brown in his *The Death of Christian Britain* there are two main hypotheses which have informed the somewhat pessimistic view of religion particularly in Britain since the 1800s. The first attributes the decline in religion to the growth of industrial cities during the nineteenth century and the second takes that further, stating that the working-class in these cities became somewhat alienated from organised religion. His book then

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<sup>37</sup> Woodhead, L. *Reinventing Christianity: Nineteenth-century Contexts* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001).

<sup>38</sup> Wolffe, J. 'Anglicanism' In Denis G. Paz *Nineteenth-century English Religious Traditions: Retrospect and Prospect* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1995).

<sup>39</sup> Cf. P. Toon, *Evangelical Theology, 1833 – 1856: A Response to Tractarianism* (London: Marshall Morgan and Scott, 1979); Wolffe, 8.

<sup>40</sup> Welch, C. *Protestant Thought in the Nineteenth Century, Volume 1: 1799-1870* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock, 2003), 6.

<sup>41</sup> Knight, F. *The Nineteenth-Century Church and English Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 1.

goes on to examine these hypotheses and question their legitimacy, offering what he calls 'an alternative religious history of modern Britain.'<sup>42</sup>

Larsen claims that when the Victorian landscape is painted, doubt is frequently exaggerated and faith dwarfed.<sup>43</sup> He tries to get rid of the thought that the Victorian people were all experiencing a 'crisis of faith'; whilst naturally true of some people, as is the case in every century, he says it is more likely they were suffering from 'a crisis of doubt'. Morris also gives reason for seeing the strength of the role religion played in society at the time, stating:

But how can one really sustain such a view [that the church was experiencing a "crisis of faith"], when churchgoing was rising inexorably for most of the [nineteenth] century, when the churches pervaded almost every aspect of social life, performing vital welfare and educational functions that were later taken over by the State, and when almost all the figures in politics and the professions were active members of their denominations?<sup>44</sup>

Alan Luff also prefers to see the nineteenth century in a more positive light. He states that 'the Church musicians of the Church of England had reason to begin this century in a spirit of confidence... in many ways it had become a singing Church.'<sup>45</sup> We can use Luff's assertion to expand on Hempton's statement from the beginning of this chapter and say that it is also true that since at least the establishment of Anglicanism in the sixteenth century, music has been at the very core of Anglican worship. Even despite somewhat lamentable standards at the time, by 1824 it was recognised that in addition to being at centre of this worship, music could also be identified as the characteristic difference between cathedrals and other [parish] churches.<sup>46</sup> Luff says 'the music of our Cathedrals and Collegiate Churches is a minority interest' but one that 'remains the most rewarding aspect artistically of

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<sup>42</sup> Brown, C.G. *The Death of Christian Britain* (London: Routledge, 2009), 9.

<sup>43</sup> Larsen, T. *Crisis of Doubt: Honest Faith in Nineteenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 1.

<sup>44</sup> Morris, J. *The High Church Revival in the Church of England: Arguments and Identities*, (Leiden: Brill, 2016) 31.

<sup>45</sup> Luff, A. 'The Music of the Church of England in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century' *Jahrbuch für Liturgik und Hymnologie* Vol. 34 (1992/93), 119-126, 119.

<sup>46</sup> 'On the Cathedral Service' *Quarterly musical magazine and review*, vi (London: Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, 1824), 326.

our Church Music.<sup>47</sup> This is another reason why it is important to place the English cathedral (and its musical life) in context and at the forefront of research.

It appears that Cathedrals could not entirely shut out these changes. In reality, the Ecclesiastical Commission that resulted in the Cathedrals Act of 1840, brought about significant improvements in cathedral management (though it took at least 20 years for the full effects to be felt). E.J. Hopkins writing in 1886 states 'it was no un-common thing for the organist to be absent from eleven out of the fourteen services held every week, his place of course being supplied by a deputy. Nor was it by any means a rare exhibition for two or three of the Vicars Choral to be late in their attendance at service.'<sup>48</sup> The retirement of Dean Gregory and the appointment of Dean Inge at St Paul's Cathedral in 1911 ushered in 'what in retrospect can seem a time of troubles only terminated by the outbreak of the war in 1939.'<sup>49</sup>

With the word "cathedral" coming from the Latin *cathedra* meaning "chair", it is plain to see that the role of the cathedral in history was meant as a staple to the city's religious diet; the Mother of all churches. As Beresford-Hope puts it, 'a cathedral is, as everyone knows who has thought ever so little upon the matter, both a building and an institution.'<sup>50</sup> Over the centuries of their existence, cathedrals have played a plentitude of roles: 'a place of assembly for the great festivities of the church year... pilgrimage centres... sources of religious education...' as well as 'meeting places, places of business, storehouses, and fortresses... sites of schools, of law courts, and even of sessions of Parliament.'<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Luff, 124.

<sup>48</sup> Hopkins 'Professional and Personal Recollections'; read to the National Society of Professional Musicians at Clifton on 15 October 1886 (quoted in William Spark, *Musical Memories* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1888; 2013), 351).

<sup>49</sup> Burns 'From 1830 to the present' in Keene and Taylor *St Paul's: The Cathedral Church of London, 604-2004*, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2004), 84.

<sup>50</sup> Beresford-Hope, J.B. *The English cathedral of the nineteenth century* (London: John Murray, 1861).

<sup>51</sup> Oggins, R. *Cathedrals*. (MetroBooks, 1999), 25.

This makes sense given how Stanford E. Lehmberg claims, ‘all in all the Victorian era saw vast improvements in cathedrals. Buildings were restored, the standards of liturgy and music were raised, celebrations of the holy communion became more frequent, attendance increased, education was fostered, and crowds of tourists were accommodated’.<sup>52</sup> St Paul’s stands with Westminster and Canterbury in what Keene and Taylor have deemed ‘the trio of great churches’ standing ‘for the historic presence of Christianity in England and for the links between church and state’.<sup>53</sup> In Cathedral music we find a unique potential to study the experience of change and continuity through the eruptions of the war and beyond, and the subtle acknowledgement of the relationship between church and state.

The increase in amateur choral activity and volunteer church choirs from the early 1840s abetted Novello to develop the means of producing choral scores cheaply in octavo format: ‘a development which affected British choral activity at every level’,<sup>54</sup> attests William Gatens. He also maintains that this increase in activity stimulated and contributed to an improvement in the standard of cathedral music and worship, and almost certainly provided a stimulus to new church composition particularly noticeable in the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>55</sup> Sir John Stainer in an address to the Leeds Church Congress in 1872 stated:

Knowing as we do the extraordinary effects music is capable of producing on the emotions, on the mind, on the very soul itself, it is of the utmost importance that these effects, this power, should be guided and handled to the best possible purpose. ... If the Church is content to stand still in matters of music, she is allowing a valuable weapon to be wrested from her hands and used by her adversaries. Our duty as churchmen, is plain; we must strive to keep the standard of our music as high or higher than that of secular music, and so extend the influence of the Church, as that of the world.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Lehmberg, S.E. *English Cathedrals: A History* (London and New York: Hambledon Continuum, 2005), 286.

<sup>53</sup> Keene and Taylor ‘St Paul’s as St Paul’s’ in *St Paul’s: The Cathedral Church of London, 604-2004*, 1.

<sup>54</sup> Gatens, W. *Victorian Cathedral Music in Theory and Practice*, 33.

<sup>55</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> Stainer, J. *Authorised Report of the Church Congress* (Leeds: Thomas Ponsonby, Church Institute, Albion Place, 1872), 334-340, 334.

Victorian restoration was the widespread and extensive refurbishment and rebuilding of Church of England churches and cathedrals that took place in England and Wales during the 19th-century reign of Queen Victoria. Church restorations were also strongly influenced by the Oxford Movement, which advocated moving the centre of importance in the church from preaching to the sacrament of the Eucharist: from the pulpit to the altar. As the Oxford Movement began to advocate restoring traditional Catholic faith and practice to the Church of England there was felt to be a need for a restoration of the monastic life. The impact that these movements had also influenced conditions for choristers and organists and so it is important that their clout be recognised.

It is true in England that the Oxford Movement is, as Welch says, hardly intelligible apart from the peculiar situation and condition of the Anglican church in 1833.<sup>57</sup> The Oxford Movement 'represented a reemphasis of the importance of the church as divine institution and gradually moved away from established Anglican positions on the nature of the sacraments, the use of religious ritual, and the identity of the church'.<sup>58</sup> Yet, if one takes too narrow a view of the Oxford Movement, it is possible to see it in the end as an anti-cathedral force, or at any rate as a kind of neo-Georgian force for limiting the contribution music can make in church to what is appropriate to the Eucharist according to Routley and Dakers.<sup>59</sup> In England, Anglicans emphasised the historically Catholic components of their heritage. The High Church element reintroduced vestments and incense into their rituals against the opposition of Low Church evangelicals. This reaction against evangelical theology happened whilst 'incarnational theology and the emphasis on the corporate dimensions of faith were associated with critical attitudes towards the competitive, profit-oriented features of industrial, capitalist society.'<sup>60</sup> As Rowe shows, from the Reformation to the turn of the twentieth century, gradually objectives for progress were established and furthered. No vast changes and

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<sup>57</sup> Welch, 15.

<sup>58</sup> *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*, 617.

<sup>59</sup> Routley & Dakers *A Short History of English Church Music*, 58.

<sup>60</sup> Medhurst, K., Moyser, G. *Church and Politics in a Secular Age* (Gloucestershire: Clarendon Press, 1988), 12.

nothing particularly diocesan-wide happened before the mid-nineteenth century. Towards the end of the century, the question of Christianity and culture, or church and society, came to flower. Welch observed there to be a clear attempt to try to understand the relationship between personal faith and sociological and psychological analyses of religion.<sup>61</sup>

Despite the apparent decline of Christianity covered in earlier parts of this thesis, some of the ideals, sentiments and messages that were promulgated by Christianity proved to not only be relevant to the people, but crucially important to their lives during the war years. The collective nature of worship would certainly be advantageous for the Church and apposite for the people in the national crisis that loomed just around the corner. In the following chapters, it will become apparent that throughout the war period in Britain, it was exactly the elusiveness and nature of the choir as spiritual proxy that helped the people come to terms with what was going on; being present but not active was for many people reflective of their entire wartime lives.

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<sup>61</sup> Welch, 6.

## **Chapter 2: Before the War**

In *The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought*, Hastings attests that music has been the art closest to the functional heart of the Cathedral from at least the time of Ambrose and Gregory the Great.<sup>62</sup> Hastings' assessment is central to the aim and focus of this thesis, and the point that music so closely related with both the daily and long-term functioning of the cathedral is necessary to understand when elucidating the role of religion, art, and culture in history. In this section, we will look specifically at how exactly music, as the art closest to the functional heart of the Cathedral, was utilised and developed during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Percy Scholes wrote the following as part of an article in *The Music Student*:

It has often been pointed out that the British school of music is the oldest in the world, and it will be noticed that, counting from John of Forneste to Henry Purcell, we either led, or at least held our musical position amongst the competing nations, with few and merely passing lapses, for a period of about five hundred years. Then, after a period of about one hundred and fifty years of backsliding, we began to pull forward in the race once more.<sup>63</sup>

It is this period (broadly 1814-1914) in which Scholes' progression is made. It is certainly the case that the music which was being produced for and sung in English cathedrals was vital to this progress. In addition to providing basic context and background to the state of cathedral music and exactly how much impact the war could have had on cathedral musical life in Britain, it is important that we clearly establish what exactly the situation was in the musical cathedral when the First World War imposed itself on every facet of British life. In the previous chapter, we gained an insight into the general state of religion, Christianity and Anglicanism in Britain more generally in the nineteenth century mostly, and the years directly in the lead up to the outbreak of World War One. This chapter now takes a more specific approach, looking at the musical state of Britain in the nineteenth century

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<sup>62</sup> Hastings, A. 'Cathedrals' in *The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought* eds. A. Hastings, A. Mason & H. Pyper (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 98-100, 99.

<sup>63</sup> The Editor [Percy Scholes], 'A Short Popular Introduction to British Music', *MS*, 10 (1918), 195.

and also the musical state of the Anglican Cathedrals. This will then be used to explore and extrapolate the impact of the First World War on cathedral music in the rest of the thesis. Additionally, this chapter will provide a structural outline for the rest of the thesis: after a more general statement about cathedral music during the time-frame, the chapter will be divided into contextual framework including daily administrative undertakings of the musical management of the cathedral before discussing actual musical programmatic choices throughout that period, including broad repertory as well as a more specific look at hymnody.

At the turn of the nineteenth century, the traditional cathedral and collegiate foundations of England underwent what Samson calls 'their period of greatest neglect'.<sup>64</sup> But it was the Cathedrals Commission of 1852 which certainly marked a new beginning for Cathedral music in England. After much stagnation and indifference, Cathedrals became central to Diocesan life and, with the impetus provided by many amateur parish choirs, Anglicanism came to lead the way in English choir music again.<sup>65</sup> Archdeacon Gardner's letter to the *Morning Post* postulates that the Cathedral is proper centre of each Diocese and as such it should be from here that any and all 'reforming influence should emanate'<sup>66</sup> but was this the case?

The modern history of English cathedrals has been characterised by the following important trends according to Burns: 1) increasing importance and changing relationships with both the wider public and the worshipping laity 2) a growing sense of financial crisis 3) administrative and financial reform.<sup>67</sup> The question, 'for what purpose do cathedrals exist?' was unsurprisingly then asked repeatedly. Writing in 1849, SS Wesley wrote 'to arrive at a right understanding of the matter, it is obviously requisite to consider what Cathedral service is intended to be, and

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<sup>64</sup> Samson, *Cambridge History of Nineteenth Century Music*, 215.

<sup>65</sup> Dibble, J. 'Musical Trends and the Western Church: A Collision of the Ancient and Modern'. In *World Christianities c.1815-c.1914*. Gilley S & Stanley B (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) 8: 121-135, 131-132.

<sup>66</sup> Quoted in Bennett, J. 'The Reform of Church Music: Some Reflections on the Morning Post Correspondence'. *The Musical Times*, 5 (1914), 5(853), 171-174, 172.

<sup>67</sup> Burns, 84.

what it has hitherto been.’<sup>68</sup> This statement is as important now as it was in the mid-nineteenth century in terms of understanding the cathedral and putting it into context. In the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a climate of change - of religious renewal, of social, political, and technological advance - exposed cathedrals to scrutiny as never before; it challenged torpor and demanded an innovative response.

According to Routley and Dakers ‘the centuries-old concept is that of a highly-skilled choir singing on behalf of a congregation who are thus able to meditate and contemplate, their prayer life being enriched as a result. This then is cathedral worship at its most fulfilling.’<sup>69</sup> This neatly combines with Jebb’s idea [that]:

our Cathedral music has a substantive excellence, unknown to any other Church on earth: that while it contains a variety of resource and skilful combination, inadmissible into Parochial music, it is remarkable for a gravity, a sublimity, a sweetness, and above all a holy character, which, ... retains the essential spirit of primitive devotion.<sup>70</sup>

However, the reality appeared to be far from this. Luff claims that ‘the Cathedrals were not all in such good condition as the parishes.’ He goes on to claim that they had been slow to respond to the reforms which I have mentioned before. He claims that in one respect have never done so; that ‘they have remained in the early 19th century position of not encouraging their congregations to join in the services.’<sup>71</sup> An article in the *Musical Times* in 1898 supports this statement: ‘Much is it to be regretted that our congregations do not prepare and perform their part with more earnestness and effect.’<sup>72</sup> Speaking in regard to the congregational aspect of Mendelssohn’s *St Paul’s*,<sup>73</sup> it is perhaps reflective of the larger community of congregational singing in churches at the turn of the twentieth century. The author

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<sup>68</sup> Wesley, S.S. *A Few Words on Cathedral Music and the Musical System of the Church, with a Plan of Reform* (London: P & J Rivington, 1849), 2.

<sup>69</sup> Routley and Dakers, 128.

<sup>70</sup> Jebb, J. *Three Lectures on the Cathedral Service of the Church of England*, 14.

<sup>71</sup> Luff, 119.

<sup>72</sup> ‘Church Music’ *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular* Vol. 39, No. 666 (1898), 529.

<sup>73</sup> Oratorio based on the Acts of the Apostles, composed in 1834.

continues, 'the congregation part in the music of all forms of the 'musical service' demands increased attention and well-considered cultivation'.<sup>74</sup>

Choirs during the nineteenth century were 'ill-disciplined and musically unreliable' according to Martin Thomas, who continues that 'Lay clerks, who were paid less than the domestic servants of the clergy, were often absent from weekday services and some were aged and incompetent possessors of freehold.'<sup>75</sup> Yet, Phillip Barrett cites the progress in St Paul's Cathedral between 1870-1890 as proof that it was possible for cathedrals to become very active and very successful without far reaching reforms.<sup>76</sup> Dealing with the many issues that were plaguing the Cathedrals at the turn of the century was therefore not an insurmountable task.

Ripon noted in 1922 that there has been 'a continuous tradition of English Church music, and it has connected itself naturally with the Cathedrals; further, the tradition of daily Service has been preserved. It must be admitted that there is something accidental about this tradition.'<sup>77</sup> In the eighteenth century and in the early nineteenth it seemed that the actual existence of the tradition, rather than any sense of its value, had kept it going.<sup>78</sup> The prominence of the sung Eucharist had resulted in the demise of Matins in many cathedrals and churches before the war. This is seen in the gradual prominence of sung Matins services, and eventual absence of Matins services altogether recorded in the Service Sheets for all three cathedrals in the years immediately following the First World War.

Moody was adamantly clear that 'pre-war salaries are pathetically inadequate', continuing, 'it is ironical to find that many cathedrals are driven to the expedient of reducing the number of their choral services in lieu of increasing the salaries of

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<sup>74</sup> 'Church Music.' *The Musical Times*, 529.

<sup>75</sup> Thomas, M. *English Cathedral Music and Liturgy in the Twentieth Century*. (London: Routledge, 2015), 5.

<sup>76</sup> Barrett, P. 'English Cathedral Choirs in the Nineteenth Century.' *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 25, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 15-37.

<sup>77</sup> Ripon, 'Cathedral Music', 163.

<sup>78</sup> *ibid.*, 164.

their organists and choirs.’<sup>79</sup> It is worth noting however that both St Paul’s and Durham Cathedral were financially very well off according to the *Ecclesiastical Duties and Revenues* report 1835 (the gross income of the common fund at St Paul’s being £11,140 with Durham at £35,071).

Britain’s choral tradition is rooted in its cathedrals’ monastic past, when monks would chant eight holy offices a day, sometimes joined by boy novices and relatives. The Choral Revival, as Martin Thomas sees it, was one of the many developments which sprung from ‘renewed and romantic interest in all things mediaeval that characterised the 1830s’.<sup>80</sup> Yet the music that was sung in the cathedrals during the renaissance and has been a great influence on many great composers, and even remains hugely popular with choirs today.

During the first half of the twentieth century, as Routley and Dakers note in *A Short History of English Church Music*, ‘the composition of anthems was virtually dominated by Stanford, Charles Wood and Parry, and a generation later by Bairstow and Howells.’<sup>81</sup> Almost in contradiction to the earlier statement from Luff, they also claim that during the first half of the twentieth century many major parish churches, undoubtedly encouraged by the adequacy of their musical resources, strove to emulate cathedrals.<sup>82</sup> Moody concurs, stating, ‘It is not too much to say that English Cathedral music is unrivalled throughout the world, and that never since the Golden Age has the standard been so consistently high, or more completely in accord with the spirit of the buildings in which it is sung, than it is in our own time.’<sup>83</sup>

Regardless of whether the parish churches were emulating cathedrals or vice versa, during the nineteenth century, cathedral choirs gradually became more professional and were better organised. Philip Barrett notes that through the

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<sup>79</sup> Moody, C.H. ‘The Future of English Cathedral Music’, 526.

<sup>80</sup> Thomas, 6.

<sup>81</sup> Routley & Dakers, 132.

<sup>82</sup> *ibid.*, 128.

<sup>83</sup> Moody, 527.

valiant efforts of 'crusading reformers'<sup>84</sup> including Maria Hackett and S.S. Wesley, abuses of the system were removed. Chapters at many Cathedrals seem to have become increasingly concerned both for the welfare of choristers and Lay clerks and for their contribution to the total life of each individual cathedral. Sir Frederick Ouseley and Sir John Stainer also worked indefatigably to improve the standards of Cathedral music. Musically speaking, the advanced situation at St Paul's, for example, was due to the appointment of Stainer, widely regarded composer, as organist of the Cathedral in 1872. Stainer, along with Parry, Stanford and Henry Hadow and others met in 1897 for a series of meetings at the Royal College of Music. They were 'united under a single aim: to encourage the reform of Anglican cathedral repertoires across the country.'<sup>85</sup> Barrett concludes that it was as a result of this break with the past that '...the art of English Cathedral Music was rescued from extinction and re-established' averring it as 'one of the many achievements of the Victorian Church.'<sup>86</sup> The cathedral worship at this time was then fulfilling for those who still had a belief in God. For those who did not or for those who found solace and comfort in the Cathedral but not necessarily in God or the messages of Christianity necessarily, the passiveness of the worship or the possibility of passiveness in worship was more appealing than any other form of Church of England worship, or indeed than sitting at home.

In addition to the physical efforts of individuals, it was at least in part because of political movements such as the Oxford and Cambridge Movements mentioned in the previous chapter that the musical life of the British Cathedrals was motivated to change. For example, Jenkins is certain that the welcomed revival of Plainsong in England was a definite result of the Oxford Movement.<sup>87</sup> St Paul's Cathedral did, however, come under criticism as a result of its arrangements in reaction to the Oxford Movement. According to Charlton, the Cathedral was accused of being very

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<sup>84</sup> Barrett, 'English Cathedral Choirs in the Nineteenth Century', 37.

<sup>85</sup> Rainbow, B. *Choral revival in the Anglican Church 1839-1872* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), 243.

<sup>86</sup> Barrett, 'English Cathedral Choirs in the Nineteenth Century,' 37.

<sup>87</sup> Jenkins, I.A. 'The influence of the Oxford movement on church music' (Boston University, MA, 1946).

‘High Church’ due to the appointment of R.W. Church as Dean<sup>88</sup> who had introduced choral celebrations of the Eucharist and altar candles.<sup>89</sup> Beeson attests that a regular Choral Eucharist indicated the influence of the Oxford Movement. He also notes that music by Mendelssohn, Gounod and other contemporary composers was not welcomed by everyone but nonetheless the cathedral became regarded as one of the capital’s important centres of music, if not a nationally important centre.

The nineteenth-century revival has been criticised for being archaistic and of trying to breathe a ‘second life’ into dead issues according to Dahlhaus.<sup>90</sup> Gatens similarly described the attitudes towards music at this time as ‘neo-puritanism’ – by which he means, the traditional Puritan antipathy to music in worship seemed to be extended into a wide-ranging distaste for music too.<sup>91</sup> Yet, there was an awareness of this thinking. One commentator bewailed,

it is to be much lamented that the regular cathedral service seems to be rapidly declining, which may chiefly originate in the too prevalent custom of omitting to chant, as formerly, the prayers and responses; ... our Cathedral Music, instead of being, as formerly, one uniform and dignified *concord of sweet sounds*, is now almost reduced to a level with the rude performance of Psalm singing in our Country Parish Churches.<sup>92</sup>

### Daily Musical Administration

In the first half of the nineteenth century, it was customary for the mens’ voices in the ‘old foundations’ including St Paul’s to be provided by clergy who were members of the colleges of Vicars Choral attached to the cathedrals.<sup>93</sup> There were commonly at least six Lay clerks in most cathedrals, each of whom were required to attend at least two daily services. In the 1830s there were eight regular singing men

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<sup>88</sup> Church was Dean of St Paul’s from 1871 until his death in 1890.

<sup>89</sup> Charlton, P. *John Stainer and the Musical Life of Victorian Britain*. (Newton Abbot: David & Charles; 1st ed. Edition, 1984), 47.

<sup>90</sup> Dahlhaus, 181.

<sup>91</sup> Gatens, *Victorian Cathedral Music in Theory and Practice*, 22.

<sup>92</sup> Clarke-Whitfield, J. *Cathedral Music* (4 vols; London, 1800-37), ii, preface.

<sup>93</sup> Cf J. E. Jebb, *Three Lectures on the Cathedral Service of the Church* (London: F. & J. Rivington, 1841).

at York Minster. Meanwhile, both J.B. Dykes, the Precentor of Durham and John Goss, the organist of St Paul's, felt that their choirs were too small. Bernarr Rainbow notes that the Durham Cathedral's choir were 'of good, long-running quality with four basses, three tenors and three altos at the time of writing', he notes that the boys too 'were well instructed.'<sup>94</sup>

What is more, many nineteenth-century English critics insisted that participation must be a genuine act of worship. John Jebb, for example, advocated the idea that lay singers are 'only one degree less sacred than the ordained Ministers of the Church'<sup>95</sup> rather than merely people who are hired to sing in a cathedral setting. Yet, it appeared that arguing that the singers were effectively carrying out that role would not be honest. By 1838 it was evident that the situation of the English cathedrals could not be tolerated much longer. To claim that the daily offering was of worthy praise in the nineteenth century was, according to Rainbow, 'to fly in the face of instances which leapt to mind where irreverence, incompetence and slovenliness were the order of the day'.<sup>96</sup>

Additionally, Peace's *Apology for Cathedral Service* (1839)<sup>97</sup> does list some rather palpable shortcomings of the Cathedral at the time, not least poor attendance from the members of the choir. Peace and Rainbow both remark on the fact that in some cathedrals "good days" were not in fact days in which the cathedral choir was at full force, but merely days where the attendance was above average. Moreover, this lack of attendance from members of the choir was increasingly given as an excuse for the lack of congregation attendance too by members of the clergy who were attempting to establish the reasons for poor attendance at the Cathedrals, particularly on days which were not Sunday. Even then, Sunday evening services at St Paul's had to be sung by a volunteer choir certainly in the nineteenth century if not before.

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<sup>94</sup> Rainbow, B. *Choral revival in the Anglican church 1839-1872* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), 256.

<sup>95</sup> Jebb, *Three Lectures on the Cathedral Service of the Church of England*, 18.

<sup>96</sup> Op. cit. *The Choral Revival in the Anglican Church 1839-1872*, 246.

<sup>97</sup> Peace, J. *An Apology for Cathedral Service* (London: J Bohn, 1839).

This was a most regrettable stage for a cathedral choir to be at and although various reasons were given (some more legitimate than others), something needed to be done. So, the question arises, what exactly did the Victorians think of their cathedral choirs? For much of the century it would appear that they had a moderately low opinion of them.<sup>98</sup> This stems from a number of issues within the organisation and commitment from the choir. The following statement made in 1831 about the potential of the cathedral choir in *The Harmonicon* implies that the worship of the Cathedral was not fulfilling its true purpose:

Who can doubt that the choral service of the Church of England would be one of the greatest feasts to be enjoyed on earth, if it were performed by educated musicians, with that beautiful unanimity which would result from their daily practising together?<sup>99</sup>

Peace does note that the cathedral service is not “performed” for the delight of the congregation or for earthly enjoyment but instead for the glory of God. He urges that it would do well for the members of the Victorian Cathedral congregation and anyone who participates, however frequently, to recognise this. Ouseley also provides a damning report of the low regard with which many members of the choir, principally the back-row, afforded their own supposedly worshipful work:

they are apt to look on it simply from a mercantile point of view... if they kneel down at all, it is not to pray, if they utter with their lips anything beyond what they have to sing, it is too often some common everyday conversation addressed *sotto voce* to their neighbour, or some jokes,...<sup>100</sup>

It is worth observing however that the attendance and behaviour of the choristers was in stark contrast to that of the men of the choirs – and almost universally was this the case. Rainbow recognised that the boys’ attendance at the daily service at Durham was enforced so, unlike many of the other cathedrals in Britain, there was not a sharp discrepancy in the choir members between the weekday services and the Sunday services.<sup>101</sup> However, whilst chorister attendance was not necessarily a

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<sup>98</sup> Barrett, ‘English Cathedral Choirs in the Nineteenth Century’, 25.

<sup>99</sup> *The Harmonicon*, March 1831, 57; quoted in J. Peace op.cit., 70.

<sup>100</sup> Cf, J.B. Howson, op.cit., 222.

<sup>101</sup> Rainbow, *Choral revival*, 256.

universal issue, there were still problems that surrounded the boys in the service. For example, up until the mid-nineteenth century there was a serious problem regarding the 'indecent of the boys roving around with messages' during services. This refers to the fact that music was chosen in services by a member of the clergy and then passed through the choir and to the organist in a seemingly undignified and unnecessary manner. Weekly music lists were then introduced in the Cathedrals around the turn of the century. This created more decorum and allowed for the worship to be significantly less interrupted and therefore more dignified. It was also not uncommon in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for there to be a gap before the anthem due to a lack of preparation of the choir for the piece, and even for the organist to play entirely the wrong piece owing to miscommunication between the quire and the organ loft. Due to the hard work of John Stainer and William Sparrow-Simpson, St Paul's became an exemplar of all that cathedral music and worship ought to be. This is perhaps due in part to the fact that it became common for cathedral choirs in the later nineteenth century to have short breaks from duties. It is probable that this was an outcome of the following, most serious issue which surrounded the daily life of the choristers in all English cathedrals at this time and for a long time before.

During (and before) the early decades of the nineteenth century choristers were definitively victim to a malaise that was affecting the cathedral life in general. The boys were treated very poorly, were malnourished and over-exerted.<sup>102</sup> Whilst conditions varied from cathedral to cathedral, there was a gradual improvement in their situations during the century due to the efforts of people such as Maria Hackett who, being outraged at the situation that the choristers endured, began legal action to secure statutory rights for the choristers. Maria Hackett had placed a fatherless boy, Wintle, in the choir of St Paul's Cathedral with the hope that he might achieve a decent education. Finding this to be not the case, she made it her aim to change this and the future of the life of choristers. Thankfully, through her tireless work, the continuity of this tradition, and the opportunities given to future

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<sup>102</sup> The situation is explained very plainly and without prejudice in Robertson's *Sarum Close*.

musicians in their training under the cathedral system, 'have made us undoubtedly the leading nation' in this particularly English branch of music, viz. choir training and organ-playing, according to Ley.<sup>103</sup>

Yet it also true that the place of church music 'in a long, prestigious, university-linked, distinctly English, and exclusively male tradition that provided church musicians with their special status in the profession'<sup>104</sup> was, as John Hullah presented it, 'ignor[ing] the existence of half the creation, and that the most musical half.'<sup>105</sup> This is referring to the fact that throughout the nineteenth century and for most of the twentieth century, the higher voices in all cathedrals were boys and the back row was exclusively male. This problem would be one that would not be addressed until many generations later, as more immediately pressing issues regarding the welfare of the choristers mentioned above needed to be addressed.

The management of the choristers was not the only systemic failure in the administration of the Cathedral, however. As per Burns' examination earlier, the financial situation in the cathedrals of Britain in the nineteenth century also left much to be desired. Rohr wrote that the economic and artistic conditions for church music seem to have declined considerably, reaching their trough in the early nineteenth century.<sup>106</sup> After 1828, although parliament were still legislating for the church, the parliamentary grants were stopped. Accordingly, the creation of the Ecclesiastical Commission of 1835-6 was an occasion for enabling existing funding to be managed more equally and efficiently rather than an opportunity for additional Parliamentary largesse.<sup>107</sup> According to Turner, The Royal Commissions of 1832 and 1835 stripped the cathedrals of what was considered superfluous wealth. He continues, 'from that process emerged the bones of the modern

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<sup>103</sup> Ley, H. 'The music of the English Church'. *History*, 17(67), new series (1932), 193-200, 199.

<sup>104</sup> Rohr, D. *The Careers of British Musicians 1750-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 87.

<sup>105</sup> Quoted in *Life of John Hullah*, 69.

<sup>106</sup> Rohr, 86.

<sup>107</sup> Cranmer, F, J Lucas and B Morris *Church and State: A mapping exercise* (London: Constitution Unit, University College London, 2006), 32.

cathedral: a chapter consisting of a dean and three or four residentiary canons and, beyond, a larger honorary body with honorific titles. The commissions of 1854 and 1885 attempted, without success, to clothe these bones in the flesh of a richer collegiate life.<sup>108</sup>

It was not actually until the turn of the twentieth century that most Deans and Chapters began to increase considerably the financial resources necessary to produce high-quality music in their cathedrals.<sup>109</sup> This expenditure would of course also have to be two-fold. The first would concern releasing the funds to properly support the singers, organists and masters of music. The second was related to accumulating the financial support necessary to purchase and maintain a full, vibrant, and germane musical library. By the early twentieth century, the financial situation in the musical administration of the three case-study cathedrals had been somewhat addressed. At Durham in December 1911 chorister school costs were approved for 20 boys and in late 1914 twelve choristers were approved fit. Durham was a financially affluent cathedral before the war, as can be seen from the agreement of Dean and Chapter to spend £50 on music, services and anthems for the Cathedral in the February of 1914<sup>110</sup> and through the setting up of a special fund for church schools in the diocese, to which they agreed to pay £250 over the course of five years.<sup>111</sup> Additionally, the stipends of some of the Durham Lay clerks had been increased by 10% a month before the war, in July 1914<sup>112</sup> and A New Scale of Salaries and Pensions for Assistant Vicars Choral was drawn up in July 1914 at St Paul's.

### Music

The dissatisfaction with the administration of the cathedrals also permeated decisions regarding the actual music. The function of church music according to

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<sup>108</sup> Turner, *Cathedrals and Change*, 12.

<sup>109</sup> Beeson, 25.

<sup>110</sup> Durham Cathedral, *Chapter Minutes*, February 1914, 449.

<sup>111</sup> *ibid.* 6 June 1914.

<sup>112</sup> *ibid.* July 1914, 465.

Duncan-Jones is 'to minister to the worthy performance of certain solemn rites and Offices, which in structure are entirely independent of its aid.'<sup>113</sup> It is true, of course, that not even the most skilled musicians, who practise together daily, and who turn up and give a full heart to the worship that they are providing can do anything about a lack of new music, or a deficiency of decent music.

In 1853, Walter Kerr Hamilton (who would become Bishop of Salisbury in 1854), noted that 'the whole arrangements of divine service often show slovenliness, and want of order and discipline, and are in strange contrast with the manner in which the services are conducted in some parish churches.'<sup>114</sup> There is perhaps some truth in the statement from the *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review* that 'music is the characteristic difference between the cathedral and other churches' which Temperley attests had been true since the Reformation.<sup>115</sup> Of course, the discrepancy between the parish church and the cathedral had caused much concern for many centuries, ebbing and flowing between the cathedral and the parish church throughout every decade with one relating more to different people during different eras. Admittedly, the cathedral has always had a certain inaccessible decadence about it. However, this is not necessarily reflective of how people saw it. It certainly did not appear to be a major contributory factor when it came to times of crisis, and certainly not the case when people 'needed' God or a belief in (a) God. It did not matter whether through lowly parish or through high church, access to God could and would be universal.

During the nineteenth century Dahlhaus asserts that church was related primarily to the congregation with the object of instilling devotion.<sup>116</sup> The Church of England did acknowledge, however, that this instilling could be done in the form of congregational worship; musical worship and more specifically, hymnody. This understanding is shown in the following statement from the *Liverpool Mail*, which

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<sup>113</sup> Duncan-Jones, A.S., *Church Music* (London, Robert Scott, 1920), vii.

<sup>114</sup> W.K. Hamilton, *Cathedral Reform: A Letter to the Members of his Diocese* (London, Oxford and Salisbury, 1855), 12.

<sup>115</sup> Temperley, N. 'The old way of singing'. *The Musical Times* Vol 120 No 1641, 943-947, 943.

<sup>116</sup> Dahlhaus, 179.

states 'There is nothing more wanted in our churches than a good school of church music – liberality on the part of our congregations in the support of their choirs, and the attainment of so much musical knowledge as shall enable them to assist in the necessary part of public worship.'<sup>117</sup> Hoch claims that 'the style of English church music itself continued to move forward, almost completely unaffected by the Oxford Movement' and 'over the next forty years, English church music flourished as it never had before in its history'.<sup>118</sup> Whilst the standard of worship in the Church of England had been improving due to the Oxford Movement, amongst other influences, there was 'little music available to raise the hearts of worshippers' according to Beeson.<sup>119</sup> However, Bennett was also clear that this needed to happen alongside an eradication of the concept of Church music as a mere attraction, one which he claims to be 'a sort of pretty rattle to lure the congregational baby to church.'<sup>120</sup>

The Tractarian and Cambridge Ecclesiologists (and those associated with the 1840s Choral Revival) reintroduced congregational plainsong chanting of the psalms and the responses into Matins and Evensong. Thomas notes however that they were not seeking the abolition of choirs or organs, but actually to use them in the service of the liturgy, and to give the congregation a purpose in worship that was theocentric and not music-centric.<sup>121</sup> Tractarian theology itself was a factor in the creation of a significant body of anthems, motets and cantatas, claims Moore.<sup>122</sup> Moore also claims that the music of the Tractarian period reflected its architectural aims, that the musical style was 'set apart from the industrialized secular world and more in keeping with the neo-Gothic architecture of the churches in which it was performed.'<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> Passage from the *Liverpool Mail* quoted in Bennett, J. (1897). Victorian Music. II. The Music of the Church. *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, 38(648), 84-87, 86.

<sup>118</sup> Hoch *Welcome to the Church Music and The Hymnal 1982*, 8.

<sup>119</sup> Beeson, 54.

<sup>120</sup> Bennett, J. The Reform of Church Music: Some Reflections on the *Morning Post* Correspondence. *The Musical Times*, 55(853), (1914). 171-174, 173.

<sup>121</sup> Thomas, 7.

<sup>122</sup> Moore, D.A. 'Victorian Anthems of the Oxford Movement: Composers and Theologians in Dialogue' *The Choral Journal*, Vol. 34, No. 5 (December 1993), 9-14, 10.

<sup>123</sup> Moore, 11.

Fellowes points out that most English composers in the century before the Tractarian movement used psalm texts for their anthems, whilst after the Tractarian movement there is a stark increase in the use of Old Testament prophecy and usage of the Epistles. Moore says that the Tractarian Movement's influence on nineteenth-century English choral music and unsurprisingly 'especially that of Oxford-educated composers,' resulted in a body of choral literature based on important Tractarian texts.<sup>124</sup> According to Temperley 'all sectors of the Victorian Church, even the extremists at both ends, were united in their interest in hymns... they were congregational, but could also be choral; they were Evangelical, but could also be liturgical'.<sup>125</sup> Bennett claims that the passion, 'deep sentiment' and 'gracious charm' of romantic secular poetry have their counterpart in the Church's hymns and music.<sup>126</sup> He also claimed that, 'the hymnody of the Church is now worthy of its high purpose. It often rises to the standard of poetry and it shows, generally speaking, a just perception of what the poetry of worship should be'.<sup>127</sup> The congregational aspect of the hymns, additionally, helps to create a sense of togetherness and solidarity in the community – a message and feeling of unity that would be exceptionally relevant and useful during the war years.

Furthermore, the rise of the Anglo-Catholic Oxford Movement contributed a rich supply of ancient hymns drawn from medieval sources and brought alive by fine translations from the Latin.<sup>128</sup> By 1840 about 40 different hymn books, mainly local productions, were in use. The huge market for hymn tunes in Victorian Britain was a forum for hundreds of British composers, claims Temperley.<sup>129</sup> Through this hymnody, the expression of the intense religious life in mid-Victorian England can be perceived. It is worth noting too that practice of writing and singing treble descants for hymns grew alongside the tendency for a more congregational nature

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<sup>124</sup> Moore, 13.

<sup>125</sup> Temperley, *English parish church*, 296.

<sup>126</sup> Bennett, J. 'Victorian Music', 86.

<sup>127</sup> Bennett, 87.

<sup>128</sup> Beeson, 34.

<sup>129</sup> Temperley, N. 'The Lost Chord'. *Victorian Studies*, 1986 30(1), 7-23, 19.

of worship in the nineteenth century, particularly after the York Decision in 1820, which proved and asserted the place for hymnody in Anglican worship.

A correspondent in *The Guardian* remarked in 1884 that a hymn was becoming customary at cathedral services.<sup>130</sup> This was aided by men such as J.B. Dykes, Precentor of Durham Cathedral from 1849 to 1862. Dykes was a prolific composer of hymnody during the nineteenth century, and he was not alone. Bertram Barnaby wrote an article for *The Guardian* in April 1977 in which he estimates that around four hundred thousand hymns were written in the years between 1873 and 1901.<sup>131</sup>

*Hymns Ancient and Modern* 'quickly established itself as an essential ingredient of Anglican worship not only in Britain but throughout the English-speaking world.'<sup>132</sup> Three supplements were published in 1868, 1889 and 1916. Starting as a novelty in Victorian England, and acknowledging that there was little hymn singing in the Church of England before the early decades of the nineteenth century, hymn singing spread like wildfire not only to the churches but also to schools, public houses and wherever people gathered socially.<sup>133</sup> *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, was published by Novello in 1861. Its success was outstanding. Although it did not come into use in St Paul's until 1871, it was being used in at least a quarter of London churches by 1867. This degree of success gives Temperley reason to call it 'the representative book of Victorian hymnody'.<sup>134</sup>

The production of Hymnals including the 1899 *Yattendon Hymnal*, the *English Hymnal* in 1906 and the *Oxford Hymnbook* in 1908 also led Temperley to describe the spread of hymnody far and wide, enhancing the emotional and religious experience of untold millions. He also perceived that it had outlived the almost

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<sup>130</sup> G 84 / 1960.

<sup>131</sup> Barnaby, B. *The Guardian* (9 April 1977).

<sup>132</sup> Beeson, 40.

<sup>133</sup> Beeson, 41.

<sup>134</sup> Temperley, *English parish church*, 301.

complete disappearance of most other serious music of its time and place.<sup>135</sup> In the last fifteen years of the nineteenth century, Thomas indicates that 'there was a considerable movement away from the stylistic infelicities of the middle-Victorian period.'<sup>136</sup> Bennett also recognises that the 1904 edition of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* and the *English Hymnal* reflect what he calls 'awakened clerical consciousness' as much as they do the musical judgements of those who compiled and wrote the hymns.<sup>137</sup>

Another popular feature towards the end of the century was special services with music drawn from the Bach Passions, Handel's *Messiah*, Spohr's *Last Judgement* and other similar thematic works.<sup>138</sup> Stainer began an annual Holy Week performance of Bach's St Matthew Passion in 1873 with an orchestra of around 50 members and a 300-member strong choir. John Peace's *Apology for the Cathedral Service* (1839) warned that people might go to the Roman Catholic Church to seek finer liturgical music than what was being offered in the cathedrals.<sup>139</sup> In the 1840s, the new Dean of Durham's 'great taste for noisy and showy music' led to more than common 'adaptations from the semi-operatic music of Mozart, Haydn, & etc'.<sup>140</sup> Tallis's *English service* music was seen as the embodiment of established Anglicanism, while the revival of his Latin polyphony was not just a departure from but a direct challenge to that tradition. Cole goes on to say that 'a recognition that there is no single monolithic meaning that can be assigned to early choral music, is essential to a fuller understanding of the... role of 'Tudor' music in the so-called English Musical Renaissance of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.'<sup>141</sup> This perhaps made it easier for the Cathedrals to utilise this early music during the war years. Both hymnody and early music could both be virtually manipulated to represent a whole plethora of feelings.

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<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, 303.

<sup>136</sup> Thomas, 18.

<sup>137</sup> Bennett, 'The Reform of Church Music', 171.

<sup>138</sup> Barrett, 'English Cathedral Choirs in the Nineteenth Century', 22.

<sup>139</sup> Peace, *An Apology for Cathedral Service*.

<sup>140</sup> B Rainbow, *op. cit.*, 256, quoting *The Parish Choir*, i. 135.

<sup>141</sup> Cole, S. *Tallis and His Music in England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008), 194.

The Church of England provided a place of support for English musicians against a cultural backdrop that suggested that their very music was feeble and unworthy. Temperley notes that the Church was ‘an almost exclusive preserve of native composers, with traditions largely independent of Continental music.’<sup>142</sup> In the nineteenth century, many church composers were cathedral organists living relatively narrow lives in insular environments, whereas today cathedral organist composers, though fewer in number, are adding to the repertoire substantially.<sup>143</sup> English Church music has preserved, of its inheritance from the past, all that was essential to its continuity, and according to Bennett has drawn from outside all that could best contribute to its nature and orderly development.<sup>144</sup> During the first part of the twentieth century Stanford, Bairstow, Charles Wood and Darke set ‘flagship models’.<sup>145</sup>

George Hogarth writing in 1838 states, ‘England is ... entitled to boast that her cathedral music is superior to that of any other country... ours retains the solemn grandeur of the olden time.’<sup>146</sup> He is of course talking about England in comparison with the church music of Italy and Germany. The musical output at the beginning of the 20th century established what Richards calls ‘a definite and indisputable musical Protestantism as one key aspect of English identity.’<sup>147</sup> Temperley states that the idea that England was *das Land ohne Musik* harks back to what he calls ‘the overwhelming prestige that Italian music enjoyed in the Augustan age.... During the nineteenth century Italy maintained its hegemony in opera; in instrumental music and the art song it gave way not to English but to German dominance, while France continued to be the main source for dance music and, later, operetta.’<sup>148</sup> This also suggests a veracity to Lumsden’s contention that ‘no other country possesses so fine and unbroken a choral tradition as England, [...] English Church Music at its best

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<sup>142</sup> Temperley, ‘The Lost Chord’, 19.

<sup>143</sup> Routley & Dakers, 132.

<sup>144</sup> Bennett, ‘Victorian Music’, 227-228.

<sup>145</sup> Routley & Dakers, 129.

<sup>146</sup> Hogarth, G. *General Survey of Music (The Edinburgh Review, Volume 63 1836)*, 36.

<sup>147</sup> Richards, *Imperialism and Music*, 13.

<sup>148</sup> Temperley, ‘The Lost Chord’, 12.

compares with the finest to be found in the world.’<sup>149</sup> The relationship between British composers and the Church would therefore be of extreme importance during the time of great uncertainty which was to come.

Nevertheless, Routley and Dakers attest that ‘the stock of the nineteenth-century cathedral music is not, on the whole, an encouraging sight.’<sup>150</sup> Their statement is corroborated by Theodore Hoppen who writes that ‘Victorians, it seemed, could do anything with music except compose it’.<sup>151</sup> Yet For Newman, the future of music remained with Elgar and he dismissed the pastoralists as ‘the crowd of younger men [among whom] it is impossible to distinguish one who has the least chance of making history.’<sup>152</sup> Kate Kennedy notes ‘while pre-war London had already been rocked by premieres of works from the likes of Schoenberg and Stravinsky, the leading older generation of composers (Edward Elgar, Hubert Parry and Charles Villiers Stanford) remained largely conservative in style, despite the musical experimentation that was taking place around them, and even despite the war itself.’<sup>153</sup> ‘Despite the war itself’ seems like an odd phrase, as it is would have been virtually impossible for the composers to not have been impacted in some way, no matter how small, by the war that was happening on just the other side of the channel.

Newman’s belief in composers like Elgar to carry forth the torch into Britain’s musical future is important when considering how the future of British music was being born in the fields of France but being moulded on English soil. The young soldiers who were fighting found and utilised their musical voice, which was then sent back to England and proclaimed all aspects of the war there. England had produced the first industrial revolution and arguably the first example of widespread nationalism (initially English and then British) to take place under a

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<sup>149</sup> Lumsden, D. *The Treasury of English Church Music* Volume 5 1900-1965 eds by Knight and Reed (London: Blandford Press, 1965), v.

<sup>150</sup> Routley & Dakers, 64.

<sup>151</sup> Hoppen, T., *The Mid-Victorian Generation 1846-1886* (Oxford, OUP, 1998), 394.

<sup>152</sup> Quoted in Hughes & Stradling, *English Musical Renaissance*, 84.

<sup>153</sup> Kennedy, K. ‘A music of grief’: classical music and the First World War. *International Affairs*, 90(2), (2014), 379-395, 385-386.

single governance. Yet music in this advanced, powerful and united nation succumbed to the music of an advancing, potentially formidable Germany.<sup>154</sup> Maw affirms that 'if the first phase of the English Musical Renaissance was concerned with the revitalization of music in the nation's social and institutional life, the second was concerned with the individualization of musical language in the work of the nation's composers.'<sup>155</sup>

Martin Thomas also attests that the immense amount of music that was written for cathedral choirs and, like the improvements outlined above, the style of this music was showing increasing signs of developing into a standard style, which was being readily replicated.<sup>156</sup> Additionally, Garrett argues that choral singing dominated musical life of Britain and Ireland to an extent matched in few other periods and places.<sup>157</sup> Much of the church music, particularly the choral settings from the Victorian age, retains a place within Anglican services in Britain, Ireland and further afield. English musicians upon the breakout of the Great War were under immense pressure to find an independent voice, however much they admired German music and were grateful to Germany for their guidance and inspiration.<sup>158</sup>

By the turn of the twentieth century, the Church played an indisputably important role in instilling the values of society with Cathedrals more specifically continuing to play a key part in the British musical heritage, something they had of course done from their inception. Both the everyday life of the cathedral and the musical choices and changes that had been instituted or improved particularly during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries placed the Cathedral Choir in an extremely promising place. There is clear evidence that towards the end of the nineteenth century that there were real changes in cathedral music and according

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<sup>154</sup> Martin, D. 'The sound of England' in Athena S Leousi *Nationalism and Ethnosymbolism*. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 69.

<sup>155</sup> Maw, 'Quest for a National Style' in *Essays on the History of English Music* eds E. Hornby and D.N. Maw (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2010), 100.

<sup>156</sup> Thomas, 34.

<sup>157</sup> Garrett J 'Britain in Ireland' in *Nineteenth-Century Choral Music* eds by Donna M. Di Grazia, 335.

<sup>158</sup> Martin, 69.

to Stanford 'in respect of performance, of demeanour, and of general efficiency' there had been 'an immense advance'.<sup>159</sup> Discussing this very progress, Bennett notes that composers were 'stimulated by new ideas of order and efficiency in Church service, the religious application of the art entered upon the path of improvement which had led to its present brilliant position.'<sup>160</sup> Bennett's statement, although highly generalised, when taken at face value allows us to see that the Victorian musical world was being shaken up, and he provides it with a certain theological gravitas.

Beresford-Hope argues that 'There can be no question that the solemn Cathedral service, with all its stately accompaniments, is the highest development of the principle which recognises the value of art and of set order in man's collective approach to his Creator.'<sup>161</sup> This is significant when considered alongside Dahlhaus' contention that 'the socio-psychological roots of an ideal church music as an escape from the world can be seen in the bourgeois tendency to separate these two spheres and consign religion to a ghetto, thereby protecting it from 'reality' and at the same time preventing it from interfering in that reality'.<sup>162</sup> It is important to bear this in mind when considering the impact of the war that about to begin. Acknowledging the past of the cathedral and its music, the next two sections of this thesis look towards the war years (chapters 3 and 4) and the aftermath (chapters 5 and 6). Could the slow but eventual progress of the musical life of British Cathedrals during the nineteenth century be undone in four mere years?

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<sup>159</sup> Stanford, C.V. *Pages from an Unwritten Diary*. London: Wentworth Press, 1914, 307.

<sup>160</sup> Bennett, 'Victorian Music', 87.

<sup>161</sup> Beresford-Hope, 117.

<sup>162</sup> Dahlhaus, 182.

**Part Two:**  
**During the Great War**

### **Chapter Three: 1914 – 1916**

It is commonly accepted that the outbreak of World War I on the fourth of August 1914 was greeted, barring some pacifists, with a certain gusto across the length and breadth of Britain. This enthusiasm and excitement, otherwise known as 'war fever' had undoubtedly taken grip in the opening days and months of the war. The first two years of the war heralded a lot of cultural changes and ambiguities and in these years, there were a number of significant repercussions. This was due to the way in which the government and mass media took advantage of propaganda and cashed-in on the patriotic belief in the fight for King and Country. When war was declared, the national reaction was one of excitement and hope, yet this was not necessarily reflected in the governmental response. On the 8<sup>th</sup> of August 1914, The Defence of the Realm Act (DORA) was passed, taking just four days to achieve Royal Assent. Designed to help prevent invasions and keep public morale high the Act demanded strict rules be followed. The legislation gave the government executive powers to quash and admonish distributed critiques of the war effort, imprison without trial, and to appropriate economic resources for the war effort. More rules followed, including official lighting restrictions which came into force on Monday, 5 April 1915 across the whole country.

The arts would have a significant role to play in both sustaining and responding to the propaganda and patriotism during the long four years. It is perhaps true that the idea that music would or could form a national symbol of hope was no clearer seen than in Cathedrals as fortresses of British identity. It is therefore true that 1914-1916 were the years in which nationalism became pronounced in every aspect of British life. This nationalism and patriotic pride in one's country did not go unnoticed by staff or congregations in British cathedrals and it enacted itself in a variety of ways. There was a pressure for the church to play its part in the national aim and in the first two years the wider cultural impact can be seen in the administration and musical choices of each cathedral. Frost states, 'Where previously the music interested only cathedral musicians and church-goers, it was soon to become a national symbol.' He continues, 'this would have significant

implications for the way in which the music was written about, performed and received.’<sup>163</sup>

### Day-to-Day Musical Administration

From the outbreak of World War I, the day-to-day running of the three cathedrals in this study, York Minster, Durham, and St Paul’s, was significantly disrupted. In terms of daily musical administration, it is apparent that throughout the first two years, managing and maintaining a strong and well-balanced back row, as well as ensuring that those who remained or were deputising were financially organised placed a significant strain on the administration. There were also necessary changes to the service schedule that had to be made to allow for National Days of Intercession, funeral and memorial services, as well as special services organised at each cathedral linked to their own unique diocesan situation.

The most drastic organisational concern during the war years was brought about because of the sweep of men who either volunteered or were conscripted during the four years. Many of the men who sang in the back rows were too old to fight. Yet, given the fragile circumstances laid out before, any loss to the men would be a severe detriment to the musical life of the cathedral, and could cause a stark backwards step for cathedral music. In all cathedrals, the necessity to carry out ‘reshuffles’ due to death or disability stemming from the war is evident. The St Paul’s Chapter minutes are indeed telling about this impact of the war on the musical men at the London Cathedral. One of the tenors, Turner, was called to War in August 1914, and chapter agreed that he be allowed to provide a permanent deputy;<sup>164</sup> Vernon Taylor was provided in October 1914. On Saturday December 12th 1914 they agreed that the Master of St Paul’s Choir School could look for an Assistant Master at the school pending the return of Mr. Chesterman from War service. In June 1915, members of the choir, Mr. Farrington and Mr. Webster, were given permission to go to the front for three weeks from July 5th to take part in concerts for wounded soldiers. Whilst these men would have their own individual

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<sup>163</sup> Frost, *English Cathedral Music and the BBC*, 25.

<sup>164</sup> St Paul’s Cathedral, *Chapter Minutes*, 8 August 1914.

experience of the war, the wartime problems experienced in England had a definite impact on the men left behind. A key example of this happened on November 27th 1915, when it was reported that all four St Paul's basses were absent until the *Te Deum*. The reason given in the minutes pertained to the lack of punctuality on the railways, almost certainly exacerbated by the war.

At Durham Cathedral, the situation was not dissimilar. By October of 1914 the Durham Dean and Chapter had agreed that positions in the choir would be kept open for men who had enlisted in His Majesty's forces.<sup>165</sup> By this time, one of their basses had enlisted, and the Cathedral were still having trouble with a residual vacant alto Lay clerk position from years previous. And at York Minster too the situation was comparable with Vicars Choral, George Trundel volunteering for service as an army chaplain and ambulance driver. The system at York Minster charged the other Vicars Choral with the unenviable task of replacing him. He was replaced in February 1915 but fortunately returned to the Minster at the end of July that year. Whilst this primarily administrative task of appointing successors seems unrelated to the war, the frequency of the replacements that were needed in wartime is undoubtedly what thrust the Dean and Chapter of York Minster into overhauling this flawed and outmoded administrative system.

As regards to choristers at the three cathedrals, it seemed there continued to be a healthy intake throughout the war, or at least an ability to carry them through the war mostly unscathed. Choristers at St Paul's were still admitted in sets of seven in October 1914 and July 1915 as had been the case in the pre-war years. At Durham, the minutes reflect discussion of a report on a King's Scholarship in July 1915 and also the financial aspect of choristership is brought up on more than occasion. Twelve choristers were approved fit for service at Durham according to the Precentor's report in 1915.<sup>166</sup> Special circumstances were afforded to 'boy Abbey' but this seems to be unrelated to the War.

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<sup>165</sup> Durham Cathedral, *Chapter Minutes*, 7 October 1914.

<sup>166</sup> Durham Cathedral, *Chapter Minutes*, 486.

As stated before, Durham was a financially affluent cathedral before the war. This can be seen from the agreement of Dean and Chapter to spend £50 on music, services and anthems for the Cathedral in February of 1914<sup>167</sup> and through the setting up of a special fund for church schools in the diocese, to which they agreed to pay £250 over the course of five years.<sup>168</sup> In December, a committee was set up to review the applications for Lay clerks who appealed for financial assistance during the war.<sup>169</sup> Stipends of some Lay clerks at Durham were increased by 10% in July 1914 and an application for assistance from Lay clerks was considered and a committee was formed in December 1915. One month earlier, in November of 1915 the Durham Dean and Chapter had also agreed on a weekly allowance of £1,8,0 to be paid to the wives of any Lay clerks who may join the army.<sup>170</sup> They additionally agreed that the families of Lay clerks would not be prejudiced financially as a result of this.<sup>171</sup> In fact, one widow was to be paid a pension of £45 for the rest of the war, which was to be reconsidered once the war had ended.<sup>172</sup> They did note, however, that each case would have to be judged on its own merit.<sup>173</sup> York Minster also appeared to have no shortage of money at the beginning of the war either. The Dean and Chapter of York Minster decided to give £500 to buy and stock the ambulance that George Trundel (mentioned above) would drive, under the premise that it be given the name “York Minster”, and that it was returned for service locally after the war.<sup>174</sup>

Had service schedules remained as they were in pre-war times, this extreme change in the personnel of the choirs would have been more manageable. However, this was not the case. The Cathedrals had to hold a wealth of extra services, which came in various forms. The first was National Days of Intercession: these days of prayer

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<sup>167</sup> Durham Cathedral, *Chapter Minutes*, February 1914, 449.

<sup>168</sup> *ibid.* 6<sup>th</sup> June 1914.

<sup>169</sup> *ibid.* 4<sup>th</sup> December 1915, 506.

<sup>170</sup> *ibid.* 20<sup>th</sup> November 1915, 504.

<sup>171</sup> *ibid.* 7<sup>th</sup> of October 1914.

<sup>172</sup> *ibid.* March 1916, 8.

<sup>173</sup> *ibid.* 468.

<sup>174</sup> York Minster, *Chapter Minutes*, February 1915, 154.

served to establish an entirely new co-operation between the principal churches in all parts of the United Kingdom. The example of these coordinated acts of special worship affected the relative positions of the main churches, and ensured that religious perspectives remained prominent in public life. Williamson attests that these days 'emphasised the churches' commitment to the national effort... and renewed the assumption that the churches fulfilled important national purposes.'<sup>175</sup> The exceptionally well-documented service sheets from York Minster make clear just how many days were set aside as National Days of Intercession; including the first Sunday of every year, the 4th of August, as well as in honour of the American forces joining the war, and respective celebrations of July 4th which were all in addition to special services at individual cathedrals and other days which were declared as the war went on. While congregations for the different days of prayer varied in size and were not always exceptional, for most of them the newspapers reported that churches and chapels were unusually well attended, 'full', or 'crowded', with queues at cathedrals and sometimes with over-flow services held elsewhere.<sup>176</sup>

These National Days of Intercession held particular prominence at St Paul's, given its geographical centrality during the war. For example, a special service of Intercession was held on Thursday August 6th 1914 on 'the Eve of the War in Europe' at 1.15pm at St Paul's. According to Chapter minutes 'the cathedral was full, and many could not obtain admission'.<sup>177</sup> The special services evidently attracted many who were relatively indifferent towards religious observance. A special service of Intercession was held on Thursday August 6<sup>th</sup> 1914 on 'the Eve of the War in Europe' at 1.15pm at St Paul's. According to Chapter minutes 'the cathedral was full, and many could not obtain admission'.<sup>178</sup> Friday August 21st 1914 was also set apart by the Archbishop as a Day of Intercession in connection with the war, with a note in the St Paul's chapter minutes that 'there were very

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<sup>175</sup> Williamson, P. 'National days of prayer: the churches, the state and public worship in Britain 1899- 1957' *English historical review*. 128 (531), 19.

<sup>176</sup> See *Daily Express*, 3 Jan 1916.

<sup>177</sup> St Paul's Cathedral, *Chapter Minutes*, 8th August 1914.

<sup>178</sup> St Paul's Cathedral, *Chapter Minutes*, 8<sup>th</sup> August 1914.

large congregation [sic.] all day.<sup>179</sup> The Dean of St Paul's noted in his diary on December 2<sup>nd</sup> 1914: 'From to day onwards, service of Intercession for the War, on all week days after Mattins, also on Mondays and Wednesdays after Evensong, on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays memorial services for those who have fallen in the war.'<sup>180</sup> This comment emphasises the role of the Cathedral from the outset; people clearly found solace in the messages of Christianity and in the collective comfort of worship.

The location of St Paul's in the capital city meant that its increase in services quickly revolved around national memory of major figures in Britain's war effort. It quickly became the nation-wide home of military funerals, for example that of Earl Roberts on 19<sup>th</sup> November 1914. Mourning for the common man was also extremely prevalent, and services such as the special memorial service for the fallen in the war at 10.30am on November 6<sup>th</sup> 1914 continued throughout the war and in its aftermath. St Paul's was host to numerous services for people who fell in the war, for example for those who were involved with journalism and printing, British banks, for members of staff of the Port of London Authority and those connected with London County Council and Lloyds of London amongst others. St Paul's Cathedral also held host to a 'Day and Night Watch of Intercession' from 8am on December 16<sup>th</sup> to 8am on December 17<sup>th</sup> 1914. The 16<sup>th</sup> was a nationally recognised Day of Intercession for the War. The instructions for those participating in the Day and Night Watch at St Paul's included the following:

Pray for all who are serving the nation in this crisis at home, by faithful discharge of necessary duties however unexciting, by contributing to the supply of comforts for those abroad, by earnest intercession.

Additionally, many of the annual services that took place during the war would offer up prayers for those involved in the war. For example, at the London Church Choir Association 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Service, held on 12<sup>th</sup> November 1914, it was recorded that 'the prayers of the congregation are especially desired for those members of

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<sup>179</sup> *ibid.* 22<sup>nd</sup> August 1914.

<sup>180</sup> *Dean's Diary*, 2 December 1914.

the various choirs, who, but for the call of their country, would have taken part in this service.' Memorial services were also held in the St Dunstan's Chapel on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays immediately after Evensong from the middle of 1915 for those who had fallen in the war.

The fact that St Paul's Cathedral was geographically based in the capital city meant that aside from playing host to the national services (days of intercession, funerals etc), it came under significant physical threat. Its location undoubtedly makes it the most likely of the cathedrals in this case study to come under significant physical threat. As such, the official documents record that the cathedral was of paramount importance for Dean and Chapter. On June 19<sup>th</sup> 1915 it was recorded that a report was made on the further steps to protect the cathedral against aircraft. By September 26<sup>th</sup> it was requested that the Treasurer consult the War Office in regard to the safety of the Cathedral during the War. This care for the Cathedral's exterior was not extended to its musical life: according to Martin Thomas, Dean Inge's 'antipathy to the musical and liturgical traditions'<sup>181</sup> was well-known.

### Music

Music that was chosen and composed during the war years would have to be exceptionally poignant in order to do justice to the services discussed above. It would have to cover the multifaceted responses to war. Music in the cathedrals would, as it always had, put God and the core messages of Christianity at the heart of the initial enthusiasm and excitement for the war. In terms of musical output, many of the longstanding traditions of the respective cathedrals stayed more or less in place. The excerpt on the next page from *The Musical Times* in 1915 shows the musical choices of various Cathedrals for services on the fifth Sunday in Lent that year.

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<sup>181</sup> Thomas, *English Cathedral Music*, 79.

It is interesting that all the *Te Deum* settings were by English composers, with all of the canticles written by well-known Renaissance or early Victorian composers. Meanwhile the anthems, whilst varied, give an interesting insight into Cathedral musicians' feelings regarding the rejection of non-British music. French composer Charles Gounod's settings 'O come near to the Cross', 'All ye who weep', 'Ave Verum', and 'There was darkness' as well as music from his *Passion* were all chosen to be fitting for this occasion. Material by Dvorák and Allegri were both seen as equally relevant and acceptable choices.

Palestrina also joined English Renaissance and early Baroque composers including Merbecke, Tallis, Gibbons, Mundy, Boyce and Pearsall in a musical programme which was considered appropriate and acceptable through the war. Settings of *If ye love me* by Tallis and Stewart appeared to be favoured in York Minster. From the excerpts from the service lists it is clear that Dr. Edward Bairstow had a proclivity for Renaissance music. Even before the war Gibbons, Tallis and Palestrina were held in high esteem at the Minster. Whilst most of the musical trends were widespread in England, at York Minster, Bairstow revived some old, unknown music like Anerio's 'Jesus, once for our salvation' and J. Stafford Smith's 'Almighty and everlasting God'. Bairstow also gave voice to Sheppard's 'O lord,

## Church and Organ Music.

Lists of music used at Metropolitan Cathedrals and Churches on the fifth Sunday in Lent :

### BENEDICITE.

Martin.	Roberts in F.
Hylton-Stewart in C.	Best.
Frost in D.	W. English Jones.

### TE DEUM AND BENEDICTUS.

King in F.	Barnby in G.
Wesley in F.	Stainer in A.
Walford Davies in F.	Parry in D.
Roberts in F.	Young.
Stanford in C.	

### MAGNIFICAT AND NUNC DIMITTIS.

Farrant in G minor.	Smart in G.
Gibbons in F.	Stainer in A.
Kempton in B flat.	Tallis in the Dorian Mode.
King in F.	Vinning in F.
Noble in B minor.	Walmisley in D.
Parisian Tones.	Wesley in F.

### ANTHEMS.

'Zion's ways do languish.' *Gounod.*  
 'Faithful Cross.' *John IV. of Portugal.*  
 'Hear, O Thou Shepherd.' *Walmisley.*  
 'God is a Spirit.' *Sterndale Bennett.*  
 'Remember not, Lord.' *Hathaway.*  
 'At Thy feet in adoration.' *Dvorák.*  
 'Thou wilt keep him.' *Wesley.*  
 'Have mercy upon me, O God.' *Allegri.*  
 'By Thy glorious Death and Passion.' *Dvorák.*  
 'Hear, O Lord.' *Goss.*  
 'O come near to the Cross.' *Gounod.*  
 'O cast thy burden.' *Thorne.*  
 'Let my complaint.' *Boyce.*  
 'Vexilla regis.' *Gregorian melody, harmonized by Gounod.*  
 'All ye who weep.' *Gounod.*  
 'Thou wilt keep him.' *Lee Williams.*  
 'Blessed Jesu.' *Dvorák.*  
 'Super Flumina.' *Palestrina.*  
 'Bread of the world.' *Walford Davies.*  
 'Have mercy upon me.' *Pelham Humphreys.*  
 'Turn Thee unto me.' *Boyce.*  
 'In the hour of persecution.' *Graun's 'Passion.'*  
 'There was darkness.' *Gounod.*  
 'Beside her Son's Cross.' *Gounod's 'Redemption.'*  
 'O Thou, Whose head was wounded.' *Bach.*  
 'Tristes est Anima.' *Orlando di Lasso.*  
 'Ave Verum.' *Gounod.*

### HOLY COMMUNION.

'Aeterna Christi.' *Palestrina.*  
 'Missa Brevis.' *Palestrina.*  
 'Assumpta est Maria.' *Palestrina.*  
 Merbecke.  
 Selby in F.  
 Tallis in the Dorian Mode.

### LARGER WORKS.

'The Passion' (St. Matthew). *Bach.*  
 (As Anthem, Temple Church, Sunday, March 21.)  
 'Gethsemane.' *Lee Williams.*

*The Musical Times*, April 1, (1915), 216

maker of all things', Humfrey's 'Rejoice in the Lord' and Cornelius' 'Saviour, who in thine own image'. Interestingly the music for holidays was largely the same throughout the war. The continuing use of Mendelssohn, Brahms, Handel, Bach, and Mozart to celebrate key festivals (Easter and Christmas) should also not go unnoticed. At York Minster, the 'Hallelujah Chorus' continued to be chosen on Christmas Day each year throughout the war.

Broadly speaking, musical changes manifested themselves in different ways at different points throughout the four-year period. In the first year changes were fairly slow. At St Paul's on the 4<sup>th</sup> of August 1914, Handel's 'The Lord is a man of war' undoubtedly, but perhaps not intentionally, set the tone for the next four years. Themes of war were from then to be prevalent and more frequent than anticipated. By late 1914, Mondays appeared to be specifically set aside to address themes and topics associated with war at York Minster. 'A Nation's Hymn' [thereafter commonly referred to in places as 'The Nation's Hymn'] with words by Reverend W.H. Draper was composed by director of music at York Minster and premiered on the first Day of National Intercession. It was sung frequently on Mondays at Evensong during the first year of the war.

Attwood's 'They that go down to the sea' also became commonplace at all three cathedrals throughout the war, but especially at the Minster. At the 10.30am service on October 18<sup>th</sup> 1914 the hymn 'The Voice of Duty calls' accompanied Noble in B minor and at Evensong Stainer in E was sung alongside Mozart's 'Glory, Honour, Praise and Power' and the National Anthem. The music and its sentiments in this service would be commonplace for the duration of the war as music meditated on the deeper repercussions of war. It could remind people of who they were by retelling the national story and panegyricising its values. Perhaps most poignantly it acted as the voice of conscience, integrity, and morality.<sup>182</sup> It does seem that the most outstanding offering of nationalism was through the continual

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<sup>182</sup> Hewett, I. 'First World War: how British music responded.' *The Telegraph*, (2014). Accessed 10 Feb 2016.

dedication of God Save the King. The National Anthem was sung regularly in all cathedrals; in fact, it was sung at the end of every Monday Evensong service at York Minster for almost six months at the beginning of the war (October 25 1914 – 15 March 1915).

It is unsurprising, though, that the overriding theme throughout was a desire for peace. Both settings of 'O pray for the peace of Jerusalem' by Hubert Parry and Gerard Cobb, and Calcott's 'Give peace in our time' were usual from late 1914 at St Paul's in addition to Crotch's setting of 'Be peace on earth'. Not only was this a message of peace, it was a message of Christian peace: a peace that comes from God. The setting of 'God so loved the world' by former Director of Music at St Paul's, John Stainer, was also frequent. The comfort that the church could provide and God's compassion is also seen, for example, in the usage of 'Almighty and merciful God' by Goss and Byrd's anthem 'I will not leave you comfortless'.

Stanford's services in A and B flat as well as his Te Deum in C featured regularly at all three cathedrals during the war alongside popular usage of his anthems, including 'And I saw another angel'. Furthermore, the outbreak of war in 1914 prompted Stanford to write what Dibble attests is his 'most dramatic anthem.'<sup>183</sup> The work, 'For lo, I raise up that bitter and hasty nation', shows Stanford's skilled use of the Bible. Here he takes a selection of verses from Habakkuk to express his pity and sadness at the war.<sup>184</sup> The restlessness felt nationally is depicted clearly in the turbulent choral parts. The ending of Stanford's anthem is one of promise, and of hope. Stanford's music emphasises God's purpose in Habakkuk's life, which would have been a relatable sentiment for the listener in the war years, and immediately afterwards. The work undoubtedly shows Stanford's revulsion and sorrow at the war, but reveals him as hopeful that this too would pass. In all three cathedrals, his services were more frequent than any other composer, British or otherwise. Interestingly his work seems to be performed as a counterbalance to any

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<sup>183</sup> Dibble, *Charles Villiers Stanford*, 410.

<sup>184</sup> Clarke, *Music and Theology in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, 177.

German or foreign compositions. For example, at York Minster, Stanford's music was often performed alongside any works by Mendelssohn. The music lists at York Minster are the most complete and therefore the most forthcoming with the musical trends up and down the country during the war. Whilst English music and music written in English was exceptionally prevalent, by 1916 Mendelssohn was still as frequent in the service sheets as English composers like Stanford and Parry, if not more so.

What is more, despite Stanford's assessment in his *Pages of an Unwritten Diary* that 'our hymn-books are about four times too large',<sup>185</sup> the use of hymnody came into its own in the increase of war-related services. Some hymns, as we will discuss later, are frequently repeated across all the repertoire of all three cathedrals, some deal with the direct battle motif, some are in praise of God, whilst some tell of the all-encompassing issue of death and resurrection. The congregational aspect of the hymns undoubtedly helps to create a sense of togetherness and solidarity in the community – a message that war could unite, and not divide the people of Britain and an assurance that the Church mourned with the world. Wartime Hymnody had its greatest impact controlling the emotions of the people at this time.

Dibble emphasises that although the Anglican Church was late in recognising the value of hymnody, when it did, it fostered arguably the richest and most popular tradition in the world.<sup>186</sup> It is as a result of the ubiquitous position that hymnody had come to occupy, that its prominent usage during the First World War, which will be discussed below, is so significant. The similarities between the three cathedrals are a salient mark of universality in the cathedral musical trends at that time. Yet the most telling feature of the wartime musical life of British cathedrals is through the way in which hymnody was selected and used. From solemnity to loss of life, morale-boosting of women left behind and men about to leave, to celebration post-November 11th 1918, it is clear from all three Cathedral studies

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<sup>185</sup> Stanford, C.V. *Pages from an Unwritten Diary*, 311.

<sup>186</sup> Dibble, *Cambridge History of Christianity*, 134.

that hymnody was crucial to the Church's role in the First World War. Equally, the way in which hymnody was presented shows the impact of the war on the Church's musical choices. There is a clear pattern for the usage of hymnody during the war. In his *General Introduction to Hymnody and Congregational Song*, Rogal asserts that hymns during the war were written as reactions to the war or as 'reverberations from the scenes of its tragedies.'<sup>187</sup> The *Hymns Ancient & Modern*, Standard Edition, 1875- 1924 was the hymnal of choice during the war years. The picture created in music lists and service sheets at St Paul's, York Minster and Durham, although incomplete, allow us to establish the use of hymnody throughout the war.

All Cathedrals were given a copy of 'The Form Of Prayer For Use In Time Of War', which lists seven hymns:

Hymn No.	Name
108	When I survey the wondrous Cross
165	O God our help in ages past
184	Rock of ages, cleft for me
376	O God of love, O King of peace
193	Jesus, lover of my soul
595	Holy Father, in thy mercy
298	Praise, my soul, the King of heaven

**Table 1 – Hymns from The Form Of Prayer For Use In Time Of War**

These hymns are mostly general-use hymns that utilised texts of intercession and reflect their pre-war-time popularity that they had esteemed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Hymn 595, 'Holy Father, in thy mercy' is from the 'For those at Sea' section of *Hymns Ancient & Modern* and 376 'O God of love' from the 'In Times of Trouble' section. Other hymns from the 'In Times of Trouble'

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<sup>187</sup> Rogal, S.J. *A General Introduction to Hymnody and Congregational Song* (Metuchen, N.J., & London: The Scarecrow Press, 1991), 146.

section include: 'God of my life, to thee I call', 'Great King of nations, hear our prayer', and 'In grief and fear to thee, O Lord'. In times of trouble, the Church has always been adamant that God be at the centre of the mourning process and of the healing process. On August 16<sup>th</sup> 1914 the Reception of the Regimental Colours took place at Durham Cathedral. This would be the first instance of the combination of an annual and special services, which would of course assume a new level of poignancy as a result of the war. 'Fight the good fight with all thy might' also features heavily in services during the war.

"Run the straight race,  
through God's good grace,  
lift up thine eyes and seek his face;  
life with its way before us lies,  
Christ is the path and Christ the  
prize."

"Faint not nor fear,  
his arms are near;  
he changeth not, and thou art dear;  
only believe, and thou shalt see  
that Christ is all in all to thee."

#### **Verses 2 and 4 of Fight the good fight with all thy might**

The links between the combat of the Great War and the words by John Samuel Bewley Monsell, Jr., (above) poignantly affirm the role of faith and the message of hope that God and the Church would provide to those living and fighting in the war. At Evensong at Durham on the same day, 'Onward Christian Soldiers' and 'O God our help in ages past' complemented the National Anthem and Walmisley in D minor. The same message was evident at the City of London National Guard Service on June 9<sup>th</sup> 1915, at which all three hymns were sung. The Memorial Service for the Yorkshire Sailors and Soldiers who fell in the first year of the war in October 1915 introduced new hymns to York Minster. 'O God our help in ages past' is by far the most common hymn at all three Cathedrals, both during the war and in its aftermath. It was chosen as the only hymn for the service of solemn intercession on 25 July 1915 at St Paul's.

Hymnody throughout the war often pressed more than one message. For example, hymns included at the Memorial Service for Yorkshire Sailors and Soldiers (Table 2) dealt with the Christian idea that eternal life is the goal and that life on earth is only

for a short while, but at the same time these hymns almost juxtapose this with the notion of God’s mercy and grace.

Hymn No.	Name
225	Brief life here is our portion
94	Lord, in this thy mercy's day
221	Let saints on earth in concert sing
	God Save the King

**Table 2 - Hymns at the Memorial Service for Yorkshire Sailors and Soldiers**

The Christian theology promoted in hymns like ‘Brief life here is our portion’ were very important because they allowed the congregations to find comfort in the message that the thousands of men and women who were dying at war were not dying in vain, not just politically but also, and more importantly because, as per the words of the nineteenth-century hymn upon death ‘Jesus in mercy brings us, to that dear land of rest’. The use of Christian battle motif was of utmost importance during the war. It was used frequently, but especially in services which honoured or remembered the military for example at the 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Military Service which was held in May 1915 at York Minster:

Hymn No.	Name
391	Onward, Christian soldiers
147	Hail the day that sees him rise
540	Fight the good fight with all thy might

**Table 3 – Hymns at the 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Military Service at York Minster**

‘Onwards Christian soldiers’ and ‘Fight the good fight with all thy might’ also gave hope and meaning to the relentless trauma of war. Sentiments which attested that

God would give ‘strength’ and ‘right’ to those who were fighting wholeheartedly in God’s army inevitably gave comfort and consolation to those who were left behind and inspiration to those who were not yet sent off to fight. Adrian Gregory’s notion that ‘the grammar and vocabulary of the language of sacrifice were deeply familiar to a Bible-reading and hymn-singing public’<sup>188</sup> is no clearer seen in these two hymns. ‘Onward Christian Soldiers’ made World War One a Christian battle for all those who would allow it to be. The idea that ‘we are not divided; all one body we: One in hope and doctrine, one in charity’ would prove to be an exceptionally important position for the Church of England to promulgate and was extremely potent for the British people. This was as true in the fields of France as it was in the pews of England. The congregational aspect of the hymns undoubtedly helped to create a sense of togetherness, unity and solidarity in the communities – a message that war could unite, and not divide the people of Britain and an assurance that the Church mourned with them.

As well as providing comfort through the communal aspect of worshipping, hymnody promoted particularly Christian messages about the belief that life on earth was only intended to be temporary. At the memorial service for Lord Londonderry at Durham Cathedral on February 11<sup>th</sup> 1915 the following hymns assured the people of life after death, noting the Christian message that death is not final and that God will bring peace to those who are currently suffering:

Hymn No.	Name
536	There is a land of pure delight
499	On the resurrection morning
276	O Lord, how happy should we be

**Table 4 – Hymns at the Lord Londonderry Memorial Service at Durham Cathedral**

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<sup>188</sup> Gregory, A. *The Last Great War: British Society and the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), n.p.

The fact that hymnody could so easily and readily cover the wealth of emotion and sentiment throughout the war helped the Church of England to insert itself in the war agenda. The hymns help to create a chasm between the allies and the enemy. These hymns also propose the means of opposition - through praise and unity. They opposed the negative atmosphere which overwhelmed the country at the time.

During the first two years of the Great War, British Cathedrals became a microcosm of national opinion and thought. This is clearly exemplified in the daily musical administration. The First World War devastated the financial market and imposed a lot of pressure on the already strained cathedral finances, it caused a dearth in the back row and a lot of pressure on the Dean and Chapter of all three cathedrals in the case study to replace the adult members of the choir. The first two years of World War I generated an abundance of confusion. As the war continued, and as fear and doubt increasingly became more common, the cathedral's administration reflected this. Between the years of 1914 and 1916 the choice in music in the cathedrals in Britain was used to place God at the centre of the war machine, it was used in these two years as rally-cries and to comfort those whose loved ones were fighting for King and Country. The music was used to justify the war aim in the formative years and the use of hymnody to create a quasi-comradery between the congregations was exceptionally poignant and advantageous in creating an importance for the Cathedrals in a world that was slowly becoming disenchanted with organised religion.

## **Chapter Four: 1916 – 1918**

The longer the war drew on, the more tumultuous and unrelenting the changes became, and the more depressed and dissatisfied the people were. The governmental response to the war that was most definitely not over by Christmas resulted in a number of grand scale changes that would come to impact, in at least some way, every facet of British life. The Military Service Bill was introduced in January 1916 and offered three options for single men and childless widowers aged between 18 and 41. If the eligible men did not attest under Derby's system, they were automatically enlisted on 2 March 1916. Later that year, the bill was extended to married men, and by April 1918 the upper age limit was pushed to 50 years old. Blackouts were also introduced in certain towns and cities in the latter half of the war to protect against air raids. Obviously, London was a crucial city for protection, and whilst that had always been true, the likelihood of it being a target for destruction was becoming greater every year that went by. British Summer Time was also instituted in May 1916 to maximise working hours in the day, particularly in agriculture.

The Durham Diocesan Gazette report of 1917-18 stated that the number of students at Church training college dropped from 551 before the war to just 30 at the end of the war. This outstanding number was representative of the situation in the country at large. At all cathedrals, tablets were placed for men who fell. But what impact did all of these changes have on the cathedral life? And how did that permeate the musical life of the Cathedrals? Particularly in the latter years of the war, dissent, in its broadest terms, found a voice in Parliament among the members of the Independent Labour Party, in various left-wing journals, amongst scholars like George Bernard Shaw, Bertrand Russell and his Cambridge friends, as well as in the Bloomsbury Circle. This was the case throughout the war, but it became especially common post-1916. By this point bitterness and disenchantment with the entire notion of war and national pride began to loom over the troops and civilians alike. The supposed short war that the patriotic British people had stood behind slowly turned into a long, cold, and miserable conflict. With that in mind,

this chapter seeks to explore how the cathedral responded to the national feeling, through music, during the war. As the heroic note that had set the tone, especially prominent in the arts during the first two years, gave way to the unforgiving condemnation of the mass slaughter of millions, does the musical response of the Cathedral change? And if so how is that disappointment and heartache managed in a Christian manner?

#### Day-to-Day Musical Administration

Like the situation in the opening two years of the First World War, the changes that were made immediately regarding the men who sang back row continued. They were by this point exacerbated by the fact that the war had continued far longer than was anticipated, and the enthusiasm of the British men (and women) was dramatically waning. The introduction of the Military Service Bill impacted upon the Cathedral choirs, and the financial strain that was already in existence was aggravated by the continuation of the war. The fact that there was a significant shortage of men had implications for the services and musical choices throughout the entire war, but as will be shown, this became more pronounced the longer the war drew on.

Given the arrival of conscription and a continued diminution of male reserves appropriate for cathedral choirs, it was not surprising that there would be a few more logistical issues between 1916 and 1918. Predictably, they affected the same areas as they had done in the formative years. In July 1916, a committee was established at York Minster to consider the whole question of appointments of Vicars Choral.<sup>189</sup> Whilst this primarily administrative task of appointing successors seems unrelated to the war, the frequency of the replacements that were needed in wartime is undoubtedly what thrust Dean and Chapter into overhauling this administrative system at both Durham and York Minster. A committee was established at York Minster in July 1916 to consider the whole question of the

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<sup>189</sup> York Minster, *Chapter Minutes*, 5 July 1916, 185.

appointment of Vicars Choral. This may be entirely unrelated to the war, but it was no doubt exacerbated by the frequency of replacements.

By February 1916 the York Succentor was instructed to keep an attendance register for Vicars Choral and Assistants. This register was of course due to the disorder and instability of the fact that the singers were readily being drafted off to war and their replacements were on the most part temporary. On April 8<sup>th</sup> Mr. Reid (alto), was called up, joined by two masters of the choir school. Reid's deployment left only three permanent choir members to sing on Thursday, Friday and Saturday; one of the basses was only available at weekends from May, and likewise a tenor from June, leaving only three tenors on Monday and Tuesday; a further member of the bass section was then called up which left only three basses to attend on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. On June 3<sup>rd</sup> 1916, the service was sung by *boys only*, 'owing to the war'. Another tenor was called up in July.<sup>190</sup> This unyielding disturbance would undoubtedly limit the musical progress of the Cathedral. By the summer of 1917 it was reported that "occasional assistance" would be provided at the organ during the Summer holidays, recorded in the minutes as 'owing to the absence of younger players on military service.'<sup>191</sup>

The Dean of St Paul's reported on December 8th 1917 that they had received a letter from Coleridge Kennard of the Foreign Office. In this letter, it was requested that Mr. May (alto) and Mr. Rearton (tenor) be released to Stockholm as part of the Westminster Scarlett to sing in concert with a view to anti-German propaganda. This was approved, and deputies were arranged for both of them. During the boys' holidays that year the remaining men had to be spaced out over the whole week, with some very sparse choirs as a result, the nadir being reached on Friday 26 July 1918 when the choir consisted of four altos, one tenor (a deputy) and three basses, two of whom were deputies.

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<sup>190</sup> St Paul's Cathedral, *Chapter Minutes*, 9 April 1916: *Attendance Registers 1916 passim*.

<sup>191</sup> *ibid.*, July 28th 1917.

From 1916, more National Days of Intercession were included. In addition to the long-standing services like the commemoration of the commencement of war, there were services set aside in honour of the American forces joining the war, and respective celebrations of July 4th which were all in addition to yet more special services at individual cathedrals and other days which were declared as the war went on. On 11 June 1916 it is recorded that there was a *Te Deum* sung after the afternoon service in Thanksgiving for the recent victory at sea. Two days later, on 13<sup>th</sup> June 1916, the memorial service for Lord Kitchener was held, with the 14<sup>th</sup> of June being documented as another National Day of Intercession. New Year's Eve (31<sup>st</sup> December) became a nationally recognised Day of Intercession too.

By October 1916, the Dean and Chapter of St Paul's discontinued the Sunday evening service once more until further notice again due to lighting regulations imposed in London. The service was reinstated by September of 1917, as the minutes reflect that Evensong would be at 6pm instead of 7pm for the duration of the month. The special advent service had also been cancelled and they even took the decision to omit the annual Bach *Passion* service in the Easter of 1916. In his 1917 diary, the Dean also noted that loud noises as a result of dropping of bombs from enemy aircrafts were heard during Evensong, however 'the service went on as usual.'<sup>192</sup>

In terms of changes to the services at York Minster, it is interesting to see that specific services for men, women and children were held at various points during and after the war. E.g. the 'Men Only' service held on December 10<sup>th</sup> 1916; Service for women workers in the nave on 5<sup>th</sup> May 1918; Children's service for thanksgiving of peace August 20<sup>th</sup> 1919. In addition to variation in timings of services, the war also brought about cancellations of individual services either short-term, one-off cancellations or more long-term changes. The Sunday evening service at the Minster, which had been cancelled since mid-1915, was reinstated on Easter Sunday (April 23<sup>rd</sup> 1916) at 6pm and would be continued at a later time of 7pm from the first Sunday in June. It was decided on 29<sup>th</sup> April 1918 that the choral

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<sup>192</sup> St Paul's Cathedral, *Chapter Minutes*, Saturday 7 July 1917, 73.; *Dean's Diary* 1917.

service at Matins should be discontinued. This was recorded to be 'as a result of the new Education Act',<sup>193</sup> but was undoubtedly expedited by the war.

## Music

The deeper into the conflict the clearer the musical changes became and the more commemorative the tone became. Settings of music to the words of 'Call to remembrance' by Battishill and Farrant for example became more commonplace.<sup>194</sup> At the 262<sup>nd</sup> Festival of the Sons of Clergy<sup>195</sup> at St Paul's in May 1916, Arthur Sullivan's *In Memoriam Overture in C* was played before the service 'with special intention for those who have fallen in the war, many of whom are the Sons of Clergyman.'<sup>196</sup> Written in 1866, it was described at the time of its premiere as a work that 'expresses with wonderful force and clearness of intention the various phases of an all-absorbing, poignant sorrow, from the first overwhelming burst of passionate grief to the calm resignation which time and a higher teaching alone can bring',<sup>197</sup> which would prove to be particularly relevant to the loss of life resultant of the war.

A solemn Te Deum was sung after 4pm Evensong on December 10<sup>th</sup> 1917, 'in thanksgiving to Almighty God, for the surrender of Jerusalem to our armies.' Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> January 1918 saw a continuation in the vein of previous years as a day of National Intercession. In all cathedrals, the Royal Proclamation was read out on this day, in order to ensure that the country was empowered with clear-sightedness and strength necessary for victory as well as so reinforcing the value and necessity of the Church's role in this. October 12<sup>th</sup> 1918 saw a memorial service for the workers of Lloyds who had fallen in the war. On November 9<sup>th</sup> 1918 bells were to be rung formally before Evensong for an hour, and the service to be followed by a Te Deum.

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<sup>193</sup> The Education Act of 1918, often known as the Fisher Act raised school leaving age to 14, planned to expand tertiary education and included the provision of ancillary services.

<sup>194</sup> *Music lists*, York Minster 12th March; 22nd March 1917.

<sup>195</sup> The service is an annual service of thanksgiving and rededication in respect of the work of the Sons of the Clergy charity in helping clergy and their families in times of financial need.

<sup>196</sup> *Service Sheet*, 262nd Festival of the Sons of Clergy, St Paul's Cathedral.

<sup>197</sup> Norwich Music Festival", *The Observer*, 4 November 1866, 6.

The frequent use of the *Te Deum* during the war is significant because of the message that it promotes: a message of promise and an acknowledgement of God's power, mercy and glory in a time which was otherwise overwhelmed with uncertainty, fear and doubt. It also helped to affirm that Christianity was at the centre of Britain's response to the war with words including 'Everlasting Father, all the earth doth worship Thee' and 'Holy Church throughout the world doth acknowledge Thee: The Father of infinite Majesty.' Its regularity attests that the people who were listening to it connected with its message.

Whilst there do not appear to be any glaringly obvious changes of tone or pace in the immediate aftermath of the war, upon the signing of the Armistice, the commemorative tone and the characteristics of reconciliation and peace are more prominent. On Monday 11 November 1918, the Armistice was signed and it is recorded that the services at 1.15pm and 4pm 'assumed a special character of Thanksgiving, the *Te Deum* being sung at the latter.'<sup>198</sup> The King and Queen attended a special thanksgiving service the next day. However, in September of the following year, the Dean and Chapter decided that no more war memorial services should be held in the Cathedral 'save under special circumstances'.<sup>199</sup> Perhaps the most obvious change though, is that the tone in the religious sphere turned from one which assured God's mercy and God's power to a distinct sense of praise from the people. An albeit subtle change reflects the idea that the people needed something to get behind. The bitter disillusionment was juxtaposed with a need to stand behind something which was greater than them. The memorial service of the officers, warrant officers and men of the six regiments of the Yorkshire Brigade of Guards held on 5<sup>th</sup> February 1919 ended with Stainer's *Sevenfold Amen*. Stanford's B flat service was sung on Christmas Day in 1919, undoubtedly with more gusto than during the war.

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<sup>198</sup> St Paul's Cathedral, *Chapter Minutes*, Monday 11 November 1918.

<sup>199</sup> *ibid.* Saturday September 20th 1919.

When it came to music, the question of what constituted Britishness and ascertaining the difference between nationalism and patriotism was hard to resolve. Partially the distinction was exacerbated by the uncomfortable truth that British classical music was largely Germanic. For decades, the leading talents had travelled to Germany to study. The influence of Mendelssohn – a favourite composer of Queen Victoria – was particularly potent, as was shown by the enduring popularity of that apparently most ‘British’ of forms, the oratorio. This is why the outbreak of war caused such anguished soul-searching amongst the leading figures of British musical culture. The nationalist patriotism that was necessary to survive a world war was unfortunately bound up in the nationalism of the very country it was at war with. Especially relevant for British composers, Sir Hubert Parry said of his relationship with Germany,

I owed too much to their music and their philosophers and authors of former times to believe it possible that the nation at large could be imbued with the teaching of a few advocates of mere brutal violence and material aggression. We know now that it is the hideous militarism of the Prussians that has poisoned the wells of the spirit throughout Germany.<sup>200</sup>

But despite the long-standing, otherwise amicable relationship, the situation regrettably demanded a rejection of all things German. For example, Ernest Newman, critic and biographer of renowned German composer Richard Wagner, had at one time been an ardent admirer of German music, but since changed his credence, declaring: ‘German music as a whole has settled into a complacent tilling of an almost exhausted field.’<sup>201</sup> Yet the more prevalent issue at this point was, as has been pointed out earlier, there was a desperate need for a music that was ‘specifically British’ and could replace the void that was to be left in the absence of the influence of Germany. How did the Cathedral deal with the patriotism that was sweeping the country? How did the musical choices reflect the patriotism? How did they reflect the relationship with allies and the relationship with Germany? Was it clear cut? How does cathedral music reflect the national situation?

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<sup>200</sup> Parry, C.H.H. *College Addresses Delivered to Pupils of the Royal College of Music* (London: Macmillian and Company, 1920), 222.

<sup>201</sup> Newman, E. ‘The War and the Future of Music’, *The Musical Times* 55, 1 September 1914, 571.

The notion that using music that was well-known and well-liked during times of trouble was no clearer seen than in the use of hymnody. As important as its role had been in the opening years, during the final two years of the war its poignancy was especially felt in memorial services. The use of hymnody at this time helped to clarify the communal thoughts of the people, and although the hymns were already popular in the pre-war years, it was how this popularity was used during the war that was so interesting.

The services in memory of the Boy Scouts (12 April 1919) and Cadet Corps (21 April 1919) respectively give an insight into the use of hymnody in the post-war mourning process. Hymn 165 (A&M), 'O God our help in ages past', 184 'Rock of ages, cleft for me', 437 'For all the saints who from their labours rest' and 499 'On the resurrection morning' firmly place God at the centre of public grief. 'O God our help in ages past' was sung at the service to celebrate the entry of the United States of America into the Great War on Friday 20 April 1917 at 11.30am. On this particular occasion, it was sung alongside the American and British National Anthems. The National Anthem was also sung after Evensong at St Paul's on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1916 and the first verse sung alongside a *Te Deum* after the afternoon service in Thanksgiving for the recent victory at sea on 11<sup>th</sup> June 1916. It became especially poignant in combination with the Last Post and Handel's 'Dead March' from *Saul*, heard for example at the Cadet Corps Memorial above. The Last Post of course is an abiding tradition in memory of the men who fell during the war. The use of National Anthems in the Cathedrals asserted the importance of the relationship between church and state. It affirmed the church's role in patriotism and made sure that war, nationalism and religion were innately mingled. The National Anthem also featured heavily in memorial services such as the memorial for nurses on April 10<sup>th</sup> 1918 at St Paul's. At York Minster, there was a service of thanksgiving for the American Alliance 4 July 1918 which included 'Through the night of doubt and sorrow' and 'Mine eyes have seen the glory' as well as Gray's setting of the words by Christina Rossetti, 'What are these that glow from afar?'

In terms of music used during the holidays, Bach's *St Matthew Passion* had been performed on the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent in 1915 at York Minster (the larger work mentioned in the *Musical Times* excerpt which featured earlier) and again on Palm

Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> April 1916. The 'Hallelujah Chorus' was the music of choice on Easter Sunday that year. Handel's *Messiah* was performed on the 19<sup>th</sup> December 1915 (fourth Sunday in Advent) and 17<sup>th</sup> December 1917. During the war, Handel's 'Hallelujah Chorus' was often coupled with Mozart's *Jesu, word of God incarnate* on Christmas Day, with services by Stanford, Harwood and Bairstow also being featured. Allegri's *Miserere* was sung in part every Friday during Lent throughout the war period. The music lists at Durham and St Paul's record generally similar trends.

The middle years of the war saw a distinct investment in Russian music, as well as other European music predominantly from the Renaissance. In all three cathedrals compositions by Dvořák and Tchaikovsky were dominant. Dvořák's setting of 'Come, Thou fount of every blessing' and 'At thy feet in adoration' joined Tchaikovsky's 'Hymn to the Trinity'. This was of course a tip of the hat to other trends in the English musical scene of replacing German works with Russian and Eastern European masterpieces. Brahms, particularly his setting of 'Blessed are they that mourn', and Mendelssohn, Mozart and Bach were also prominent. At all three cathedrals, the inclusion of composers with 'German-sounding' names became less frequent. The 1915 to 1925 music lists at all three cathedrals, particularly St Paul's, reflect the reluctant tossing aside of newer German composers who became increasingly less commonplace as the war endured. It however did seem to be well established in the cathedrals that the German masters could not be so easily dismissed or abandoned because of the troubles. English composers like Frederic Löhr (of German descent but born in Norwich) were still included alongside German composers such as Friedrich Himmel and Louis Spohr. The fact that these are uncontroversial composers was probably intentional, although of course the bigger German giants of Church music were also kept in the repertoire where possible.

The respective sitting Directors of Music would have their own works performed in their cathedrals. Dr. Edward Bairstow made haste on this as Master of Music at York Minster and Charles Macpherson, having taken up the role of organist at St Paul's Cathedral on March 11th 1916 owing to the death of George Martin on 26th

February 1916; he also used the choir at St Paul's as a sounding board for his music. A lot of Macpherson's music was therefore featured from the latter half of the war. What is more, one of the rare commissions at St Paul's was actually the music of Dr. Bairstow: 'Lord Thou hast been our refuge', written for the Sons of Clergy conference in 1917. It was also not uncommon, especially at St Paul's, for music by previous directors of music to be sung. Music by T.T. Noble (his setting in B minor) and John Stainer (settings in E and some of his most well-known anthems) were sung at their former places of work (York and St Paul's respectively), and undoubtedly all around the country as they are today. From an overview of the music at all three cathedrals, it is clear that the most common language for music to be sung in was English. The most typical exception to this was music sung in Latin, for example Palestrina's *Adoramus te, Christe*.

When combined with the inexorable problems of the war, and the change in musical leadership at St Paul's from George Martin to Charles Macpherson in 1916, it is unsurprising that the changes in music and liturgy were quite slow during the first half of the new century. Parry's music was performed less frequently than Stanford's, although not by much. The music chosen for Parry's funeral in 1918, just weeks before the signing of the Armistice, also provides an interesting insight into the musical life at St Paul's. Aside from the perhaps obvious choice of music written by the composer himself, the service also included music by Stanford in addition to the hymn 'Brief life here is our portion'. Whilst Stanford and Parry dominated the Cathedral output before and during the war years there was not a significant amount of music by Elgar. Elgar's music would however come into its own in the post-war years. His 1911 setting of Psalm 5:23, 'O hearken thou', Op. 64 originally written for the Coronation of King George V and Queen Mary was sung on the 27<sup>th</sup> May 1917 (Whitsun Day) and then became moderately frequent in the repertoire thereafter.

The reaction in the cathedrals to the changing musical landscape which arose during the war was perplexing and confusing. It seemed to stand by its traditions and stand firm to its musical history. The new music being composed also participated in this musical heritage. Parry's key composition *Jerusalem* is very

much associated with patriotic fervour, pride, and passion. In March 1916, poet Robert Bridges requested that Parry set the words to music for the patriotic 'Fight for Right' campaign. The resulting anthem is commonly associated with the sounds of the Last Night of The Proms, but its First World War origins are less well known or acknowledged.<sup>202</sup> The words of Blake which Bridges had sent Parry were from the preface to an Epic, "Prophetic Books" written in the early nineteenth century, and tell how Jesus as a child had been brought to England's green and pleasant land, expressing a mystical desire to see Jerusalem 'builded here'. Lumsden's affirmation that 'no other country possesses so fine and unbroken a choral tradition as England'<sup>203</sup> again comes to mind.

Parry's tune quickly acquired the somewhat obvious title 'Jerusalem'. It is apparent upon hearing the work that he intended it for communal singing to bolster the morale of the population two years into the war. *Jerusalem* would achieve that goal quite effortlessly. Having been promptly printed, it was sung at the Fight for Right meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> March at Mansion House in London and was an instant triumph. So much so, it was sung again on 23 March at another Fight for Right meeting at Westminster Cathedral Hall and then again on 28<sup>th</sup> March at Queen's Hall.<sup>204</sup> Suffice to say, Parry's music was exactly what was needed: it was 'at once uplifting and patriotic without being vulgar or jingoistic.'<sup>205</sup> Married to Blake's text it conveyed a fervent love of country with a deep, if fairly unspecific religious sentiment. It was particularly suited to being sung in unison by large congregations, accompanied by a powerful organ. In the Cathedral setting, 'Jerusalem' was sung as a hymn and roused just as much patriotic fervour as it did in other musical settings, but its religious sentiment was allowed to come to the forefront.

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<sup>202</sup> Dibble, J. 'War, impression, sound, and memory: British music and the First World War', *German Historical Institute London Bulletin.*, 37 (1). 2015, 43-56, 46.

<sup>203</sup> Lumsden, D. *The Treasury of English Church Music Volume 5 1900-1965* eds by Knight and Reed (London: Blandford Press, 1965), v.

<sup>204</sup> See 'Fight for Right'. Sir H. Parry's Music for the Movement' *The Times*, 29 March 1916.

<sup>205</sup> Thacker, *British Culture and the First World War*, 143.

What would become the fourth motet in Parry's *Songs of Farewell* - 'There is an old belief' - is another magnificent example of this deep yearning to escape from a world that was destroying itself by means of nationalistic obsessions. This is particularly poignant as it was especially during the composition of the final two motets that Parry's health began to deteriorate dramatically. Dibble therefore describes Parry's writing as an acknowledgement of this 'magnificent codicil' as 'his spiritually unorthodox farewell to a world in turmoil and distress.'<sup>206</sup> Their blatant religious sentiments make them an obvious choice for the Cathedral setting, particularly in such a tumultuous religious landscape.

By June 1917 the positive messages including the distinctive Christian promulgation of the church as a metaphoric and literal refuge was evident. In the week beginning Monday 18<sup>th</sup> June the following were sung: Wesley's 'Praise the Lord', Child's setting of 'Praise the Lord, O my soul', Walmisley's 'O give thanks unto the Lord' and 'O Saviour of the world' by Goss. The encouraging Christian messages about death not being final and the glory of the resurrection were also commonplace and most welcomed during the war. Part VI of Brahms' Requiem, 'Here on earth we have no continuing city' and Bach's 'Death, I do not fear thee' were amongst the pieces chosen to broadcast these messages and beliefs for families and loved ones of soldiers and others whose lives were lost in war.

In terms of other characteristically 'English' music produced in the war years, Elgar's choral trilogy, *The Spirit of England* (1917) is another obvious choice. In this he sets three poems from 'The Winnowing Fan' by Laurence Binyon, one of which includes the famous lines heard on Remembrance Sunday to this day: 'They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old...'. This setting is probably his best-known work of the period due largely to the fact that it was herein that Elgar best gauged the national mood three years in. Moreover, the poems he chose here typify popular early-war poetry: they juxtapose the war in terms of 'the grandeur of England's fate': its heritage, and the righteousness of the cause, with natural images of the

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<sup>206</sup> Dibble, *Hubert H. Parry: His Life and Music*, 479.

countryside, and the beauty of England and everything the soldiers were fighting for. It was due to this innate understanding of the situation that Novello and others promoted *The Spirit of England* as 'the grand response to the war by Great Britain's greatest living composer.'<sup>207</sup> In terms of its music this was no clearer seen in the years of 1916-1918, when the rest of Britain's cultural exports were being crushed under extreme pressure, and pulled to extremes, the choirs of Britain's cathedrals continued to sing music that had been sung for generations. It was *in gratis* to this fine tradition that the cathedral could stand firm in its choices, and defend its musical tradition throughout the war. These old works had of course paved the way to the new works mentioned above. Both were of equal importance throughout the war, although it is common now to entirely undermine the contribution and place of the older compositions in the war effort.

When the war ended on November 11<sup>th</sup> 1918, the musical administration of cathedrals in Britain was not as it had been in 1914. The adult members of the choir had been in constant flux throughout the four years, the financial situation of the cathedrals left much to be desired, and the service schedules were unrecognisable from 1914, although much of the traditional cathedral service music seemed to be largely unchanged on a day-to-day basis. There were clear changes in mood and tone, including issues pertaining to the nationality of the composer and music that was poignant given the international circumstances. Hymnody was an important collective aspect of worship in the Cathedrals, and through it the changing opinions and moods can be tracked. Music was also particularly important throughout the war particularly due to the role that it played in commemoration and remembrance at funeral and memorial services in addition to its everyday role.

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<sup>207</sup> See McGuire, 'Functional music: imperialism, the Great war and Elgar as popular composer' in *The Cambridge Companion to Elgar* eds. D.M. Grimley & J. Rushton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 220.

**Part Three:**  
**After the Great War**

## **Chapter Five: The Aftermath**

Although the Armistice was signed in November 1918, the remorseless chaos that had been brought about during the war years lingered on. The Church of England, and the Cathedrals in particular, faced an uphill battle. At the three cathedrals which have been included in this study, the administrative issues that had been cultivated during the war years remained long after 1918. Some would take decades to resolve. Looking at the impact of the First World War on English Cathedrals, or indeed any other facet of cultural life, must therefore involve an examination of the years which followed, in addition to the war years themselves.

The post-war years are commonly associated with the decline of Christian Britain. For example, the hardship of the 1920s was reflected in a report that under 3 per cent of young men regularly attended church. Whilst this need not imply a causal relationship, it is very important that the decline of Christian Britain and the statistic quoted above be recognised as not entirely unconnected. Yet, Cathedrals did appear to concurrently maintain their central place in commemoration and help the perception that the soldiers who fought and died in the Great War sacrificed themselves, like Jesus, for a cause which was greater for themselves. The immediate post-war years also saw the Lambeth Appeal for Christian Unity (1920). This set out the basis on which Anglican churches would move towards visible union with churches of other traditions. Unity in the post-war years of course was vital to the Church's message. This all leads Goebel to indicate that the war left behind 'a paradoxical legacy of religious awakening and ecclesiastical decline.'<sup>208</sup>

The plethora of emotions felt during the war years also remained just as confused in the aftermath. The change of emotions which was tracked during the four years coalesced musically, but undoubtedly the tone which was most prevalent during the war was one which reflected a strange mix of destitution and sorrow with pride and glory. The former was significantly more prevalent as the war went on and in its

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<sup>208</sup> Goebel, *The Great War and Medieval Memory*, 232.

aftermath. After four long years, the soul had been sucked from the British institutions and the British people were left disheartened and disenchanted with organised religion, with the government and with anything they could associate with the war effort.

Just as it forever altered the perception of what war was, it brought winds of change to the Church Music Society as to many other similar organisations. The Society had instigated a series of shorter papers in 1917 which were more practical and placed greater emphasis on the people's part in church music than any previous papers from the society had done.<sup>209</sup> Following the end of the war the occasional papers that they published took an alarmed and defensive attitude to perceived threats to the future of Cathedral music, not least given its newfound stability in its *raison d'être*. Of particular relevance are *The Choral Foundations of the Church of England* (1924), *The Music of the Holy Communion* (1933; and subsequently re-issued in a revised version in 1946), *The Present State of Cathedral Music* (1934), *Music in the New Cathedrals* (1937), *Forty Years of Cathedral Music* (1940), and *Sixty Years of Cathedral Music* (1958/1960).<sup>210</sup> Despite their thwarting defensiveness they help to ensure that the role of Cathedral music was acknowledged as vital to the musical war effort in Britain. All of these papers then are a reflection of the mood which the Church and the people who were emotionally invested in its success were submersed in. Retrospectively they vowed that Cathedral music was crucial throughout the war, and was relevant in its aftermath.

### Day-to-day Musical Administration

Aside from any issues pertaining to the fabric of the cathedrals from bombing, for example at St Paul's, where the work on the choir dome was not complete until 1929, the same issues that had come to light during the war years were still a great

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<sup>209</sup> Temperley, N. *The Music of the English Parish Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 326.

<sup>210</sup> All published in London by SPCK.

cause for concern in the aftermath. It is important to note too that much like the wider response to the post-war years, the move from wartime to post-war was not easy or smooth, and in many regards, it took a very long time to move beyond the war. The initial tone may have been one of jubilation and much-welcomed relief, but the destitution and desolation of the war was the shadow that hung over the people of Britain. This is, as expected, reflected in the use of music in cathedrals in the post-war years, especially in services of remembrance and commemoration.

In the post-war years, the status of the choirs at St Paul's, Durham, and York was in what can surely be described as utter disarray. All the issues that had affected choral performance during the war: enlistment and death, appointment and maintenance of the back row, and financial problems were still prevalent and it seemed that these problems were all tortuously interwoven.

The issues surrounding retaining men in the choirs highlight the financial pressures felt in the Cathedrals resultant of the wars. Dr. Bairstow, Master of Music at York Minster reported in early November 1919 that they were struggling to retain men in the choir due to issues owing the higher salaries being offered elsewhere. It was thus agreed to uniformly raise their annual salaries to £120 from the 15<sup>th</sup> of November.<sup>211</sup> Although it was not clearly stated whether this was enough to retain the men, one of the tenor Songmen at the Minster left without notice in April 1920. Chapter reported that his 'service had been unsatisfactory and it was not desired to retain him' in any case.<sup>212</sup> The situation was similar at Durham Cathedral, where the salaries of the Lay clerks was one of the most frequent issues in the chapter minutes in Durham, coming up time and time again, including an entry in October 1920 which noted that the men were to be given a £5 bonus at Christmas (as per their request).

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<sup>211</sup> *ibid.*, *Chapter Minutes 1919-1929*, 1.

<sup>212</sup> York Minster, *Chapter Minutes*, April 1920, 12.

It appears that the situation pertaining to the retention of musical men in Durham Cathedral and York Minster was an inconvenience but not an uncontrollable administrative and financial burden. The picture at St Paul's is more confused and more volatile. At the London Cathedral, the men's salaries had not kept pace with wartime inflation either. Keene reports that the non-freeholders were kept on after retiring age, 'this presumably being easier than trying to replace them.'<sup>213</sup> It took the Dean and Chapter until April 1920 to agree to review the salaries of the choir. That it took some time for things to settle down is reflected in St Paul's where, in February 1919 the choir was not anywhere near a state of completeness.<sup>214</sup> In fact, the back row at St Paul's did not return to normal until the mid-twenties, by which time, Mr. Kenningham, one of the two surviving members of the 1873 choir at St Paul's had also gone into retirement. He retained his £150 per annum Vicars Choral stipend as his pension.

In addition, one of the St Paul's back-row had been given three months' notice in May 1919 and another resigned in August 1919 as he was still serving as a member of the Royal Air Force. Deputies were eventually provided. Two more men left the choir in 1923, and one of the replacements, Purvis, sang in the choir until the mid-1950s. George Mountford Scott was in the replacement line-up and eventually served for 30 years.<sup>215</sup> May and Marriott even remained as deputies for six months after they were due to retire. Storey surmises that the willingness to retain men after pension age was likely due to the fact that 'the stipend offered was no longer so attractive to newcomers after the wartime depreciation in the value of money, which had affected the cathedral's financial situation very seriously'.<sup>216</sup> Thomas Ripon was even aware of this in 1922 when he wrote, 'the financial difficulties of the present time have affected many interests in the country: it is clear from various indications that the music in our Cathedrals has received a serious blow owing to this cause.'<sup>217</sup>

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<sup>213</sup> Keene et al., *St. Paul's: The Cathedral Church of London 604-2004*, 408.

<sup>214</sup> St Paul's Cathedral, *Attendance Registers*, 1916-19.

<sup>215</sup> 30 August, 11 October 1919, 10 January 1920.

<sup>216</sup> Storey, 83.

<sup>217</sup> Ripon, 'Cathedral Music', 162-166.

Regarding the status of choristers, St Paul's boys reportedly suffered in the post-war years as a result of the deficient national diet triggered by the war. They were resultantly excused between 29<sup>th</sup> February and 5<sup>th</sup> March 1920, and outbreaks of diphtheria caused extended closures of the Choir School in 1921.<sup>218</sup> The constant overhaul of the choir which outlasted the war must have been exasperating and exhausting for all members of the musical community at St Paul's. Whether or not this extended to the boys at Durham and York Minster is undocumented. What is clear, though, is that there was a great pressure on the boys at the Minster and Durham to maintain services.

Thomas Ripon, writing in 1922, was saddened by the fact that 'many Cathedrals and other Churches in which hitherto Morning and Evening Prayer had been sung daily from time immemorial have reduced their daily musical services to one.'<sup>219</sup> This was of course due in part to the above dearth of men resultant of the strain of war years, and the respective lack of ease in which British Cathedrals took to reverting to or maintaining the pre-war standards of old. With the use of women in cathedrals being an idea that would never have been countenanced in Cathedrals in the early decades of the twentieth century, the all-male choirs struggled to return to the glory days. According to the chapter minutes 'all special services in the morning, including choral Eucharist on Saints' days were suspended'.<sup>220</sup> Although sung morning services were restored in 1930, it was often difficult to fill the choir as the men had found things to fill their time and their pockets instead.

Combining this with the inexorable problems of the war, and the change in musical leadership from George Martin to Charles Macpherson in 1916, it is unsurprising that the changes in music and liturgy at St Paul's were quite slow during the first half of the new century. Slowly, small changes were implemented. For example, at the end of November 1919, St Paul's Dean and Chapter agreed to revive the Sunday

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<sup>218</sup> *Chapter Minutes*, 2 July & 24 September 1921.

<sup>219</sup> Ripon, 'Cathedral Music', 162.

<sup>220</sup> St Pauls Cathedral, *Chapter Minutes*, 7 March 1922.

evening choir annual dinner, which had been suspended during the war. At St Paul's the daily morning choral services were not restored in full until 1930. This was not without some difficulty as the men had meanwhile found other uses for their time, and the BBC was beginning to be a fruitful source of casual employment.<sup>221</sup> Indeed, the services were being whittled down in most other cathedrals.

Whilst the pre-war pattern of the full weekday services was resumed at St Paul's, it was not until 1924 that the anthem on Thursday mornings was no longer sung by only boys at St. Paul's (although the men were present at the services). The fact that this wartime tradition lingered until the mid-twenties was probably due to the fact that there was a strong boys-only repertoire which had been built up during the war. It could also be a result of the ideal of the beauty of the boys singing without men.

In January of 1920 Dean and Chapter at Durham agreed that Choral Evensong would continue every day, except during the 27 days of Summer holidays. They decided that there would be no Lay clerk absences from Evensong except during the summer holidays, and any absences would correspond with a deduction from said holidays.<sup>222</sup> Evensong continued at 3pm in 1921 and choirboys were 'henceforth excused' from Thursday services in the latter half of the year.<sup>223</sup> Choral Matins services, however, did not return to their full former glory. Having been cancelled throughout the war they returned initially on 3 days. In 1920, the service was only sung on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday mornings; not long after that Matins was only to be sung on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Holy Days.

At York Minster, the beginning of modern developments in worship came with the appointment of William Foxley Norris in 1917. It was not until 1926 however that a Rota of old choristers had been drawn up. This enabled a provision of servers for

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<sup>221</sup> Keene et al., *St Paul's*, 408.

<sup>222</sup> Durham Cathedral, *Chapter Minutes*, January 17 1920.

<sup>223</sup> *ibid.*, 15 October 1921.

every celebration and two for the Sunday Eucharist; the availability of servers for holy day Eucharist on weekdays had also been ensured.<sup>224</sup>

The clearest impact of the war in post-war cathedral services was indeed the reminders that came in the form of Memorial and Commemorative services. In the post-war years, they were just as prevalent as they were throughout; however, it was not too long before the Cathedral chapters decided to stop holding these services, or at least not as frequently. For example, at St Paul's there was a decision to not hold anymore 'save under special circumstances'.<sup>225</sup>

### Music

Writing in 1998, Storey attested that St Paul's cathedral had survived a world war with its musical programme substantially intact, even if the heart seemed to have gone out of parts of the daily routine.<sup>226</sup> This was equally true of the other two cathedrals in this study. In the post-war years, the more colourful 'High-Victorian' music had been removed from the repertoire but not been replaced in equal quantity, and the daily service music was appearing both repetitive and perfunctory. With Foxell being appointed Precentor at St Paul's in the mid-twenties, the musical changes at St Paul's became more *à la mode*. Composers that had formed the backbone of the musical service at the cathedral throughout the war especially, such as Gounod, Sullivan, and Spohr, were now largely eradicated. They were to be replaced by selections from Octavo's 'Tudor Church Music' although this seems to be in contradiction to Fellowes' reference to 'the mid-Victorian taste, which survived for some years after the revival had set in elsewhere.'<sup>227</sup> John Ireland's Communion Service in C and his Evening Service in F were being used prominently by the mid-1920s.

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<sup>224</sup> York Minster Record Book (Minster Vestry), footnote 7.

<sup>225</sup> St Paul's Cathedral, *Chapter Minutes*, Saturday September 20th 1919.

<sup>226</sup> Storey, 86.

<sup>227</sup> Fellowes op.cit., 236.

The use of hymnody changed little in the immediate aftermath of the war. The service of thanksgiving for victory at York Minster on the 17<sup>th</sup> November 1918 saw some of the commonplace hymns of the war combined with new, uplifting hymns. These emphasised the success of the allied forces as well as the love and power of God and the Christian church. Stanford's *Te Deum* in C, well-known as a truly celebratory piece of music, was also sung.

Hymn No. A&M	Name
166	All people that on earth do dwell
304	Crown him with many crowns
165	O God our help in ages past
298	Praise, my soul, the King of heaven
215	The Church's one foundation

**Table 5 – Hymns at the Thanksgiving for victory service at York Minster**

Accordingly, public grief appeared to be juxtaposed with the equally relevant and conspicuously salient chord of victory in the years immediately following the Great War. This attitude of victory was prevalent in the hymnody in all three Cathedrals. For example, at Durham Cathedral the Service of Thanksgiving to Almighty God on July 6<sup>th</sup> 1919, the hymns 'Praise my soul, the king of heaven' (298) and 165 'O God, our help in ages past' were sung alongside hymn 548 'Let all the world in every corner sing'. The National Anthem also took on a different sort of patriotism than it had done at any point in the war years in these kinds of services. The analogous service of 'Praise and Thanksgiving on the Restoration of Peace' on 16<sup>th</sup> July 1919 at St Paul's featured the same wartime favourites, this time alongside the triumphant setting of Psalm 47:1, 'O clap your hands' by Gibbons and Oakeley's *Te Deum Laudamus*.

Rogal, writing about the words that Housman set to music in 1918 'how shall we love Thee, holy, hidden Being, / If we love not the world which thou hast made?'

says, 'no hymn tune written could dull the sharpness of that direct inquiry; no organ or choir could deter its passage from the printed page into the collective conscience of even the most insensitive congregation.'<sup>228</sup> The reality of his statement for the congregations in the years following the war was that anger and despair at God, and at the Christian Church, was displaced anger for those who they had lost in the war. The role of hymnody then was to pose questions to their God and to the Church in hope for an answer or for comfort in knowing that they might never know the answer.

Hawn's notion that when a congregation sings a hymn, each person may have a unique experience, especially if the hymn is one of intrinsic artistic quality, theological integrity and liturgical appropriateness<sup>229</sup> is an interesting presentation of post-war earnestness associated with hymnody. Fulfilling all three of these categories, hymnody in the British Cathedrals took on its full usefulness in services such as the memorial services for the Boy Scouts which was held on the 12 April 1919 and Cadet Corps (21 April 1919). As the process of worship became increasingly reflective of the tragedy and loss throughout the latter years of the war and into the post-war years, the poignancy and symbolic nature of both the music and words of the hymnody became more moving. The post-war mourning process is no clearer seen through this use of hymns such as 'O God our help in ages past', 'Rock of ages, cleft for me', 'For all the saints who from their labours rest' and 'On the resurrection morning'. Every one of these hymns firmly place God at the centre of public grief and reparation, allowing the people to place their grief in a relatable communal sphere. Not just this, but one which allowed connection between the ruinous past and a hope for the future.

Hymnody in the post-war years was not there to distract from the realities of what had happened or to sweeten the extreme blows of war, and certainly not to erase it from memory. Instead it seemed to provide a way for people to explore the whole

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<sup>228</sup> Rogal, *A General Introduction to Hymnody and Congregational Song*, 147.

<sup>229</sup> Hawn, C.M. *Church Music: Where Music, Language and Theology meet*, National Association of Schools of Music, Proceedings 1997, 151-159, 153.

range of emotions and questions about the war and loss of millions of lives that they were grappling with. Rogal also makes mention of the hymns composed after the war, in the inter-war years (obviously, at that time the writers did not know another war was on its way), and recognises that the hymnody of the 1920s and 30s modeled 'the artificial calm that hung over the Western world'.<sup>230</sup>

Stanford's post-war funeral march and oration including a setting of J. Darling's poem 'At the Abbey Gate' is also reflective of the post-war musical response. It is also reflective of the appetite in the post-war musical market for the choral and church works of Stanford (and Parry). The words for 'At the Abbey Gate' were first published in *The Times* on 26 October 1920 as a memorial to the Unknown Warrior. Stanford set these words for baritone solo (or male chorus), chorus and orchestra. The work, a substantial slow march in the form of a choral scena, attempts in orchestral terms to portray the cortège to the Abbey, the firing of the guns, the troupes of silent people processing by the tomb. The central vocal passage enacts a dialogue between the Unknown Warrior and those left to grieve, embodying what Dibble calls 'a cathartic process of collective mourning which Britain had not experience hitherto.'<sup>231</sup> Rodmell supposes that it was in 'At the Abbey Gate' that Stanford came nearest to 'an appropriate summation of the war.'<sup>232</sup> Yet, whilst the work evokes the 'thorough spirit of patriotism in both words and music,' it is almost entirely lacking in jingoism. A review of 'At the Abbey Gate' in *The Times* is careful to point out the difficulty, so soon after the war, of tackling themes connected with the conflict, recommending instead a detached view:

By such detachment one is able to appreciate [Stanford's] reticence and admire the certain nobility of design and workmanship which has given a due impressiveness to his setting. But the very depth of our sensitiveness makes us exacting in respect of such associative expression, and we could not feel that the music had enough emotion behind it to do full justice to the touching little poem.<sup>233</sup>

Nevertheless, as the awful human cost of the war became evident, the elegiac note

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<sup>230</sup> Rogal, 149.

<sup>231</sup> Dibble, 'War, Impression, Sound, and Memory', 48.

<sup>232</sup> Rodmell, *Charles Villiers Stanford*, 319.

<sup>233</sup> *The Times*, March 1921, 8.

became more insistent. It can be heard in works like Ivor Gurney's 'War Elegy' (1920). Kate Kennedy's research on the younger composers who fought on the fields of France emphasises, as a result, the dichotomy between the older generation and the younger generation who were of enlistment age. Indeed, music such as Elgar's 1917 *The Spirit of England* seems in many ways to anticipate the more ecumenical and internationalist outlook that emerged among Anglicans in the years after the war and could even be seen as paving the way to John Foulds' *World Requiem* (1919-21), argues Cowgill. The dedication that Foulds inscribes in his *World Requiem*, to 'the memory of the Dead - a message of consolation to the bereaved of all countries'<sup>234</sup> speaks to the tone and manner in which a lot of new works were being composed.

It is important that the young composers that Cowgill studies are part of First World War musical studies, but this should not be at the expense of the older generation of composers. This should also not result in the same older generation being dismissed from inclusion in the 'war composer' title. When considering the impact of the First World War on English Cathedrals, the composition style and techniques that were being employed at the time play a considerable role. It is notable, for example, that many of Elgar's obituaries remarked on the post-war reaction with a clear sense of hindsight; as this quote from *The Musical Times* put it: 'inevitably the music that was so triumphant an expression of the spirit of the Edwardian Era lost much of its appeal in the years of disillusionment.'<sup>235</sup> As a result, by the end of the First World War, conception of the past had consolidated around the perception of an unreserved English Musical Renaissance in the present. This perception is relevant to the view that both the composers of Cathedral musical and the general church-going population had of music at the time. The impact that the war had particularly on the new composers would manifest itself in their output. Of course, whilst the seeming disenchantment with the old way of doing things was more pronounced outside of the cathedral, it would be irresponsible to suggest that its

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<sup>234</sup> Cowgill, 'Elgar's War Requiem.', 372.

<sup>235</sup> H. G., and W. McN. 'Edward Elgar June 2, 1857 - February 23, 1934.' *The Musical Times* 75, no. 1094 (1934): 305-13, 312.

effect was not felt within the walls of the Mother Churches.

The years that followed the Armistice in 1918 showed that the impact of a World War would touch every aspect of human life. With music at the heart of organised religion in Britain, it is unsurprising that the aftermath of World War I was felt in the day-to-day musical happenings of the cathedrals. The long-lasting administrative issues pertaining to the retention of men and boys in the choirs, the lack of women and girls, financial problems, and service schedule changes reflected the tragedy and loss of the war, and the situation which the country was left in. They also represented the state of change and flux that was taking place in the English musical sphere as a whole in the early twentieth century. Although it could be argued that the repercussions of the First World War on the life of the cathedrals, in hindsight, were not irreparable, the wider issues that were reflected in the musical life and in the congregational practice would serve to highlight the place that the British people and institutions saw themselves in at the time. This seemed to be a place of utter despair with no light at the end of the tunnel. Their position also foreshadowed the decline of Christianity throughout the century to come.

## **Chapter Six: Final Thoughts**

James Fox notes that World War I was responsible for the creation of a cocktail of social, political, and financial problems which placed the cultural sphere under intense pressure from the war's inception.<sup>236</sup> The bitter and unresolved grievances that the First World War aroused would indisputably cast a long and impending shadow over inter-war Europe. Outside of politics, this was perhaps no clearer seen in the arts, and music in particular. The war unquestionably inflamed British cultural insularity which often led to attacks on German art, music, and literature. Upon the outbreak of World War One, British music was in a state of subdued replication of European music, on the cusp of a revelation but decidedly dependent on Germanic influences nonetheless. All the British composers discussed in this study were raised on a German diet, and born into a musical world bedded upon Brahmsian organicism in which the intellectual argument of the musical notes brought a sense of unity to the work's content. It was a principle to which Parry and Stanford cleaved and which they fervently promulgated. They exhorted their students (the new generation of English composers) to consider intellect rather than colour as the highest goal. Their expressions of the war, though powerful in their own ways, were incontrovertibly tempered by this principle.<sup>237</sup>

Before and throughout the Great War, British composers were faced with a decision: continue along the same vein that they had done in the pre-war years, or actively pursue the creation of a new and unique "British" music. This decision could not be made lightly. Composers had to acknowledge that choosing the former would result in being left behind on a national scale and that as a consequence of the pursuit of the latter by predominantly younger composers, the music of the older generation could quickly and eternally drop out of fashion. Nevertheless, the war had provided a strong belief in Britain as a musical nation, a Britain which had given the world Purcell. Colin McAlpin wrote to the *Musical Times* in 1916 saying

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<sup>236</sup> Fox, J. *British Art and the First World War, 1914-1924* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 32.

<sup>237</sup> Dibble, 'War, impression, sound and memory', 55.

‘so, then, let British music be true to itself. Let its school of music be distinctive, and no exotic growth transplanted from the Continent and foreign to her soil... let us have the courage of our musical convictions, and trust to the natural utterance of our own distinctive genius.’<sup>238</sup> Marion Scott in 1917 was certain that the war had ‘already had a real effect upon our existing composers’ bringing about a ‘deepening of purpose.’<sup>239</sup> Kennedy, writing in 2014 corroborates Scott’s assessment, suggesting that ‘as the need for a collective expression of grief became clearer, classical music carved a niche for itself in post-war culture.’<sup>240</sup>

This was reflected in the musical choices of the Cathedrals, which were bastions of Englishness and reflected the musical trends at the time quite aptly, although occasionally with a slight delay. Throughout the war years, the cathedrals all responded to the insular war moods and tones through a musical reaction which relied heavily upon works which were somewhat uncontroversial. Uncontroversial in this context makes reference to the fact that much of the music had a long reputation in the cathedral sphere and was well respected in the English musical world. William Gatens noted that ‘cathedral music came to be regarded as the normal music of the Anglican Church as a whole, not just the preserve of the choral foundation.’ He continues, ‘...elements of the cathedral ideal found their way into the typical parish churches of the land to produce the varying mixture of congregational and choral worship that had become the norm by the end of the Victorian era.’<sup>241</sup>

The war gave a period of pause and recollection for the British musicians to figure out what the future may hold. Establishing a new, distinctive voice would be a direct result. This was all resultant of the personal circumstances of each individual composer and distinctive conditions pertaining to each cathedral set-up. It was also

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<sup>238</sup> McAlpin, C. ‘Britain: Her Music.’ *Musical Times* Oct. 1 (1916) Vol. 57, 445-447, 447.

<sup>239</sup> Scott, M. ‘Contemporary British War-Poetry, Music, and Patriotism’. *Musical Times* Vol. 58, No. 889 (Mar. 1, 1917), 120-123, 120.

<sup>240</sup> Kennedy, ‘A musical grief’, 394.

<sup>241</sup> Gatens, W. *Victorian Cathedral Music in Theory and Practice*, 15.

largely due to the peculiar workings of the British music scene that had emerged from Victorian Britain, certainly kept conservative by the war.

During the war the musical and liturgical life of churches in London seemed to be more severely disrupted than elsewhere.<sup>242</sup> This could be for a variety of reasons, and it could also be that the situation in London is more widely commented on, reflected upon, and documented. Obviously, some Cathedrals did better than others and the three cathedrals in this study did not seem to completely miss the mark in regard to musical synthesis with the message of the war and indeed the anti-war sentiments. In terms of musical activities, the larger choirs naturally suffered less than the smaller ones, which meant that church and cathedral choirs suffered very seriously in this respect. So much is this so that, according to Antcliffe, 'one well-known cathedral choir – boys and men – has been left for a couple of years with but one adult member.'<sup>243</sup>

It is noteworthy that women were not employed to fill this gap. Women were being used in parish choirs due to the scarcity of men but there does not seem to be any sign of the female alto in the cathedral setting.<sup>244</sup> Obviously, this is a contrast that is easily made now that both girls and women have been introduced into front and back rows respectively in English cathedrals, and clearly this reflection must be considered in the context of the Suffrage Movement and the residue of Victorian culture. In 1923, Sydney Nicholson wrote:

[...] in the large majority of cases the best form of choir is one composed of boys and men. Where it is impossible to obtain sufficient boys' voices, it may be necessary to utilise the services of women for the treble, and particularly for the alto, parts. But the choir of boys and men is peculiarly characteristic of our Church; and it must not be forgotten that most of the finest specimens of English Church music were written for this combination, and not for women's voices. There would seem to be little advantage in the modern custom of dressing women in surplices, which has not even the sanction of tradition.<sup>245</sup>

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<sup>242</sup> Thomas, *English Cathedral Music*, 82.

<sup>243</sup> Antcliffe, 'The Effect of the War on English Choral Music', 343.

<sup>244</sup> Grace, H. 'A choir problem of to-day' *Musical Times* Aug 1. (1916), 367-369.

<sup>245</sup> Nicholson, S.H. 'Choirs' in *A Manual of English Church Music*, ed. by George Gardner and Sydney H Nicholson (London: SPCK, 1923), 53-58, 53.

It was a possibility which was explored in parish churches and I expect that the Cathedral choir mentioned above by Antcliffe would have had significantly fewer issues were women allowed to join the musical war effort in this capacity as they had done in many other aspects of the British life during the war. Interestingly, the large-scale productions of common orchestral works required women to come into their own in other musical settings.<sup>246</sup> Yet, the consequently fewer opportunities for the performance of large-scale works (doubtless made fewer still by the absence of choral singers and orchestral players on combative duty), and the understandable reticence of publishing houses to incur the expense of printing lengthy choral works which would not for the time being sell<sup>247</sup> also played a significant role in both the decrease in compositional output and new opportunities for female musicians. On a larger musical scale, women were then employed. Unfortunately, on the Cathedral scale, the dearth of musical men did not give rise to a female replacement system.<sup>248</sup>

With replacements secured for the musical men who were missing from the Cathedrals during the war, the question of what music was appropriate in terms of mood, and within the capabilities of the deputies, was a natural topic of debate and discussion. John Jebb's explanation of the process of choosing music for the service noted that selecting anthems should be a 'matter of deliberate and religious study' that once chosen and published in the weekly service sheet should not be altered 'by the solicitation of amateurs and others who desire some favourite Anthem'.<sup>249</sup> In the early nineteenth century, the music to be sung was generally chosen during the actual service. Bennett reckons that in the last sixty or so years of the nineteenth century, it was shown that sentiment and religious ecstasy need not be divorced from the worthiness of the music.<sup>250</sup> When John Goss became organist of

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<sup>246</sup> Women were employed during the war in world-renowned orchestras including the LSO (2 Harpists) and the Hallé (8 women between 1916-1920).

<sup>247</sup> Smith, *The Choral Music of Charles Villiers Stanford*, 234.

<sup>248</sup> Unsurprising given that female choristers were not seen in the stalls until 1991 and women lay clerks not until significantly after that.

<sup>249</sup> Jebb, J. *The Choral Service of the United Church of England and Ireland*, (London: John W.Parker, 1843), 375.

<sup>250</sup> Bennett, 'Victorian Music', 87.

St Paul's in 1838 he found the music of the great cathedral appalling.<sup>251</sup> Beresford-Hope claims that in Durham 'the execution of the service and the quality of the anthem was a strong point of provincial pride'.<sup>252</sup>

The earlier statement from Storey which described St Paul's musical world as having survived the war should not be understated. It does indeed ring true for all three of the Cathedrals in this study, and most probably extended nationwide. Of course, some of the changes that the First World War brought about remain with the Cathedrals to this day, while some did not survive beyond the confines of inter-war Britain. However, the changes that were brought about both musically and administratively throughout the war and in its immediate aftermath made their impact known at the time and appeared to have at least on some level seriously challenged the proud choral tradition in English Cathedrals during the four long years and in its aftermath.<sup>253</sup>

Both the First and Second World War had their own profound impact on art and culture. Composers, writers and artists today are undoubtedly impacted and influenced in some way by events and trends that arose or were escalated as a result of these wars: as the twentieth century progressed into the twenty-first, British artists have incorporated into their own work the various techniques pioneered during the first two decades of the twentieth century. World War One altered the way in which people would think about the world, about Britain and about self-expression and even how Britain portrayed itself on a world stage. Elsewhere, the cosy, sentimental light music of the Victorian age gave way to the frenetic gaiety of jazz.<sup>254</sup> Reality had changed in fundamental ways that called into question the assumptions on which art and civilisation itself had been based.<sup>255</sup>

Temperley noted: 'the accelerating growth of materialism and secularism has been

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<sup>251</sup> Beeson. *In Tuneful Accord*, 17.

<sup>252</sup> Beresford-Hope, *The English cathedral of the nineteenth century*, 118.

<sup>253</sup> Storey, 86.

<sup>254</sup> Pirie, *English Musical Renaissance*, 104.

<sup>255</sup> Hynes, *A War Imagined*, n.p.

halted only in times of crises, such as the two world wars.'<sup>256</sup> Despite the enormous development of secular music in recent years, Ley attests that composers in the mid-1930s were not ignoring church music – proven by the fact that new hymnals and new methods of chanting Psalms were still being developed.<sup>257</sup> In the earlier years of the twentieth century, efforts to improve church musical life generally took the form of improving the artistic quality of choral performance, both by changing the repertory (reviving the cathedral music of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods) and by more sensitive singing, particularly of chanted psalms. British compositions were ubiquitous throughout the war and in its aftermath due to the banning of travel to foreign countries and a specific but begrudgingly unsympathetic attitude towards German compositions; the cathedrals had to abide by these rules just as much as any concert hall. Yet, relatively little new music was added to the repertoire and there was a strong reliance on the repetition of well-known works. It is uncertain whether this was due to a lack of skilled singing men, apathy from the Deans and Chapters, continuous renewal or lack of choristers and men, or perhaps more positively an active, but perhaps unsaid decision to remain singing what was known; the 'crowd pleasers' in such changeable times.

War music, in every form that it came, then combined the feelings of the people left back in Britain with the horrors from the front. The impact of the First World War on the English musical tradition is aptly summarised in Elgar's statement: 'Everything is at a standstill & we have nothing left in the world. ... But we are cheerful & I will die a man, if not a musician.'<sup>258</sup> This unique combination of propaganda and patriotism with reality and cynicism promulgated the English musical voice as a confused but direct rhetoric – one which was over time increasingly sorrowful whilst still recognising the courage of the troops. Modris Eksteins says that 'beyond the loyalty to King and country, which with few exceptions was foremost, the war exerted a singular fascination by its very

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<sup>256</sup> Temperley, *The music of the English Parish Church*, 315.

<sup>257</sup> Ley, H. 'The Music of the English Church'. *History* (1932, 17(67), new series), 193-200, 199.

<sup>258</sup> Letter from Elgar to Frank Schuster, 25 August 1914; published in Jerrold Northrop Moore, *Edward Elgar: Letters of a Lifetime* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 276-277.

monumentality and, as it progressed, its staggering ineffability.<sup>259</sup> The following statement in the *Musical Times* in November 1915 is particularly apt:

The stress of the present war was unparalleled and the consequent musical awakening might not be proportionally significant. It was not, however, bound to come in this country, and it would not do so unless our composers gave the public what the public wanted to hear. They must rid themselves of the idea that their dignity compelled them to unvarying solemnity.<sup>260</sup>

Doubtless the causes for much of the decline in choral music are obvious circumstantial ones, but there is certainly also a psychological cause, or rather two psychological causes which may be additional to these but are not unconnected with them – mourning arising from death and disaster, and a deep desire for solitude and/or retirement. Temperley suggests that difficulties of recruitment to choirs in the post-war period facilitated the emergence of concentrated attacks on ‘professionalism and choralism’ at the parish level as well.<sup>261</sup> Protests against the techniques of choral singing and professionalism had been noted throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth century, but they were ineffective until after the First World War, in fact ‘we should like to see experiments made in the suppression of choirs’ is a quote from the Army chaplains on the Archbishops’ Committee in 1917.<sup>262</sup>

There is also much evidence of decline in various activities within the musical life of English cathedrals during and after the 1920s. Indeed it had become almost a commonplace even before the war that standards were dropping.<sup>263</sup> Further evidence of the declining popularity of the choral movement can be found in some exaggeratedly congratulatory reviews of the Festival of English Church Music (1930), one writer claiming that the Festival proved that church music in general

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<sup>259</sup> Eksteins, M. *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000), 209.

<sup>260</sup> ‘The War and Musical Composition.’ *The Musical Times* 56, no. 873 (1915): 671-72.

<sup>261</sup> *ibid.*, 319.

<sup>262</sup> *The Worship of the Church*, 37 quoted in N. Temperley, *The Music of the English Parish Church*, 319.

<sup>263</sup> Thomas, *English Cathedral Music*, 34.

was 'much more alive than the pessimists thought.'<sup>264</sup> In the Cathedrals the desire to recapitulate the musical position in sixteenth and seventeenth-century Britain should not go unnoticed. These changes were exactly what cathedral music required, although they seemed less relevant for the parish church as the dominance of upper-middle class and professional values receded. In retrospect, it seems that the First World War was the turning point.<sup>265</sup> The war, therefore, set itself out as an influence on the future running of the British Cathedrals, through which they could be prepared for the changing world. People readily turned to the church in this time of great crisis. The response was of course different in city to city, it differed based on congregation sizes, how many men had left the diocese for war (and how many returned), and the general feeling that was left behind in those parishes undoubtedly impacted upon the music and the people who would perform it.

### The Centenary Years

As Wilkinson records, the fact that the Great War still haunts the communal memory suggests that we have not yet completed our work of remembrance.<sup>266</sup> People in the aftermath of the war still found the time and a need to write (compose) their feelings and impressions of the struggle. Even today there are works which have been dedicated to the War. The corpus of commemorative works such as 'elegies and funeral marches, expressions of heroism and courage, laments, and other outpourings of grief and loss'<sup>267</sup> place the musician at the centre of society which is key to this continuity. In these four centenary years, this music takes on a specific sense of poignancy. In music, we continue to find an (national) identity that we cannot find anywhere else, that poetry would not incite; it has great potential to rouse our spirits, and is capable of provoking a certain amount of (national) pride. Common in the exploration of poetry is the role of women poets,

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<sup>264</sup> 'Church and Organ Music. Festival of English Church Music'. *The Musical Times*, 71(1050), (1930). 732-736, 733.

<sup>265</sup> Temperley, *The Music of the English Parish Church*, 343.

<sup>266</sup> Wilkinson, A. *The Church of England and the First World War* (London: SPCK, 1978), 309.

<sup>267</sup> Dibble, *War, impression, sound and memory*, 43.

and this would be an interesting angle to perceive the war musician from, including a more in-depth consideration of the reluctance to admit women into the Cathedral choir – back row or otherwise. Even to this day churches and cathedrals remain central to nationwide acts of memorialisation. Services and parades forming the backbone of commemoration up and down the land draw on the religious language of sacrifice to perhaps give some sort of meaning to the years of struggle and loss.

It is very interesting that in the centenary years, the collective remembrance of the war, especially here in 2016 in the commemoration of the Battle of the Somme that music is crucial to the memory of those who fought, or who contributed to the war effort in other ways. Parry's setting of 'My Soul there is a country' was the anthem of choice at Evensong at Durham Cathedral on the anniversary, Friday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2016. At St Paul's Cathedral, the music commemorating this hundredth anniversary included Darke in F and Samuel Barber's *Agnus Dei*, while canticles from Rachmaninoff's 'All-night vigil' were sung at Evensong at York Minster.

Defining the national in art has always been a contentious issue, particularly in music notes Clampin, 'which is believed by some to be free from political, social, and cultural associations because of its 'abstract' nature.'<sup>268</sup> To be nationalist, or more precisely to be 'English', therefore became the watchword in the 1920s.<sup>269</sup> Although the Last Night programme only became fixed in the 1950s, it is surely a testament to its national worth that 100 years on the British people still sing this music and when they do it is sung with national pride (even if it is ignorant of the origins). The Promenade Concerts in Summer 2016 included Elgar's *Pomp and Circumstance March* (Land of Hope and Glory), Wood's arrangement of the Fantasia on British Sea-Songs, 'Rule Britannia!', Elgar's orchestral arrangement of Parry's *Jerusalem* and the National Anthem as has become the norm. Importantly, Graebe attests that if we talk of 'English national song', then surely Parry's setting of

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<sup>268</sup> Clampin, F. "Those blue remembered hills...': National Identity in English Music (1900-1930)" in *National Identity* by Keith Cameron (Exeter, England: Intellect Books, 1999), 64.

<sup>269</sup> Dibble, J. 'Grove's Musical Dictionary: A National Document' in H. White and M. Murphy *Musical Constructions of Nationalism* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2001), 34.

*Jerusalem* must be regarded as one of the archetypes.<sup>270</sup> Whether now the 'Britishness' or 'Englishness' of these composers brings us to think of them as nationalist, or see them in a different light, their works were what the nation required in 1914-18 and the years following it. It was (and is) English. The national aspect of this music also manifested itself in the Cathedral music. The 'nationalist' output of these British composers was also utilised extensively in the Cathedral as well as the Festival Halls.

In sum, the extreme desolation brought about by the First World War led people to rely on and turn to the Church of England, and to the Cathedrals. The musical worship that was taking place in these buildings allowed people to find what Mackerness has described as 'spiritual sustenance'.<sup>271</sup> Propaganda and patriotism which were widespread during the war years, particularly the first two, served of course as a limiting factor for England's musical progress but it also arguably proved to be an inspiration for some of the best music produced since the death of Purcell. Matthew Riley asserts that Parry and Stanford seemed like nothing more than 'the final residue' of a nineteenth-century outlook that was swept away by World War I.<sup>272</sup> Yet whilst they might have been too enveloped by the German Romantic/classical influence ever fully to break free from its all-encompassing embrace, they undoubtedly had a significant impact on the future of British music. Moreover, English composers like Holst, and to a lesser extent, Elgar were able to break away and change the course of English music forever. This played an important role in forging the future of Cathedral music. The fact that English composers were forced to establish a new voice would ultimately come to be reflected in their choral output which found its home in the Cathedral setting.

The arts have often been relied upon to explore the themes associated with crisis. This was just as true during World War I.<sup>273</sup> The impact of the First World War is

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<sup>270</sup> Graebe, M. 'Gustav Holst, Songs of the West, and the English Folk Song Movement'. *Folk Music Journal* Vol.10, No. 1 (2011), 6.

<sup>271</sup> Mackerness, E. *A Social History of English Music*. (London: Routledge, 2010), 238.

<sup>272</sup> Riley, M. *British Music and Modernism, 1895-1960*. (London: Routledge, 2010), 28.

<sup>273</sup> Sillars, *Fields of Agony*, 8.

seen in the way in which music was written about, performed and received. The way in which composers took to composition changed. The frequency and repetition of so much music, which now defines Britain, was most commonly and perhaps most obviously seen in British Cathedrals. While burgeoning technology eclipsed the need for music to accompany movement on the battlefield by the mid-twentieth century, it remained an effective means by which the morale, energies and attitudes of armies and indeed entire populations could be controlled.

After 1918 the developments of radio, cinema and gramophone meant that mass culture further spread its influence across society. Many British composers turned to French and Russian models in preference to the Central European tradition, and focused unashamedly on colour and rhythm.<sup>274</sup> In terms of what this meant for the Cathedral tradition and for the musical tradition of the three cathedrals in this study, it is clear that the cathedrals were reluctant to reject the tradition that it had been steeped in for so long. The Cathedral tradition had long thrived on the works of composers from other European countries, and from further afield, as well as music taken from hundreds of years' worth of choices. During the war, although the pressure on the musical life of England to find a direct national voice which represented the English and presented an original voice was less pronounced in the cathedral, it did not go entirely unnoticed. The new compositions written were, as has been shown, directly in correlation with the war effort. Compositions particularly from older composers like Stanford and Parry acknowledge the pressure that was felt by English composers to create a new voice.

This specific exploration of choral and cathedral music is just a step towards a comprehensive evaluation of the impact of World War I on British music. The wide scope of this research proved to be both a limitation as well as opening up areas for further study. For example, the impact of the war on Cathedrals, not just its music but also the propaganda and patriotism which was evident in sermons and

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<sup>274</sup> Banfield, S. 'England, 1918-45', in R. P. Morgan (ed.), *Modern Times: From World War I to the Present* (Houndmills and London: Macmillan, 1993), 180-205, 184.

ultimately infiltrated other portions of the Cathedral's life and community. The early twentieth century undoubtedly saw a continuity of the reaction against the congregational song of the Victorian age. *Hymns Ancient & Modern*, which had dominated the final three decades of the nineteenth century was still largely in use and reproduced long into the twentieth century. However, there was a notable rejection of 'the sentimentality, triumphalism, and frank dullness of much Victorian hymnody'<sup>275</sup> even before the war years but certainly afterwards. The familiarity of hymnody during the war and its usage as a coping mechanism for the congregations across Britain must be recognised, however.

Seeing the impact of the First World War on the wider religious context is also an area of further development, expanding on Arthur Marwick's 'The Impact of the First World War on British Society' written in 1968, fifty years after the war ended. Hastings in *A History of English Christianity: 1920-1985* claims that 'there was no genuine religious revival during the war nor after the war, nor was there a pastoral or theological revival'.<sup>276</sup> Whether or not Hastings' statement is true, the consequences of the impact of the First World War and music in England is ongoing. It is ongoing in the sense that it continues to shape contemporary understanding of our musical, artistic history. Everyone lived a different war and through music and the church those experiences can be felt and imitated to this day. Music did not retreat into a Little England, it stumbled initially but the war undoubtedly promulgated a musical land on English soil. If England did not have a national voice before the First World War, it certainly cemented one throughout it, and that England's national voice has German origins, and takes inspiration from other countries is to be celebrated today. Colles' statement from the introduction of this thesis, that the musical future of England was being born in the fields of France certainly has validity. Yet it must be seen in the context of the committed work of the older composers and the impassioned service of the Masters of Music that remained in Britain during the First World War. The musical eclecticism, which has

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<sup>275</sup> Music, D. *Christian Hymnody in Twentieth-century Britain and America*. (Westport, Connecticut and London: Greenwood Press, 2001), 2.

<sup>276</sup> Hastings, A. *A History of English Christianity: 1920-1985* (London: Collins, 1986), 47.

been the English national voice since the early twentieth century was able to be born as a result of the work done by these people.

This predominantly archival study of the impact that the First World War had on the musical world of three English cathedrals elucidates a more general and wide-ranging national sentiment. It is hoped that exploring the inter-relationship between the war and British cathedral music through the unique lens of the archives of three cathedrals is valuable. Whilst there are undoubtedly many limitations to carrying out a research project which is heavily reliant upon archival material, as stated at the outset, this research has provided a unique perspective on the topic in hand. Acknowledging the disparity between what is included in each cathedral makes it harder to compare and establish the precise impact. For future research this archival material could be expanded upon by exploring more cathedrals in one unified study.

Furthermore, the nature of chapter minutes means that at times the information is vague and generalised for public consumption; the information that the committee are content with the broader public having access to, as a result specifics are habitually left out. Fortunately, at St Paul's Cathedral the Dean's diary gives a more unrestricted view of life at the Cathedral, but even then, it is selective and many dates have nothing written beside them. Taking this into consideration, further studies would benefit from delving deeper into the financial impact of the war on English Cathedrals. This was something that was not considered to be in the scope or timeframe for this thesis but would be an interesting expansion of the study.

The place of religion and the usefulness and relevance of Cathedral worship in the future of British society at the turn of the twentieth century was battered by the broad nature of the nationalism, propaganda and patriotism that was elucidated during the long four years. Yet, from this study, it is clear that the accessibility and relatability of the language of Christianity and its usage in music (particularly hymnody) helped to provide comfort and contributed to the national acknowledgement of the war. It allowed the British people to explore their

emotions throughout the war years and provided an outlet for everything from elation to sorrow. Through this accessible language and the nature of congregational worship, the cathedrals and churches provided a relationship between God and the people; between the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and the sacrifice of the men in the trenches. This comforting connection would help contribute to the preservation of both the Church of England and the nation to which it belonged throughout the war years and it's in aftermath. Accepting and acknowledging the role of the war in the advancement of the English musical scene, particularly as it presented itself in the Cathedral, gives it the deserved poignancy and prominence that is afforded to it in the other arts, especially poetry.

Whether considering just the administrative life of the musical cathedral or solely the musical selections of the musical leadership team throughout the war and in its aftermath in comparison to the pre-war years, it is apparent that the war had instant and lasting ramifications on the way in which music in the cathedral was thought about, managed, sung, and composed. It was during the war that a unique independent nationalism was created. Inspired by its past and present, English music would resume its universal status and the declining status of religion in Britain was taken (if temporarily) off track. As a result, the impact of the First World War on British religious and musical life can and should no longer be ignored in academic dialogue or otherwise – especially in these centenary anniversary years.

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