The Five-Part Litany

Edition by Andrew Johnstone combining the English text of May 1544 with music composed probably in that year and attributed in later sources to THOMAS TALLIS (d. 1585) THERE ARE THREE REASONS to believe that, by the time Henry VIII's English Litany was published with plainchant music on 16 June 1544,¹ Thomas Tallis had already composed the present five-part setting. First, in its earliest printed version, issued less than three weeks earlier on 27 May,² the vernacular text had incorporated a shorter form of the fourth of the opening invocations, 'O holy, blessed and glorious Trinity, one God'. The longer form 'three persons and one God', adopted by 16 June, appears in all surviving sources of Tallis's setting, yet the conspicuous diversity of rhythms encountered at the added words 'three persons and' can mean only that Tallis originally set the shorter form, and that his music was duly updated by various scribes working independently of one another.

Secondly, it would appear that the composer set a draft text earlier even than the 27 May version, for whereas in all other surviving versions of the English Litany with and without music—each Agnus Dei petition is divided into a versicle and response, Tallis in the old Sarum manner assigned the whole of each petition first to the minister(s) and then to a choral repetition. Thirdly, at several points in his setting he referred to elements of the Sarum Litany tones that would not find their way into the published vernacular plainchant.

At least three polyphonic settings of the English Litany were circulating in the summer of 1544, most notably a five-part Litany 'according to the notes used in the king's majesty's chapel' issued (almost certainly without a composer's name) by the king's printer Richard Grafton on 26 June 1544. Since not one copy of that seminal publication is known to have been sighted since the early eighteenth century,³ proof of what music it contained must await confirmation by evidence yet to be discovered. Meanwhile, as a likely precursor of the earliest surviving published versions of the new vernacular text, and being the work of a Chapel Royal composer, Tallis's five-part setting may with some confidence be identified with the lost printed one, and thereby accorded prime candidacy for the title of England's founding work of vernacular liturgical polyphony.⁴

1. London: Richard Grafton; STC 10621.5, 10621.7 and 10622.

2. London: Thomas Berthelet; STC 10620 and 10621.

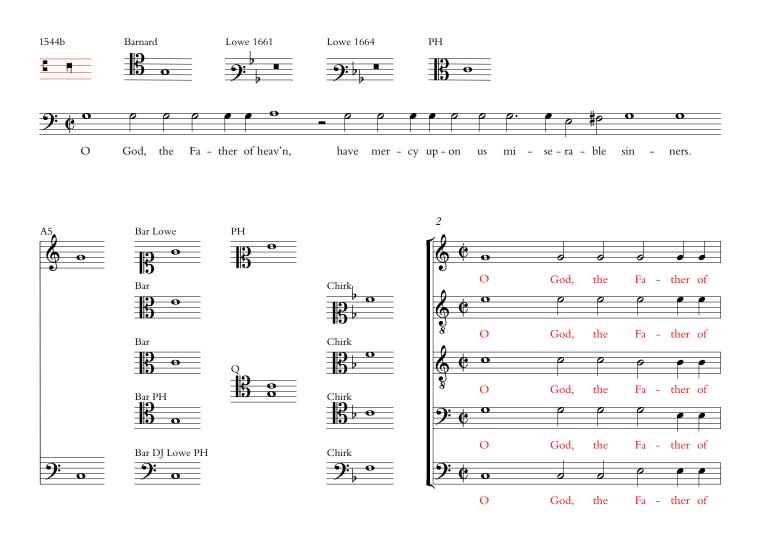
3. A record of the publication was entered by the Cambridge bibliophile Thomas Baker (1656–1740) in his personal interleaved copy of Andrew Maunsell's *Catalogue of English printed Bookes* (London: John Windet, 1595; STC 17669), Cambridge University Library shelfmark Adv. b. 52. 1, facing p. 86.

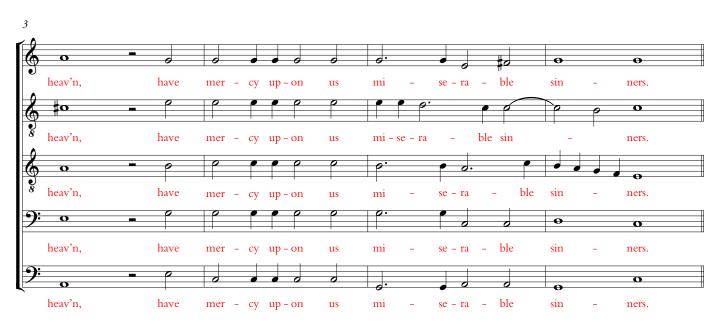
4. For a fuller discussion of the foregoing observations, see Andrew Johnstone, 'Thomas Tallis and the Five-Part English Litany of 1544: Evidence of "the Notes Used in the King's Majesty's Chapel", *Early Music*, 44 (2016).

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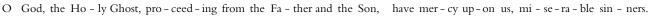


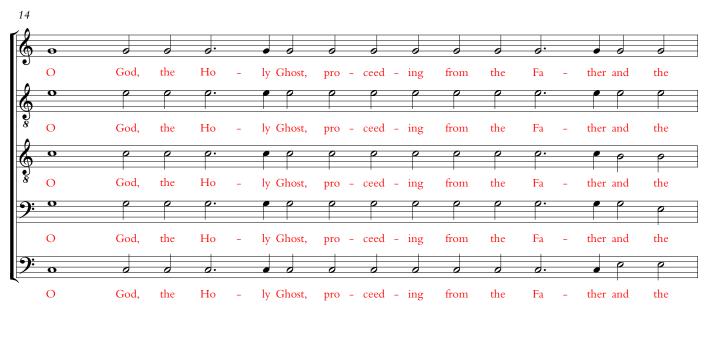




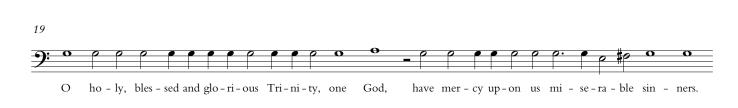
world, have mer - cy up - on us mi - se - ra - ble sin - ners.

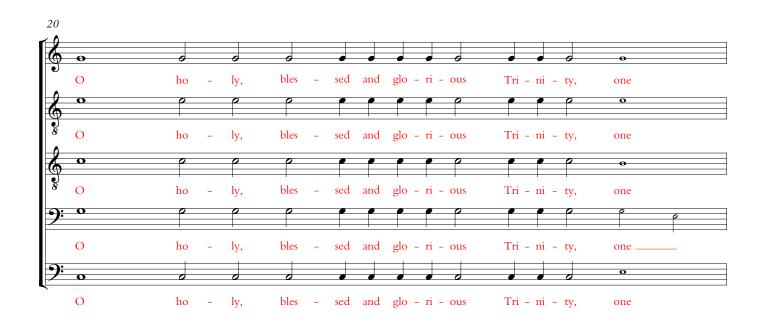


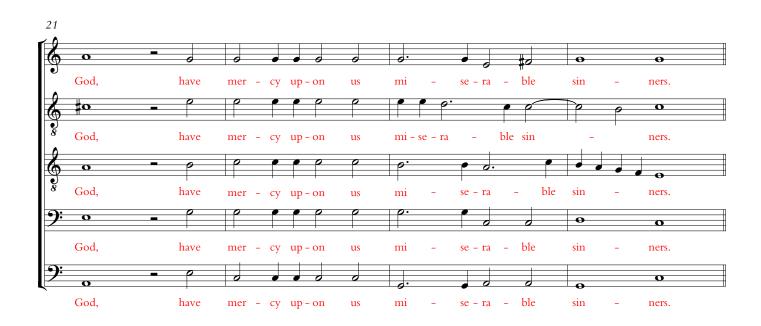


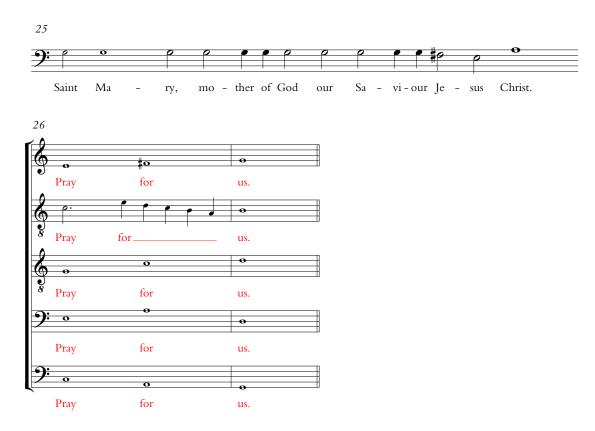












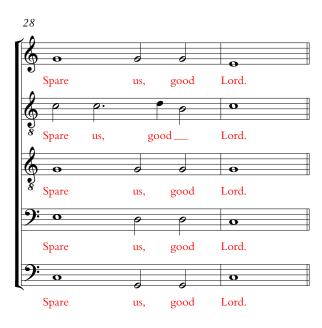
All holy angels and archangels and all holy orders of blessed spirits.

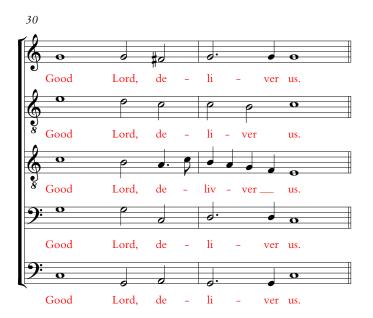
Pray for us.

All holy patriarchs, and prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, and virgins, and all the blessed company of heaven.

Pray for us.

Remember not, Lord, our offences, nor the offences of our forefathers; neither take thou vengeance of our sins: spare us, good Lord, spare thy people, whom thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood, and be not angry with us for ever.





From all evil and mischief; from sin, from the crafts and assaults of the devil; from thy wrath, and from everlasting damnation,

From blindness of heart; from pride, vain-glory, and hypocrisy; from envy, hatred and malice, and all uncharitableness,

Good Lord, deliver us.

From fornication, and all deadly sin; and from all the deceits of the world, the flesh, and the devil,

Good Lord, deliver us.

From lightning and tempest; from plague, pestilence, and famine; from battle and murder, and from sudden death,

Good Lord, deliver us.

From all sedition, and privy conspiracy; from the tyranny of the bishop of Rome, and all his detestable enormities; from all false doctrine, and heresy; from hardness of heart, and contempt of thy Word and Commandment,

Good Lord, deliver us.

By the mystery of thy holy Incarnation; by thy holy Nativity and Circumcision; by thy Baptism, Fasting, and Temptation,

Good Lord, deliver us.

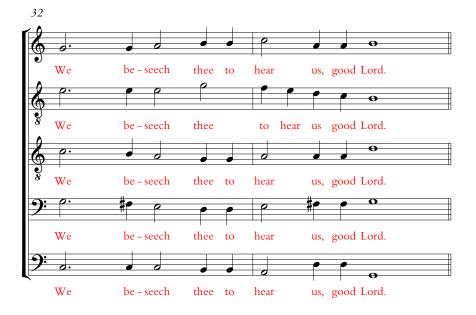
By thine Agony and bloody Sweat; by thy Cross and Passion; by thy precious Death and Burial; by thy glorious Resurrection and Ascension; by the coming of the Holy Ghost,

Good Lord, deliver us.

In all time of our tribulation; in all time of our wealth; in the hour of death; in the day of judgment,

Good Lord, deliver us.

We sinners do beseech thee to hear us, O Lord God: and that it may please thee to rule and govern thy holy Church universal in the right way,



That it may please thee to keep Henry the eighth thy servant and our king and governor,

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to rule his heart in thy faith, fear and love, that he may ever have affiance in thee, and ever seek thy honour and glory,

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to be his defender and keeper, giving him the victory over all his enemies,

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to keep our noble Queen Catherine in thy fear and love, giving her increase of all godliness, honour and children,

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to keep and defend our noble Prince Edward, and all the king's majesty's children,

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to illuminate all bishops, pastors and ministers of the Church with true knowledge and understanding of thy Word; and that both by their preaching and living, they may set it forth and show it accordingly,

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to endue the Lords of the Council, and all the Nobility, with grace, wisdom, and understanding,

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to bless and keep the Magistrates, giving them grace to execute justice, and to maintain truth,

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to bless and keep all thy people,

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to give to all nations unity, peace, and concord,

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to give to us an heart to love and dread thee, and diligently to live after thy commandments,

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to give all thy people increase of grace, to hear meekly thy Word, and to receive it with pure affection, and to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit,

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to bring into the way of truth all such as have erred, and are deceived,

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to strengthen such as do stand; and to comfort and help the weak-hearted; and to raise up them that fall; and finally to beat down Satan under our feet,

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to succour, help, and comfort all that be in danger, necessity, and tribulation,

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to preserve all that travel by land or by water, all women labouring of child, all sick persons, and young children; and to show thy pity upon all prisoners and captives,

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to defend, and provide for, the fatherless children, and widows, and all that be desolate and oppressed,

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to have mercy upon all men,

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to forgive our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers, and to turn their hearts,

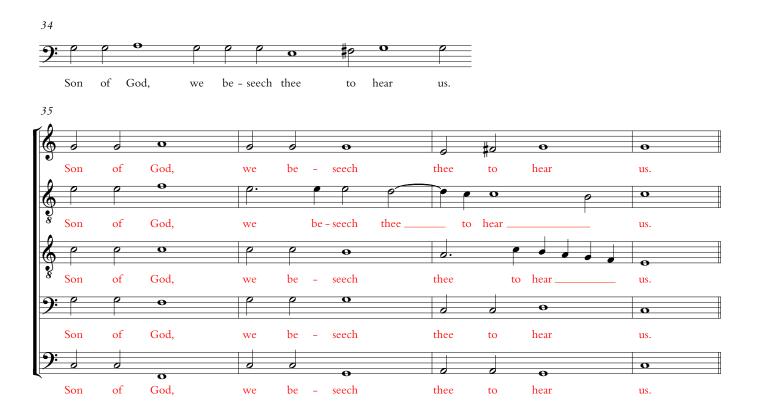
We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

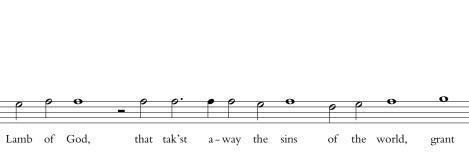
That it may please thee to give to our use the kindly fruits of the earth, so as in due time we may enjoy them, and to preserve them,

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to give us true repentance; to forgive us all our sins, negligences and ignorances; and to endue us with the grace of thy Holy Spirit, to amend our lives according to thy holy Word,

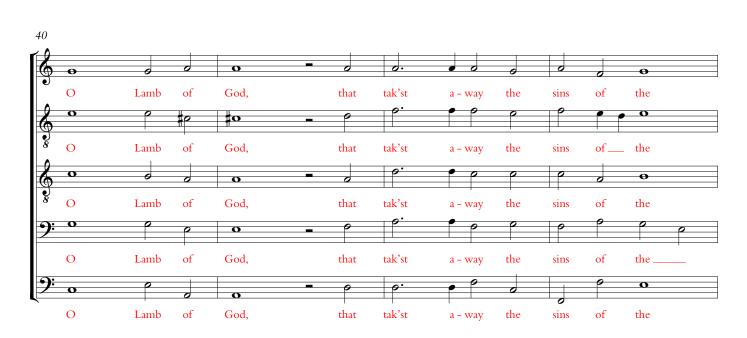
We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

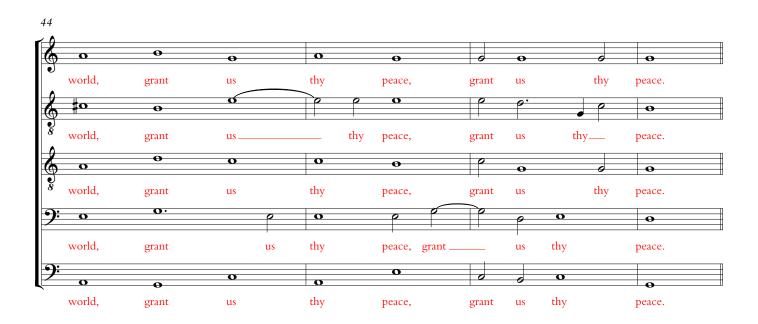




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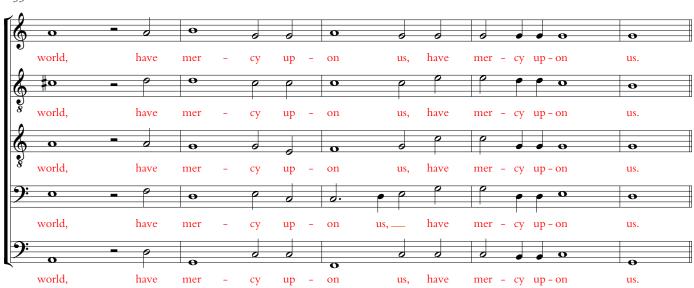
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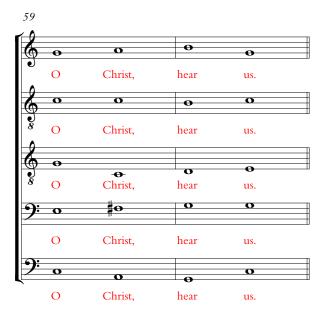
peace.



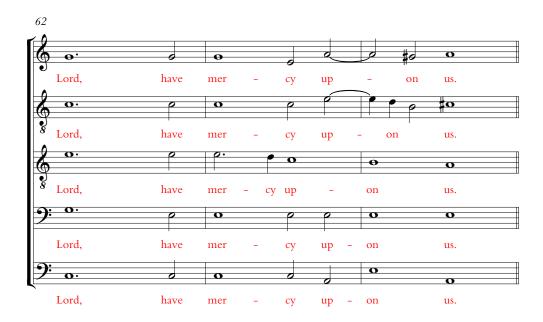


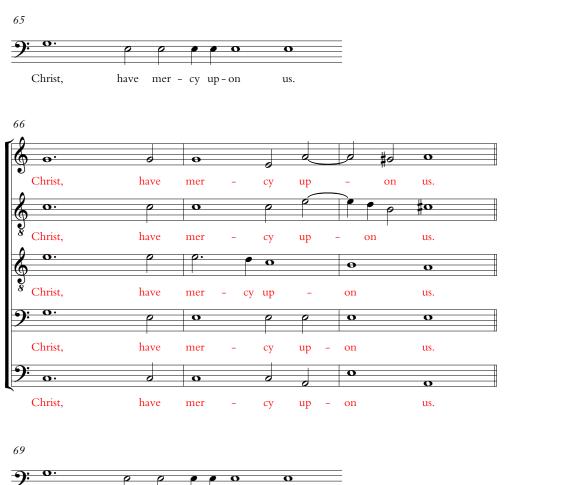




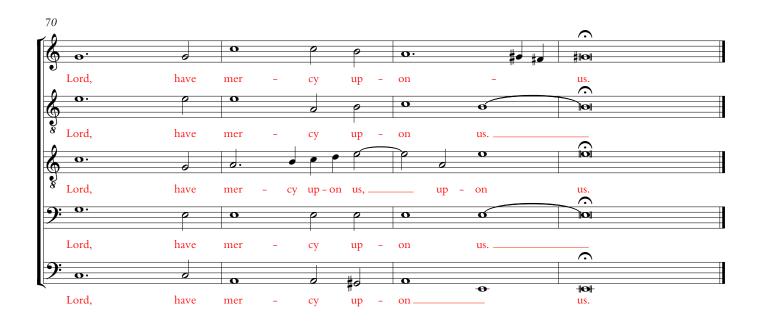












SOURCES

The following sources have been collated:

- 1544a An exhortation vnto prayer thought mete by the kinges maiestie, and his clergy, to be read to the people in euery church afore processyions. Also a letanie with suffrages to be said or song in the tyme of the said processyons (London: Thomas Berthelet, 27 May 1544; STC 10620); contains the verbal text only, of which it is the earliest known source.
- A5 Durham Cathedral Library: MS A5, pp. 277–9 (organ accompaniment comprising I and V only), 'The New Lettanye'.
- Bar The First Book of Selected Church Music, ed. John Barnard (London: 1641), 'Thomas Tallis'.
- Chirk New York, Public Library: MS Mus. Res. *MNZ (Chirk), 'Latany for Trebles ... Mr Persons'.
- DJ York, Minster Library: MS M.29(S) (the Dunnington-Jefferson MS), pp. 383-4, no attribution.
- Lowe A short direction for the performance of cathedrall service ... By E[dward] L[owe] (Oxford: William Hall for Richard Davis, 1661; Wing L3305); A review of some short directions for performance of cathedral service ... The second edition ... By E[dward] L[owe] (Oxford: W. Hall, for Richard Davis, 1664; Wing L3304), no attribution (four-part arrangement, inner parts not collated).
- PH Cambridge, Peterhouse, Perne Library: MS 35 (Td), f. 22r, 'Tallis' (later hand); MS 37 (bassus decani), f. B4r–v, 'Mr Tallis's Letanie' (later hand); MS 42 (Ctd), f. A2r (minister's part), 'This is to be sunge at the Letany Deske'; MS 44 (Md), f. A5r–v, 'Tallis' (later hand).
- Q Cambridge, Queens' College Library: G.4.17 (Prayer Book with MS music additions), f. 57r, tenor and contratenor parts in partial short score on a single staff, 'Mr Tallis'.

The following sources have been consulted but not collated:

- 1544b An exhortacion unto praier thought mete by the kynges maiestie, [and] his dergye, to be reade to the people, in euerye churche afore processions. Also a letanie with suffrages to be sayd or songe in the tyme of the sayd processions (London: Richard Grafton, 16 June 1544; STC 10622); contains a monophonic litany tone (used as the basis for the missing music of bars 25–7) in black notation and simpler than the *cantus* firmus set by Tallis.
- Cambridge, Peterhouse, Perne Library: MS 42 (Ctd), f. B6v, 'Mr Tallis' (contratenor part differing substantively from all other sources); S. 18b (Prayer Book with MS music additions), f. 8r–v, 'TALLIS' (derivative of Peterhouse MS 44, f. B6v).
- Durham, Cathedral Library: MS C1 (M), p. 87, 'The Letany in 4 parts' (derivative of Lowe).
- Gloucester, Cathedral Library: tenor decani MS (SECM 95), pp. 122–3, 'Thomas Tallis' (derivative of Bar).
- Oxford, Bodleian Library: MS Mus. C. 48 (Bd), f. 56r, 'Mr Tallis his Lattanie' (derivative or relative of Bar).
- Oxford, Christ Church Library: MS Mus. 88, pp. 14, 24, 28, 54 (organ accompaniment comprising I and V only), 'Tallis' (later hand) (derivative of Lowe); Gibbs 12 (Prayer Book with MS music additions, companion to Peterhouse S. 18b), ff. 39r and 40v, 'TALLIS' (derivative of Peterhouse MSS 42, f. A2r and 44, f. B6v).

minister's part	Bar, Lowe, PH 42
Ι	A5, Bar, Lowe, PH 44
II	Bar, Chirk
III	Bar, Chirk, Q
IV	Bar, Chirk, PH 35, Q
V	A5, Bar, Chirk, DJ, Lowe, PH 37

Chirk has been adopted as the copy text on the grounds that its cleffing and tessitura are characteristic of a setting composed in 1544 and therefore imply close filiation from a source dating from that time.

VARIANT READINGS

Chirk (all parts) and A5 give fermatas at the terminal note of every choral passage; Lowe and Q give the terminal note of every choral passage as a breve (except Q for IV at bar 47 where the terminal note is given as a semibreve, presumably in consequence of a prior rhythmic error in bars 44–6), Q additionally giving fermatas on all terminal notes from beginning to end except at bars 26 and 32.

Bar assigns II to 1Ctd and 2Ctc, and III to 2Ctd and 1Ctc, except at bars 66–8, where II is assigned to 2Ctd and 2Ctc and III is assigned to 1Ctd and 1Ctc, and at other points reported below.

1.1–20: black notation bsssssbssssbsbsssbb (Lowe) / 1.8–9: c's [= g in this edn] (PH) / 1.18: accidental om. (Lowe 1661 edn) / 1.19-20: mm (PH, Bar); rhythm adjusted by analogy with response / 2 I 5: sharp (A5, PH) / 2 I 6: sharp (PH) / 6 III 4-5: slurred (Chirk) / 6 IV 2: b (PH) / 7: words and music om. (Lowe, PH) / 7.22-23: m m (Bar) / 8-12 II and III: exchanged (Bar) / 8-12 IV: = I an 8ve lower (Bar Td) / 8.1-9.3 I: m c c m c c c c c c m c (A5, PH) / 8.1-9.3 III-V: mccm.cc.qccm.c (A5, DJ, PH, Q) / 8 I 8: sharp (A5) / 10-12 IV: signed as a repeat of bars 4-6 (PH) / 12 III 4-5: slurred (Chirk) / 13: words and music om. (Lowe, PH) / 13.28-9: mm (Bar) / 14-18 IV: = I an 8ve lower (Bar Td) / 14.1-15.3 I: m c c m m m c c c c c m m m c m c (A5, PH) / 14.1-15.3 III-V: m c c m m m. c c c c c m. c m m m. c (A5, DJ, PH, Q) / 14 I 14: sharp (A5, PH) / 16-18 IV: signed as a repeat of bars 4-6 (PH) / 18 III 4-5: slurred (Chirk) / 19: words and music om. (Lowe, PH) / 19.10-12: m. c s (Bar); rhythm adjusted by analogy with response / 19.13: text 'three persons and one' g g g g g mr m m m m m (Bar) / 20-24 II and III: exchanged (Bar) / 20-24 IV: = I an 8ve lower (Bar Td) / 20 I and III-V 1-9: mccmccm.c(A5); mccccmm.c(DJ, PH, Q) / 20 I-V 10-12: m. c s (Bar) / 20 I-V 13: text 'three persons and one' (Bar, Chirk, DJ, Lowe, PH, Q); mccmm (A5, DJ, PH, Q); mmmmmmm (Bar); sm.cmm (Chirk); mmm.cmm (Lowe) / 20 I 13; g'g'g'g'g'g' (Bar, Lowe), g'g'g'g'g'sharp (A5, PH) / 20 II 13: e'e'e'e' (Bar; equivalent notes in Chirk) / 20 III 13: e'c'c'b b (Bar, Q; equivalent notes in Chirk) / 20 IV 13: g g g g e (Bar Tc, PH, Q; equivalent notes in Chirk) / 20 V 13: c c c e e (A5, Bar, DJ, Lowe, PH; equivalent notes in Chirk) / 21 I and III-V 1-3: m. c (A5, DJ, PH, Q) / 24 III 4-5: slurred (Chirk) / 25: words and music om. (Bar, Lowe, PH); edition adapts text of 1544a to music of 1544b / 26-7: om. (A5, Bar, Chirk, DJ, Lowe, PH, Q); music editorial, voice I based on 1544b / 28-29 IV: as III (Bar) / 28.1-29.1 II: e'g'f'e's m. cs (Bar) / 28.1–29.1 III: c'c'b c's m m s (Bar) / 29 I 1: g' (A5, Bar, PH) / 29 IV 1: fermata (PH) / 30 I 3: accidental om. (Lowe 1664 edn) / 30.3-31.4 III: edn follows underlay as slurred in Chirk (underlay not indicated in Bar or Q) / 30 III 3-4: c c (Bar) / 31 IV 3: fermata (PH) / 32 II 4: g' d' c c (Bar) / 32 IV 2: g (Bar); accidental om. (Chirk) / 33 II 5 and III 4: exchanged (Chirk) / 33 IV 2-3: accidental om. (Chirk) / 33 V 2-3: c c (DJ) / 34.4-10: mr c c m m m m m (Bar); c c s m m c c (PH); rhythm adjusted by analogy with response / 36 II 1-2: m m (Bar) / 37.6-38.1 III: slurred (Chirk) / 38 IV 1: fermata (PH) / 39: minister's part in C4 clef from here to end sharp (A5, PH) / 40 IV 1-2: e e (Bar) / 41 I 3: this note repeated (Lowe 1661 edn) / 42 III 3: s (Bar 2Ctd) / 43 I and III-V 1-2: \$\$ (Bar) / 43 I and V 2-3: \$\$ (Lowe) / 43 I 3: sharp (A5, PH) / 43 II 1-3: f' d' \$\$ (Bar) / 43 IV 2-3: slurred (PH) / 44 I–V 1: ^{s sr} (Bar, ^{sr} om. in 1Ctc) / 44 II 2: d' (Bar) / 44 IV 2–3: ^{s s} (Bar) / 44.2–45.2 IV: ^{s m m} ^m (PH); ^{s m m s} (Q) / 44.3-45.1 I and III and V: ^{m m} (A5, DJ, PH, Q) / 45 I 2: sharp (A5, PH) / 45 IV 2-3: ^{s m} (Bar) / 45 V 2: e d m. c (Bar, Lowe) / 45 IV 3: g c (PH, Q); m m (PH); s m (Q) / 46 I 2-3: m s (A5, Lowe, PH) / 46 II 2-4: d' c' ^{m s} (Bar) / 46 IV 1-2: slurred (PH) / 46 IV 2: ^m (Queen's) / 47 II 1: c' (Bar 1Ctd only) / 47 IV 1: ^b fermata (PH) / 48: C3 clef (Bar Bc and Bd, notes as if C4) / 48.1-21: black notation bssbssssbsbbsbsbsbb (Lowe) / 48.4-5: ^{s.} (Bar) / 48.14-15: ^{s.} (Bar) / 48.17-18: ^{m. c} (Bar) / 48.20: ^m (Bar) / 49-57 II and III: exchanged (Chirk) / 49 I 2: sharp (A5, PH) / 49 II 3: g' = d' in this edn] (Chirk) / 49 III 2: f' = c' in this edn] (Chirk) / 49 IV: 1-2 e e (Bar) / 51 V 3: B (Lowe 1664 edn) / 52 I 1-3: 5 m m (Lowe) / 52 I 3: sharp (A5, Lowe, PH) / 52 I III-V 1-2: ^{s s} (Bar) / 52 II 1-3: f' d' ^{s s} (Bar) / 52 II 3-4: slurred (Chirk) / 52 IV 2-3: slurred (PH) / 52 V 2-3: ^{s m} (Lowe) / 53 I and III and V 2-3: ^s (A5, DJ, PH, Q) / 53 IV 2-3: ^s (PH, Q); d (Q) / 53 IV 3: d (Bar) / 54-57 III: as II (Q) / 54 II 2–3: e' e' (Bar) / 54 IV 2: c (Bar) / 54 V 3: c and f [= G and c in this edn] on same stem (Chirk) / 55.I-56.I IV: c c c c s^{mmm} (Bar) / 55 III I-2: c' f' [= g c' in this edn] (Chirk) / 55 IV I-2: slurred (PH) / 55 V 2-3: m. c (Lowe) / 55.3–56.1 II: f'f' [= c' c' in this edn] (Chirk) / 56 V 1: B (DJ) / 57 IV 1: b with fermata (PH) / 58: C3 clef (Bar Bc and Bd, notes as if C4) / 58.1-4: black notation bbbb (Lowe) / 59-60 III and IV: exchanged (Chirk); part-crossing not indicated (Q) / 59-60 IV: as III (Bar, PH) / 59.1-60.1 I: e'f-sharp g' \$\$ (Bar) / 59.1-60.2 III: $g a b g g^{s s m m s}$ (Bar) / 59 IV 2: accidental om. (Chirk) / 60 III 2: ^b with fermata (PH); c (Q) / 61: C3 clef (Bar Bc and Bd, notes as if C4) / 61.1-7: black notation ssbsssb (Lowe) / 61.2-3 g g (Lowe) / 61.6-7: mm (Bar) / 62-4 II and III: exchanged (Bar, Chirk) / 62.2-63.1 IV: g g (Bar) / 63 III 1-3: e' e' c' s m m (Bar) / 64 IV 2: fermata (PH) / 65: C3 clef (Bar Bc and Bd, notes as if C4) / 65.1-7: black notation ssbbsbb (Lowe 1661 edn); black notation ssbssbb (Lowe 1664 edn) / 65.2-3 g g (Lowe) / 65.6-7: mm (Bar) / 66.2-67.1 IV: g g (Bar) / 67 III 1-3: e' e' c' s m m (Bar) / 68 II 2: d' (Bar 2Ctd only) / 69: C3 clef (Bar Bc and Bd, notes as if C4) / 69.1-7: black notation ssbssbb (Lowe) / 69.2-3 g g (Lowe) / 69.6-7: mm (Bar) / 70.1-72.2 II: c' c' e' e' d' c' b a b s.msm.cs.ccl (Bar, third note amended to c' by hand in facs. edn of 2Ctc) / 70.1-73.1 III: e' e' e' a b c' d' e' e' s. m s m m c c m 1 (Bar) / 71.3-72.1 I: b' e' a' m. c's (A5, PH) / 71 II 2: s (Bar 2Ctd) / 71 V 3: accidental om. (Chirk) / 72 III 2: this note om. (Q) / 72.1-73.1: a' g'-sharp) s b (Lowe) / 72.2-73.1 V: E 1 (A5); E b (Lowe) / 72 I 3: accidental not printed (Bar) / 72 IV I-2: ^{b1} (Bar) / 73 I I: accidental not printed (Bar)