

London Gallery Quire 654

Lo ! unto us a Child is born

Anon.

Saint David's New, anon. (1820)

Edited by Nicholas Markwell

[♩ = 88]

Soprano [Air]

1. Lo ! un - to us a Child is born, The
 2. "Glo - ry to God in high - est heaven, Good-
 3. To ce - le - brate our Sa - viour's birth Let

Alto

1. Lo ! un - to us a Child is born,
 2. "Glo - ry to God in high - est heaven,
 3. To ce - le - brate our Sa - viour's birth

Tenor

1. Lo ! un - to us a Child is born,
 2. "Glo - ry to God in high - est heaven,
 3. To ce - le - brate our Sa - viour's birth

Bass

1. Lo ! un - to us a Child is born,
 2. "Glo - ry to God in high - est heaven,
 3. To ce - le - brate our Sa - viour's birth

6

S

Lord of life and love, To call us on this bless-ed morn, To
 -will to men of peace," The an - gel said, "A Son is given," The
 songs of praise a - bound, And thus let all the ran - somed earth, And

A

The Lord of life and love, To call us all this bless-ed morn, To
 Good - will to men of peace," The an - gel said, "A Son is given," The
 Let songs of praise a - bound, And thus let all the ran - somed earth, And

T

The Lord of life and love, To call us all this bless-ed morn, To
 Good - will to men of peace," The an - gel said, "A Son is given," The
 Let songs of praise a - bound, And thus let all the ran - somed earth, And

B

The Lord of life and love, To call us all this bless-ed morn, To
 Good - will to men of peace," The an - gel said, "A Son is given," The
 Let songs of praise a - bound, And thus let all the ran - somed earth, And

S
call us on this_ bless - ed morn_ To hap - pi - ness a - bove, To hap - pi - ness a -
an - gel said, "A_ Son is given, Whose king - dom shall in - crease, Whose king - dom shall in -
thus let all the_ ran - somed earth_ With har - mo - ny re - sound, With har - mo - ny re -

A
call us all this bless - ed morn_ To hap - pi - ness a - bove, To hap - pi - ness a -
an - gel said, "A_ Son is given, Whose king - dom shall in - crease, Whose king - dom shall in -
thus let all the_ ran - somed earth_ With har - mo - ny re - sound, With har - mo - ny re -

T
call us all this_ bless - ed morn_ To hap - pi - ness a - bove, To hap - pi - ness a -
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thus let all the_ ran - somed earth_ With har - mo - ny re - sound, With har - mo - ny re -

S
-bove, To hap - pi - ness a - bove. To hap - pi - ness a - bove.
-crease, Whose king - dom shall in - crease, Whose king - dom shall in - crease."
-sound, With har - mo - ny re - sound, With har - mo - ny re - sound.

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-bove, To hap - pi - ness a - bove, To hap - pi - ness a - bove.
-crease, Whose king - dom shall in - crease, Whose king - dom shall in - crease."
-sound, With har - mo - ny re - sound, With har - mo - ny re - sound.

T
-bove, To hap - pi - ness a - bove. To hap - pi - ness a - bove.
-crease, Whose king - dom shall in - crease, Whose king - dom shall in - crease."
-sound, With har - mo - ny re - sound, With har - mo - ny re - sound.

B
-bove, To hap - pi - ness a - bove, To hap - pi - ness a - bove.
-crease, Whose king - dom shall in - crease, Whose king - dom shall in - crease."
-sound, With har - mo - ny re - sound, With har - mo - ny re - sound.

Lo ! unto us a Child is born is an anonymous carol, the text of which is found in two sources. It was first published in Richard Robert Chope's *Carols for use in Church during Christmas and Epiphany* (undated, c. 1870). He believed the tune (and presumably the text) to be Cornish, and it may be that he came across this carol when he was a Curate at Sherbourne in Dorset during 1858. Chope acknowledges that his text is a combination of the source and his own revisions, commenting : 'In the present book, these versions have undergone careful revision, though it seemed unnecessary to point out all the alterations, or by whom they were suggested, in this combined effort of many years.'

The second source of the text is found in Glyn Court's *Carols of the Westcountry* (1996), and a comparison of the two gives a good idea of what alterations Chope has made, including the addition of a fourth stanza (Chope's third) not present in Court that is distinctly out of step with the other three. This edition uses *Carols of the Westcountry* as its primary source for the text.

The tune *Saint David's New* was first published in the second edition of James Taylor's *A Collection of Psalm and Hymn Tunes, adapted to a variety of meters, with Anthems and other select pieces of music* (Aberdeen, c. 1820). It is set in two parts for melody and bass, with slurring and textual repeat signs, but with no text or any indication as to whether the melody is intended for Soprano or Tenor voices.

The second source of the tune is found in a manuscript book used at Bierton Strict Baptist Chapel, near Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire (built in 1831, enlarged in 1885, and closed in December 2002). The tune is named *Greenhead* and appears twice, firstly on page 14 and secondly on pages 26 & 27. The entry on page 14 is untitled and incomplete, giving the first eleven bars only (corresponding to the first page of the present edition) ; the entry on pages 26 & 27 is titled *Greenhead CM*, and is complete. The unnamed order of parts, written on four staves, is Tenor, Alto, Soprano and Bass, the first two being written in the untransposed Treble Clef, and intended to be sung an octave lower than written.

It's evident that the copyist of both versions is the same person, and that there were difficulties in copying from the source, the same errors in the first attempt being repeated on the second. In the first attempt, bar 6 was omitted in error in the upper two staves, but not the lower two, resulting in the Tenor and Alto parts being out of synchrony with the Soprano and Bass parts for two bars. On page 14, having realised the error, an extra bar was tightly squeezed in at the beginning of the repeated section in the lower two staves, bringing the four parts back into synchronicity from the beginning of the repeated section. Rather inexplicably, the same error was repeated at the second attempt on page 26, but this time the extra bar required was not added, resulting in bar 8 being omitted altogether.

It's also clear that the copyist was not a skilled musician : had they been, then copying errors at the last notes of bars 11 and 12 would have been spotted, as would the parallel fifths between Tenor and Bass at the last note of bar 10 and the first note of bar 11. Oddly, the Bass part is missing completely in the last five bars on page 26, but is present in the equivalent bars on page 14.

A comparison of the printed melody and bass with the Bierton manuscript shows remarkable agreement, which leads one to the conclusion that the source being copied was a now lost four-part version of *Saint David's New*, at some point having been renamed *Greenhead*. The identical copying error resulting in the omission of bar 6 in both attempts, affecting only the lower two staves, leads one to the conclusion that the original source was most likely in short score. As vocal slurring is present in the Bierton manuscript, it's also likely that this was a vocal score, rather than organ only.

The third source of the tune is the only one to include both text and tune : Richard Chope's Cornish source given in his *Carols for use in Church during Christmas and Epiphany* (c. 1870). Quite apart from the deliberately altered text, it's clear that the music has also been subject to revision, reclothed in the harmonic idiom of the late nineteenth-century, with its characteristic chromaticism. Chope himself may not have been responsible for this, as the music was edited by the organist of Southwell Minster, Herbert Stephen Irons. Although it's rather tempting to imagine that Chope's source might have been the same one that the Bierton manuscript copyist used, evidence in favour of any such correlation has long since been swept away under the thick Victorian carpet : accordingly, this tertiary source has been consulted in research for the present edition, but has not contributed to it.

The present edition provides a reconstruction of the original carol, using the text from Glyn Court's *Carols from the Westcountry*, the Air and Bass from James Taylor's *Collection of Psalm and Hymn Tunes*, and the Tenor and Alto from the Bierton Strict Baptist Chapel MS. Where the musical sources conflict, the printed source has precedence. Previous editions by Dr Francis Roads and Ian Cutts, based solely on the Bierton MS, have proven invaluable, and I have not hesitated to adopt their readings where they have clearly been the obvious solution. I would also like to thank Dr Roads for providing me with scans of the Bierton manuscript book, without which this edition would not have been possible.

Commentary and emendations : In the following commentary, page 14 of the Bierton manuscript is referred to as 'Bierton A', and pages 26 and 27 are referred to as 'Bierton B'. Where no distinction is made between A and B, the reference applies to both. Bars 12–21 are missing in Bierton A. The Helmholtz system of notation is used to indicate pitch, and barlines are indicated by the symbol | . The music in both sources is in G ; all pitches below refer to transposed pitch. The time signature is cut common in both sources.

Bar 1 : minim rests are not present in either source. Semibreve rests are minim rests in both sources.

Bar 4, Soprano : notes 1 & 2 and 3 & 4, slurs omitted in Bierton B

Bar 5, Soprano : dotted minim = f' in Bierton B

Bar 5, beat 4 to bar 6, beat 3 : Alto and Tenor rests omitted in Bierton

Bars 7–11, Bass : bars are empty in Bierton B

Bar 7, Bass : notes 1 & 2 slurred in Bierton A ; note 4 = G in Bierton A ; Soprano notes 1 & 2 and 3 & 4, slurred in Bierton

Bar 8 : Soprano part omitted in Bierton B ; Alto and Tenor beat 4 = crotchet rest in Bierton A

Bar 9 : opening repeat barlines present not present in Taylor and the Soprano and Bass of Bierton B

Bars 9, 12 and 19 : beamed quaver pairs not slurred in Bierton.

Bar 11, Alto : note 4 = a' in Bierton ; Tenor note 4 = f' in Bierton ; textual repeat signs omitted in all parts in Bierton A

Bar 12, Tenor : notes 4 and 5 = d' and c' in Bierton

Bar 13, Alto : four crotchet gs are scored out, and replaced with the current reading in Bierton. The scored out notes are in fact the Tenor part.

Bar 13, note 4, and bar 14 note 1 : parallel octaves between Bass and Soprano sic. in both sources

Bar 14, Alto : note 4 = e' in Bierton

Bar 15, Tenor : note 4 to Bar 17, note 2 = crotchets a | b c' d' e' || dotted minim f' crotchet a in Bierton

Bar 19, Bass : notes 2 and 3 slur missing in Bierton

Bar 21 : closing repeat barlines and crotchet rests are not present in either source. All notes are semibreves in Bierton.