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Ye Banks and Braes

Folksongs to touch the heart

CANTILLATION
ANTONY WALKER



- 1 Ye Banks and Braes** 3'21
Music: Trad. Scottish arr. Percy Grainger 1882-1961 (British Folk Music Settings No. 30)
Words: Robert Burns 1759-1796
- 2 O Waly, Waly** 3'05
Music: Trad. Somerset arr. John Rutter b. 1945
Words: Anonymous
- 3 I'm Seventeen Come Sunday** 2'46
Music: Trad. Lincolnshire arr. Percy Grainger (British Folk Music Settings No. 8)
Words: Anonymous
- 4 She Moved through the Fair** 3'37
Music: Trad. Irish arr. Daryl Runswick b. 1946
Words: Padraic Colum 1881-1972
- 5 Scotch Strathspey and Reel** 7'23
Music: Trad. English, Scottish and Irish arr. Percy Grainger
(British Folk Music Settings No. 28)
Words: Anonymous
- 6 Irish Tune from County Derry** 4'04
Music: Trad. Irish arr. Percy Grainger (British Folk Music Settings No. 5)
- 7 Deep River** 3'59
Music: Trad. African-American spiritual arr. Norman Luboff 1917-1987
Words: Anonymous
Mezzo-soprano solo: Jenny Duck-Chong
- 8 Shenandoah** 3'57
Music: Trad. American arr. James Erb b. 1926
Words: Anonymous

- 9 The Minstrel Boy** 2'20
Music: Trad. Irish arr. Dan Walker b. 1978
Words: Thomas Moore 1779-1852
Mezzo-soprano solo: Jenny Duck-Chong
- 10 Scarborough Fair** 3'19
Music: Trad. English arr. Dan Walker
Words: Anonymous
Baritone solo: Mark Donnelly
- 11 Bobby Shaftoe** 1'24
Music: Trad. Northumberland arr. David Willcocks b. 1919
Words: Anonymous
- 12 Shallow Brown** 6'50
Music: Trad. Devon arr. Percy Grainger (Sea Chanty Settings No. 3)
Words: Anonymous
Baritone solo: Teddy Tahu Rhodes
- 13 Ca' the Yowes** 6'25
Music: Trad. Scottish arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams
Words: Robert Burns 1759-1796
Tenor solo: Paul McMahan
- 14 Were You There?** 3'13
Music: Trad. African-American spiritual arr. Bob Chilcott b. 1955
Words: Anonymous
- 15 Brigg Fair** 3'03
Music: Trad. Lincolnshire arr. Percy Grainger (British Folk Music Settings No. 7)
Words: Anonymous
Tenor solo: Dan Walker

16	Steal Away	3'08
	Music: Trad. African-American spiritual arr. Paul Stanhope b. 1969 Words: Anonymous	
17	The Turtle Dove	2'43
	Music: Trad. Sussex arr. Robert Latham b. 1942 Words: Anonymous Soprano solo: Alison Morgan	
18	Waltzing Matilda	2'53
	Music: Marie Cowan 1855-1919 / Trad. Queensland arr. Elliott Gyger b. 1968 Words: Andrew Barton "Banjo" Paterson 1864-1941 / adapted by Marie Cowan	
	Total Playing Time	69'14

Cantillation
Sinfonia Australis **3**, **5**, **12**
Antony Walker *conductor*
Paul Stanhope *guest conductor* **15**, **16**

There's something about a folksong. Ancient, eternal, anonymous, handed down by word of mouth from father to son, from mother to daughter, from a rural age of simplicity and innocence to our complex and cynical modern world – folksongs have a clarity that can pierce our jaded 21st-century hearts.

So the story goes. But while our ears may hear that refreshing purity, the songs have their own tales to tell. Many are not actually anonymous at all. Some were carefully crafted with paper and pen. Often they are claimed with equal fervour by communities at opposite ends of the country, or even on opposite sides of the ocean. A few are less than a century old. Nonetheless, there is still something about a folksong.

Take **Ye Banks and Braes**, the quintessential Scottish folksong. The poem was penned by Robert Burns in 1791: the familiar version is his third attempt. The first two were to be sung to a reel known variously as *Ballendoch's Reel*, *Cambdelmore* and *Gordon's Castle*. The third time, he chose a different tune, with a different number of syllables per line: *The Caledonian Hunt's Delight*. "Do you know the history of the air?" he wrote to his friend George Thomson:

It is curious enough. A good many years ago, a Mr. Jas. Miller, Writer in your good town, a gentleman whom, possibly, you know – was in company with our friend, Clarke; and talking of Scots music, Miller expressed an ardent

ambition to be able to compose a Scots air. Mr. Clarke, partly by way of a joke, told him to keep to the black keys of the harpsichord and preserve some kind of rhythm; and he would infallibly compose a Scots air. Certain it is, that within a few days, Mr. Miller produced the rudiments of an air, which Mr. Clarke, with some touches and corrections, fashioned into the tune in question... Now, to shew you how difficult it is to trace the origins of our airs, I have heard it repeatedly asserted that this was an Irish air; nay, I met with an Irish gentleman who affirmed he had heard it in Ireland among the old women; while, on the other hand, a Lady of fashion, no less than a Countess, informed me, that the first person who introduced the air into this country was a Baronet's Lady of her acquaintance, who took down the notes from an itinerant piper in the Isle of Man.

Burns' letter did not put an end to the dispute over the origins of the tune – for example, William Chappell in 1865 claimed that an almost identical melody can be found in a 1780s publication *Dale's Collection of English Songs* – and in fact the question has still not been entirely resolved.

The arrangement on this disc is by the eccentric Australian composer and pianist Percy Grainger. "Very clingingly throughout," he writes at the head of the score – one of his passions was the English language (which he wished to see

purged of its Romance accretions), hence the instructions “louden” and “slow off lots” instead of the standard Italian musical terms *crescendo* and *molto ritardando*. The women sing the melody in unison; the men accompany in four-part harmony, and a chorus of whistlers provides a descant in the second verse.

The river Doon flows up through southwest Scotland, emptying into the Firth of Clyde. The Clouden, celebrated in **Ca’ the Yowes**, also lies in the southwest, but flows in the opposite direction, joining the Nith at Dumfries and heading south to the sea at Solway Firth. The poem exists in two quite different versions, both of which are commonly attributed to Burns, although he himself acknowledged that he had taken down the text from a performance by Isobel “Tibbie” Pagan, the proprietress of a local *howff* (a Scots word for a meeting place, usually a pub): “I added some stanzas to the song and mended others.” His friend Stephen Clarke, a church organist in Edinburgh, transcribed the melody. The opening lines have nothing to do with “calling”: *ca’* is in fact Scots for “drive”. *Yowes* are ewes; *knowes* are hills or knolls; a *burnie* is a small stream; and a *mavis* is a song thrush. This arrangement is by Ralph Vaughan Williams, a key figure in the English folksong revival in the late 19th/early 20th century.

Vaughan Williams was one of several “collectors” – most notably, Lucy Broadwood,

Cecil Sharp and Percy Grainger – who saw in Britain’s rapid industrialisation the imminent death of the oral, rural traditions, and began to go out into the villages getting the locals to sing their traditional songs, which they would either note down on paper or record on wax cylinders. (In eastern Europe, Bartók and Kodály were doing the same.) **The Turtle Dove** is one of Vaughan Williams’ collecting: from one Mr Penfold, landlord of the Plough Inn in Ruspur, Sussex. Curiously, there are striking similarities with Robert Burns’ poem *A Red, Red Rose*, written in 1794, which also features a promise to be true “Till a’ the seas gang dry, my dear, And the rocks melt wi’ the sun... And I will come again, my Luve, Tho’ ’twere ten thousand mile!” Burns claimed that it was “originally a simple old Scots song which I had picked up in the country”. The tune was also popular in America, where Cecil Sharp collected nine variants in the Appalachian Mountains (in addition to the six he collected in England); a burlesque version entitled *Mary Ann* was a popular music-hall song in the United States in the 1850s. The arrangement on this disc is by the British composer and choral director Robert Latham.

Another English folksong with a Scottish connection is **O Waly, Waly** (here arranged by the Englishman John Rutter). The very word *waly* is a Scottish expression – “welladay” would be the English equivalent – and there is a Scottish poem which begins “O waly, waly, up the bank,

O waly, waly, doun the brae”. It tells of the sorrows of Lady Barbara Erskine, wife of James, Marquis of Douglas who, falsely accused of adultery, is abandoned by her husband; apart from a few spelling differences, its second verse is identical to the third verse of the song collected by Cecil Sharp from the 70-year-old Mrs Caroline Cox in Somerset in 1905. Sharp called the song “Waly Waly (Jamie Douglas)”, presumably on the basis of that shared verse (though the words “waly, waly” appear in Mrs Cox’s song nowhere); it is now thought that the relationship between the two is further removed than Sharp believed, and how that verse got from Scotland to the south of England is anyone’s guess.

There is not the slightest shadow of doubt as to **Bobby Shaftoe’s** English credentials. The Shaftoe family (also known as Shafto, Shaftan and Shaftowe) originally lived in Northumberland, at Shafto Crag; in 1652, they bought a property in Whitworth, Durham and it was for the seat of Durham that Robert Shafto ran for parliament in 1760. “Bonnie Bobby Shafto”, as he promoted himself, made good use of the song in his (successful) campaign. If the portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds is to be believed, he was indeed tall and slim, with golden hair, though we can assume that the verse about a child fathered out of wedlock was quietly retired from use by the aspiring politician. The tune is a traditional bagpipe air first put to words as “Brave Willy

Foster”; it appears in the tune book compiled by Henry Atkinson, a fiddler from Hartburn, Northumberland, in 1694/95. This jaunty arrangement is by the English conductor and composer David Willcocks, best known for his work as a collector and editor of Christmas carols.

I’m Seventeen Come Sunday was collected by Cecil Sharp 22 times, mostly in Somerset but also in Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire. There is a version rewritten by Burns which appeared in the publication *Scots Musical Museum* in 1792. There is an Irish version, from Connemara, called “As I Roved Out,” and indeed part of the tune is thought to be based on the Irish melody *Boyne Water*. The song has been documented in the Isle of Man. In the US, it’s better known as “Sixteen Come Sunday”. But the performance Percy Grainger heard was in Redbourne, Lincolnshire, in 1905, and he asks in the score that it be sung “with a Lincolnshire accent, if possible”. The singer was Mr Fred Atkinson, “a fine rhythmic singer”, with a “ringing tenor voice”; Grainger’s setting, with its jaunty brass band accompaniment, pays homage to the vigour of Mr Atkinson’s performance. The last verse is set to a different tune, one collected by Cecil Sharp in Somerset in 1904.

At the opposite end of the spectrum comes Grainger’s 1902 setting of the **Irish Tune from County Derry** (or *Londonderry Air*, as it’s perhaps better known): not only does Grainger confine

himself to voices alone, he strips away even the words – or so it seems to us! In fact, in 1902, there were no words to this melody. The familiar “Danny Boy” poem was actually written by an Englishman, the barrister Frederick E. Weatherly, who matched it up with the tune in 1912. For Grainger, the melody was an “old Irish tune, wordless and nameless”. It existed in just one source, George Petrie’s 1855 collection *Ancient Music of Ireland*; Petrie had the tune from a “Miss J. Ross of Newtown Limavady in the County of Londonderry”, who according to a Ross family tradition had learned the melody from a “very old man” in a distant mountain cabin who had himself learned it from a harper.

Today, for most of us, even with its English poem, the song is pure Ireland. As a piece of “traditional Irish music”; however, it is an oddity. Its metre – the number of syllables to the line – does not fit with any of the traditional Irish song metres; and the structure of the melody, with its second section pitched so much higher than the first, climaxing in the famous upward leap of a sixth in the second-last line, is not at all typical of the Emerald Isle’s folk music. These factors have led some commentators to accuse Jane Ross of having tampered with the song. But what now seems more likely is that the “tampering” happened before Ross encountered the tune. The *Londonderry Air* bears some strong resemblances to the tune *The Young Man’s Dream*, as noted down in the

1790s by a young Belfast organist named Edward Bunting, collecting tunes from participants in a harpers’ festival; the performer, Denis O’Hampsey, was in his nineties at the time. The last section of the melody, with its extraordinary upward leap, may have originally belonged to a lamenting refrain to this tune, also recorded in Bunting’s manuscripts; at some point in the evolution of the melody, that line of refrain appears to have replaced or at least strongly influenced the second-last phrase of the *Londonderry Air*.

Though the melody of *The Young Man’s Dream* is similar to that of the *Londonderry Air*, the rhythm is different: there are three beats to the bar (in which form it does match up to a traditional poetic metre), whereas *Londonderry Air* has four. It has been suggested that the performance Ross heard had so much rhythmic give and take that she misinterpreted a 3/4 tune as having an extra beat in each bar, but it is more likely that a degree of rhythmic freedom had been operating on the melody for some time as different performers created their own expressive interpretations. When it appeared in print, in Petrie’s collection, the 4/4 version by Ross’s “very old man” became the standard; once Weatherly married it to “Danny Boy”, there was no turning back. Who would want to, given the song’s undeniable beauty?

No such controversy surrounds the origins of **The Minstrel Boy**. The words are by the

Irishman Thomas Moore, in his day considered the equal of Byron and Sir Walter Scott, and now remembered chiefly for this stirring poem and for *The Last Rose of Summer*. It is believed that *The Minstrel Boy* was written as a memorial to friends Moore had known as a student at Trinity College, who had participated in the 1798 rebellion of the United Irishmen: one died in prison, a second was wounded, and the third captured and hanged. Moore set his poem to the traditional air *The Moreen*; this arrangement for women’s voices is by the young Australian composer Dan Walker.

She Moved through the Fair is also widely claimed as a traditional melody – a “medieval-era fiddle tune” from County Donegal, according to some – but the details are sketchy. The tune was published by Herbert Hughes, an Irish folksong collector and arranger, who is reported to have heard it in Donegal in 1909, but whether it is a transcription or an arrangement or a completely new melody based on an authentic traditional air is not clear. (The arrangement on this disc is by Daryl Runswick, whose compositional activities have included pop and jazz songs, electronic music and several years as Head of Composition at Trinity College of Music in London.) There is a similar confusion over the words. The poet Padraic Colum claimed the poem as his own, once taking issue with the *Irish Times* when it described him as the “adaptor” of the song; but he also claimed to have heard and noted down

the final verse while on a walking tour of Donegal with Hughes. Being dissatisfied with the rest of the poem, said Colum, he rewrote it. And yet, Colum is also on record as refusing to alter a word he disliked (“din”) in the original: “Who am I to change a chosen word in an authentically traditional song?”

The singer’s apparent optimism (“It will not be long, love, till our wedding day”) is, alas, unfounded: by the final verse, his beloved is dead. Colum did not make this explicit in his verses, though he acknowledged that it was clear in the song he had heard. A few days after he had sent his poem to the publisher, he wrote an extra verse, to be inserted before the last verse: “The people were saying, ‘No two were e’er wed, But one had a sorrow that never was said.’ And I smiled as she passed with her goods and her gear, And that was the last that I saw of my dear.”

Colum’s fairground lovers are doomed; the situation at **Scarborough Fair** is less clear. Will the lady manage to sew the shirt without using a needle? Will she be able to wash it in the waterless well? Will she return to her pining lover, and be true to him this time? The answers lie in an earlier and much longer version of the poem, *The Elfin Knight*: the lady, thus challenged, responds with her own set of impossible tasks: “Can you find me an acre of land Between the salt water and the sea sand? Can you plough it with ram’s horn, And sow it all

over with one pepper corn? Can you reap it with a sickle of leather, And bind it up with a peacock's feather? When you have done, and finished your work, Then come to me for your cambrick shirt." Her faery suitor is put firmly in his place; as one Scottish variant has it, "My maidenhead I'll then keep still, Let the elphin knight do what he will. The wind's not blown my plaid awa'."

Scarborough Fair was a particularly significant event: 45 days of trading, with merchants coming from all over England and even from across the Channel to buy and sell at the Yorkshire port. **Brigg Fair** in Lincolnshire was a more modest event, a mere four days in late July (which became 5 August with the Gregorian calendar reform). Eight centuries later, the fair is still being held, although it is now just one day, and has become more of a fun-fair.

Percy Grainger visited Brigg in 1905. For a number of years, an annual music competition had been held in the town; this time, at Grainger's request, there was a new section:

Class XII. Folk Songs. Open to all. The prize in this class will be given to whoever can supply the best unpublished old Lincolnshire folk song or plough song. This song should be sung or whistled by the competitor, but marks will be allotted for the excellence rather of the song than of its actual performance. It is specially requested that the establishment of this class

be brought to the notice of old people in the country who are most likely to remember this kind of song, and that they be urged to come in with the best old song they know.

There were four entrants; the first prize of 10 shillings and sixpence went to the 72-year-old Joseph Taylor, for his song *Creeping Jane*. Grainger, struck by the elaborate ornamentation of Taylor's performance, wrote it down as accurately as he could; the following year, he returned with an Edison Bell cylinder phonograph and began a mission to record as many performances of the old songs as he could. Only a handful of people had done this anywhere in the world; Grainger was the first in the British Isles to make live recordings of his singers. Sadly, his efforts earned him not the admiration of his fellow collectors, but their patronising criticism: No doubt, said Cecil Sharp, it is much easier to capture the rhythmic irregularities of a performance with a phonograph: "The question is, it is worth doing at all?" Sharp's approach, which was the standard of the day, was to distil from the performances an underlying, "pure" version of the melody, "to record its artistic effect, not necessarily the exact means by which that effect was produced."

This, to Grainger, was a "heinous crime". In *Brigg Fair*, the melody is embellished with turns and grace notes which differ subtly from verse to verse. But *Brigg Fair* was written in 1905,

collected from Joseph Taylor with pen and paper on that first, pre-phonograph visit. Grainger did record Taylor singing it in 1908, along with eight other songs, all of which were issued on record by the Gramophone Company: the first folk singer to have his performances released commercially.

Grainger's setting of *Brigg Fair* was used, with permission, by Delius in his English Rhapsody *Brigg Fair*. Joseph Taylor was present at the London premiere; legend has it that when "his" tune was played, he rose to his feet and began to sing along.

Grainger did not restrict his attentions to country villages; in 1908, while on a concert tour of Devon, he came across an old sailor by the name of John Perring. "Found Genius Sea Chanty singing man – I in Seventh Heaven. Perks," ran the telegram he sent to his mother. The songs, with their characteristic call and response structure, were traditionally sung by sailors as they worked; Perring was able to remember the days when a skilled shantyman was a prized member of a ship's crew, so valued that his only duties were to lead the men in the singing. There were different kinds of shanty to accompany different shipboard tasks, depending on the number and length of pulls required: halyard shanties for hoisting a sail up the mast; capstan shanties for weighing anchor or raising heavy cargo. The rousing choruses, it was said, could be heard a mile away.

Shallow Brown is a halyard shanty, "very handy when there's only half a dozen pulls," according to Dick Maitland, recalling in the 1950s his years as a bosun 65 years before. Grainger heard it in Dartmouth, but it is also widely reported in the US; Captain Leighton Robinson, a Cornish shantymen who went to sea in 1888, remembered hearing it "sung by the black crew of an American full-rigged ship, the *Garnet*, of New York, at Macabei, a guano island in the South Pacific."

Perring understood Shallow Brown to be a sailor, whose girl was standing on the quay waving goodbye as the ship pulled away; why Brown was "shallow," he could not say, "unless it was that he was shallow in his heart." In the American versions, Shallow Brown appears to be the girl: "Shallo Brown, I'm going to leave you... Oh I have left the wife and baby," runs one version. Grainger's setting, with an accompaniment including guitars, harmonium, brass and tremolo strings and piano, conjures up the wide, swelling waves of the open sea.

What Shall We Do with a Drunken Sailor is, according to the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, a "stamp and go" shanty, for picking up a rope and running along the deck with it, for example when hoisting a boat on board. Grainger describes it as a "top-sail haulyard chanty," but whatever its use, there is certainly something to be raised, as is clear from the refrain's "Up she rises." In **Scotch**

Strathspey and Reel, Grainger combines the shanty with folk tunes from Scotland and Ireland:

It is curious how many Celtic dance tunes there are that are so alike in their harmonic schemes (however diverse they may be rhythmically and melodically) that any number of them can be played together at the same time and mingle harmoniously. Occasionally a sea-chanty will fit in perfectly with such a group of Celtic tunes.

If a room-full of Scotch and Irish fiddlers and pipers and any nationality of English-speaking chanty-singing deep-sea sailors could be spirited together and suddenly miraculously endowed with the gift for polyphonic improvisation enjoyed, for instance, by South Sea Island Polynesians what a strange merry friendly Babel of tune, harmony and rhythm might result! My setting of the strathspey mirrors the imagination of such a contingency, using 6 Scotch and Irish tunes and halves of tunes that go well with each other and a chanty that blends amiably with the lot. These 7 melodies are heard together in the second climax of the strathspey.

In the reel no such conglomeration of traditional tune-stuffs is undertaken, but the South Sea Island type of improvised harmonic polyphony is occasionally reflected, the reel tune occurs in augmentation on the hammer-wood [xylophone], and towards the end of the work I have added a counter-tune of my own to the words of the sea-chanty.

A strathspey is a kind of slow reel characterised by its use of dotted rhythms and “Scotch snaps” – an inverted dotted rhythm where instead of a pattern of alternating long and short notes, the quick note comes first.

Shenandoah’s tale of the traveller longing for the river of his Virginian homeland has earned it the status of “interim official state song” of the Commonwealth of Virginia. In the earliest versions of the song, however, “Shenandoah” refers not to the river, but to a Native American chief whose daughter stole the heart of a white trader: “Oh Shenandoah, I love your daughter... I’ll take her ‘cross your rollin’ water...” And the “rolling river” is not the Shenandoah, but the Missouri, hundreds of kilometres west of Virginia. The song seems to have started out as a river-shanty, sung by the men who plied flatboats along the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers in the early 1800s; presumably it made its way downstream to the sea where it was picked up by the clipper ships and carried around the world. This arrangement, by James Erb, was made for Virginia’s University of Richmond Choir.

America’s best-known export in the field of traditional music is undoubtedly the African-American spiritual. It can feel a little uncomfortable, associating these profoundly sacred songs with the extremely secular, even downright profane nature of other folksongs. But it cannot be denied that the spirituals were songs of the people, songs which grew out of the day-to-day

experiences of life as a slave in the American South. Various scholars have pointed out similarities in performance practice with the musical traditions of the parts of Africa from which the slaves were taken: the earliest accounts describe spirituals in a call-and-response style, accompanied by stamping, clapping and dancing. They were generally regarded with distaste and suspicion by white slaveowners, many of whom tried to forbid their performance and prevent the slaves from congregating. In 1855, in his autobiography *My Bondage and Freedom*, the former slave Frederick Douglass explained that for these oppressed communities, the spirituals’ biblical rhetoric of death as the longed-for gate to paradise had merged with the slaves’ concrete hope of escape from the plantations to the free north. Many of the spirituals were used as a code, either signalling an imminent escape or transmitting information about the route and how to avoid recapture. **Steal Away** is an example of the former; **Deep River** of the latter – wading through water being the best way to put the dogs off the scent. **Were You There?** is one of the few spirituals to cross over into mainstream hymnals, its simple but deeply personal response to the crucifixion of Christ making it a highlight of Good Friday devotions in many traditions.

Until 1871, African-American spirituals were barely known outside the southern states of the

US. It was the Fisk Jubilee Singers who brought them to the attention of northern and European audiences. Fisk University, originally the Fisk Free Colored School, was established in Nashville, Tennessee by the American Missionary Association in 1866 to cater for the educational needs of freed slaves. The Jubilee Singers started as a student choir, singing conventional hymns and anthems. When the university found itself in financial difficulties, the Singers went north on a fund-raising tour, performing their usual repertoire – and one spiritual, which they sang as an encore. Gradually, the spirituals came to be the main attraction, and the Fisk Jubilee Singers became world famous.

Interestingly, with that success came a major shift in the nature of the spirituals themselves. Black praise meetings were conducted in a style which to outsiders seemed irreverent and even offensive. The Rev. Robert Mallard in 1859 described his experience of a service in Chattanooga:

Such confusion of sights and sounds... The whole congregation kept up one loud monotonous strain, interrupted by various sounds; groans and screams and clapping of hands... Considering the mere excitement manifested in these disorderly ways, I could but ask: What religion is there in this?

The Jubilee Singers, on the other hand, were praised for the precision of their performances,

with different voices chiming in one after another, sudden changes in dynamics and careful alternation of parts – they may have given the impression of improvisation, but the performances were very carefully rehearsed. The arrangements they sang were by Theodore Seward, a respected church musician from New York, who had it seems never even visited the South. Since Seward, there has been a long line of art music composers creating concert versions of spirituals: Americans such as Norman Luboff, but also “foreigners” such as the former Kings College chorister Bob Chilcott, and the Australian Paul Stanhope. These composers’ arrangements set aside the wildness of the original performances, but emphasise the intensity of feeling through a profound sense of dignity. In the words of Harry Burleigh, the African-American singer who introduced Dvořák to the world of spirituals, “Their worth is weakened unless they are done impressively, for through all these songs there breathes a hope, a faith in the ultimate justice and brotherhood of man. The cadences of sorrow invariably turn to joy, and the message is ever manifest that eventually deliverance from all that hinders and oppresses the soul will come and man – every man – will be free.”

Australia’s most famous contribution to the folksong repertoire also carries a message of freedom and rejection of oppression, but takes a

decidedly less reverential position. **Waltzing Matilda**, the story of the sheep-stealing tramp who kills himself to avoid capture, has come to be associated with the independence, larrikin spirit, resourcefulness and defiance of authority prized as typical of the Australian national character, and is regarded by many as an alternative national anthem. The poem was written by the Australian poet A.B. “Banjo” Paterson in 1895, possibly modelled on a popular bush song known as *The Bold Fusilier*, though there is some uncertainty as to where that song came from, and whether it came before or after *Waltzing Matilda*. Paterson was at Dagworth station in Queensland visiting his fiancé’s old school friend, Christina Macpherson, who told him of a tune she said she had heard a few months earlier at a race meeting in Warrnambool, Victoria. That tune is generally believed to have been a song called *Thou Bonnie Wood of Craigielea*, composed in 1818 by Robert Barr; Paterson, liking the tune, wrote *Waltzing Matilda* to go with it. Macpherson, many years later, wrote:

I might add that in a short time everyone in the District was singing it...When Mr Patterson [sic] returned to Sydney he wrote and asked me to send him the tune. I am no musician but did my best: & later on he told me he had sent it on to a musical friend of his who thought it would make a good bush song.

Macpherson’s manuscript still exists – it is in the collection of the National Library of Australia – and her tune, while similar to both *Craigielea* and *Waltzing Matilda*, differs from both. The words on that manuscript are also different from the “official” ones. The final versions of both tune and words are the work of Marie Cowan, who reworked the piece as an advertising jingle for Billy Tea! The first published version, in 1903, carried an ad for Billy Tea on the back, and was intended to be given away to those purchasing the product.

Paterson’s original poem is however preserved in a version sung in Queensland to a completely different tune known as the Buderim version or the O’Neill version, after one John O’Neill, who claimed he had heard his father singing it around 1912. (To make things even more complicated, there is also a variant of *that* tune called the Cloncurry version, which some claim was composed by Josephine Péné, wife of Christina Macpherson’s brother Robert.) The arrangement by Australian composer Elliott Gyger combines the Cowan and Buderim versions; though the harmonies are more modern, the effect has a ring of Grainger about it, especially his “Australian ideal” of “democratic poly-phony”:

From marketing giveaway to electioneering slogan, from bawdy sea-shanties to passionate religious outpourings, from lost lovers to light-o’-loves to declarations of unending love: folksongs cover the whole range of human strengths and

frailties. Ancient or not so ancient, anonymous or not so anonymous, wholesome or not so wholesome, there is still, and there always will be, something about a folksong.

Natalie Shea

1 Ye Banks and Braes

Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair?
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae weary, fu' o' care?
Thou'lt break my heart, thou warbling bird,
That wantons thro' the flowering thorn,
Thou minds me o' departed joys,
Departed never to return.

Aft ha'e I roved by bonnie Doon
To see the rose and woodbine twine,
And ilka bird sang o' its luvie,
And fondly sae did I o' mine.
Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Fu' sweet upon its thorny tree,
But my fause lover staw my rose,
But ah! he left the thorn wi' me.

Robert Burns

2 O Waly, Waly

The water is wide, I cannot get o'er,
And neither have I wings to fly;
Give me a boat that will carry two,
And both shall row, my love and I.

O down in the meadows the other day,
A-gathering flowers both fine and gay,
A-gathering flowers both red and blue,
I little thought what love can do.

I leaned my back up against some oak,
Thinking that he was a trusty tree;
But first he bended and then he broke;
And so did my false love to me.

A ship there is, and she sails the sea,
She's loaded deep as deep can be,
But not so deep as the love I'm in:
I know not if I sink or swim.

O love is handsome and love is fine,
And love's a jewel while it is new,
But when it is old it groweth cold,
And fades away like morning dew.

Anonymous

3 I'm Seventeen Come Sunday

As I rose up one May morning,
One May morning so wurly,
I overtook a pretty fair maid,
Just as the sun was dawnin',
With me rue rum ray,
Fother didle ay,
Wok fol air didle ido.

Her stockin's white, and her boots were bright,
And her buckling shone like silver;
She had a dark and a rolling eye,
And her hair hung round her shoulder.

"Where are you going, my pretty fair maid,
Where are you going, my honey?"
She answered me right cheerfully;
"I'm an errand for me mummy."

"How old are you, my pretty fair maid,
How old are you, my honey?"
She answered me right cheerfully,
"I am seventeen come Sunday."

"Will you take a man, my pretty fair maid,
Will you take a man, my honey?"

She answered me right cheerfully;
"I darst not for me mummy."

"Will you come down to my mummy's house,
When the moon shone bright and clearly.
You'll come down, I'll let you in,
And me mummy shall not hear me."

"O it's now I'm with my soldier lad,
His ways they are so winnin';
It's drum and fife is my delight,
And a pint o' rum in the mornin'."

Anonymous

4 She Moved through the Fair

My young love said to me, "My mother won't mind
And my father won't slight you for your lack
of kind."
And she stepped away from me, and this she
did say:
"It will not be long, love, till our wedding day."

She stepped away from me and she went thro'
the fair
And fondly I watched her move here and
move there,
And then she went homeward with one
star awake
As the swan in the evening moves over the lake.

Last night she came to me, she came softly in,
So softly she came that her feet made no din,
And she laid her hand on me and this she did say:
"It will not be long, love, till our wedding day."

Padraic Colum

5 Scotch Strathspey and Reel

What shall we do with a drunken sailor,
Early in the morning?
Put 'im in the long boat 'n' let 'im lay there,
Early in the morning.
Way ho and up she rises,
Early in the morning.

Anonymous

7 Deep River

Deep River, my home is over Jordan,
Deep River, Lord, I want to cross over into
campground.
Oh don't you want to go to that Gospel feast,
That promised land where all is peace.
Deep River, my home is over Jordan,
Deep River, Lord, I want to cross over into
campground.

Anonymous

8 Shenandoah

O Shenando', I long to see you,
And hear your rolling river,
O Shenando', I long to see you,
'Way, we're bound away,
Across the wide Missouri.

I long to see your smiling valley...

'Tis seven long years since last I see you...

Anonymous

9 The Minstrel Boy

The minstrel boy to the war has gone,
In the ranks of death you will find him;
His father's sword he has girded on
And his wild harp slung behind him.
"Land of song," said the warrior bard,
"Though all the world betrays thee,
One sword at least thy rights shall guard,
One faithful harp shall praise thee."

The minstrel fell, but the foeman's chain
Could not bring his proud soul under,
The harp he loved never spoke again
For he tore its cords asunder.
"No chains shall sully thee,
Thou soul of love and bravery!
Thy songs were made for the pure and free,
They shall never sound in slavery."

Thomas Moore

10 Scarborough Fair

Are you going to Scarborough Fair?
Parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme
Remember me to one who lives there,
She was once a true love of mine.

Have her make me a cambric shirt,
Without no seam or fine needlework,
Then she'll be a true love of mine.

Have her wash it in yonder dry well,
Where water ne'er sprung nor drop of rain fell,
And then she'll be a true love of mine.

Love imposes impossible tasks,
Although not more than any heart asks,
And I must know she's a true love of mine.

Anonymous

11 Bobby Shaftoe

Bobby Shaftoe's gone to sea,
Silver buckles at his knee;
He'll come back and marry me,
Bonny Bobby Shaftoe.

Bobby Shaftoe's bright and fair,
Combing down his yellow hair,
He's my ain for evermair,
Bonny Bobby Shaftoe.

Bobby Shaftoe's tall and slim,
He's always dressed so neat and trim,
The ladies they all keek at him,
Bonny Bobby Shaftoe.

Bobby Shaftoe's gotten a bairn,
For to dandle in his arm,
In his arm and on his knee,
Bobby Shaftoe loves me.

Anonymous

12 Shallow Brown

Shaller Brown, you're goin' ter leave me,
Shaller, Shaller Brown;
Shaller Brown, you're goin' ter leave me,
Shaller, Shaller Brown.

Shaller Brown, don't ne'er deceive me,
You're goin' away accrost the ocean,
You'll ever be my heart's devotion,

For your return my heart is burning,

Shaller Brown, you're goin' ter leave me,
Shaller, Shaller Brown;
Shaller Brown, don't ne'er deceive me,
Shaller, Shaller Brown.

Anonymous

13 Ca' the Yowes

Ca' the yowes tae the knowes,
Ca' them whar the heather grows,
Ca' them whar the burnie rows,
My bonnie dearie.

Hark the mavis' e'enin' sang,
Sounding Cluden's woods amang;
Then afauldin' let us gang,
My bonnie dearie.

Fair and lovely as thou art,
Thou hast stown my very heart;
I can die, but canna part,
My bonnie dearie.

While waters wimple to the sea,
While day blinks in the lift sae hie,
Till clay-cauld death shall blin' my e'e
Ye shall be my dearie.

Robert Burns

14 Were You There?

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
*Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble,
tremble, tremble,*
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?
*Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble,
tremble, tremble,*
Were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Anonymous

15 Brigg Fair

It was on the fifth of August-er,
The weather fine and fair,
Unto Brigg Fair I did repair,
For love I was inclined.

I rose up with the lark in the morning,
With my heart so full of glee,
Of thinking there to meet my dear,
Long time I'd wished to see.

I took hold of her lily white hand,
O and merrily was her heart,
"And now we're met together
I hope we ne'er shall part."

For it's meeting is a pleasure,
And parting is a grief,
But an unconstant lover
Is worse than any thief.

The green leaves they shall wither
And the branches they shall die
If ever I prove false to her,
To the girl that loves me.

Anonymous

17 The Turtle Dove

Fare you well, my dear, I must be gone
And leave you for a while.
If I roam away I'll come back again,
Though I roam ten thousand miles, my dear,
Though I roam ten thousand miles.

So fair thou art, my bonnie lad,
So deep in love am I,
But I never will prove false to the bonnie lad I love,
'Till the stars fall from the sky, my dear,
'Till the stars fall from the sky.

The sea will never run dry, my dear,
Nor rocks melt in the sun,
But I'll ne'er prove false to the bonnie lad I love
'Till all these things be done, my dear,
'Till all these things be done.

O yonder sits that little turtle dove
He sits on yon high tree,
A-making a moan for the loss of his love,
As I will do for thee, my dear,
As I will do for thee.

Anonymous

16 Steal Away

Steal away, steal away,
Steal away to Jesus,
Steal away, steal away home,
I ain't got long to stay here.

My Lord he calls me,
He calls me by de thunder,
The trumpet sounds within my soul,
I ain't got long to stay here.
Green trees are bendin',
Poor sinners stand a tremblin',
The trumpet sounds within my soul,
I ain't got long to stay here.

Anonymous

18 Waltzing Matilda

Oh there once was a swagman camped in
a billabong
Under the shade of a coolibah tree;
And he sang as he looked at his old billy boiling,
"Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me?"
*Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda my darling,
Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me?
Waltzing Matilda and leading a waterbag,
Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me?*

Down came a jumbuck to drink at the waterhole,
Up jumped the swagman and grabbed him
with glee;
And he sang as he stowed him away in
his tuckerbag,
"You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me."

Down came the squatter a-riding his thoroughbred,
Down came policemen, one, two and three.
"Whose is the jumbuck you've got in
the tuckerbag?
You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me."

But the swagman he up and he jumped in
the waterhole,
Drowning himself by the coolibah tree;
And his ghost may be heard as it sings in
the billabong,
"Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me?"
*Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda my darling,
Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me?
Waltzing Matilda and leading a waterbag,
Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me?*

A.B. Paterson

Once a jolly swagman camped in a billabong
Under the shade of a coolibah tree;
And he sang as he watched and waited till his
billy boiled,
"You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me."
*Waltzing Matilda, waltzing Matilda,
You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me.*
And he sang as he watched and waited till his
billy boiled,
"You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me."

Down came a jumbuck to drink at the billabong,
Up jumped the swagman and grabbed him with glee,
And he sang as he shoved that jumbuck in
his tuckerbag,
"You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me."

Up rode the squatter, mounted on his thoroughbred,
Down came the troopers, one, two, three.
"Whose that jolly jumbuck you've got in
your tuckerbag?
You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me."

Up jumped the swagman, sprang into the billabong,
"You'll never catch me alive," said he.
And his ghost may be heard as you pass by
that billabong,
"Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me?"
*Waltzing Matilda, waltzing Matilda,
Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me?*
And his ghost may be heard as you pass by
that billabong,
"Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me?"

Adapted by Marie Cowan

Cantillation

Cantillation is a chorus of professional singers – an ensemble of fine voices with the speed, agility and flexibility of a chamber orchestra. Formed in 2001 by Antony Walker and Alison Johnston, it has since been busy in the concert hall, opera theatre and the recording studio.

Performance highlights have included John Adams' *Harmonium*, the Australian premiere of Sofia Gubaidulina's *Now Always Snow* and a concert of works reflecting on the Mozart Requiem, all with the Sydney Symphony; Mahler's Symphony No. 8 with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra; several tours for Musica Viva; and Ross Edwards' *Star Chant* and the Australian premiere of Adams' *On the Transmigration of Souls* for the Sydney Festival.

Cantillation has sung for the Dalai Lama, recorded all the national anthems for the Rugby World Cup (and performed at the opening ceremony) and recorded soundtracks for several movies (including the award-winning score for *The Bank*) and the telemovie *Farscape*.

Recent engagements include several performances with the Sydney Symphony (Haydn's *Nelson Mass*, Jonathan Mills' *Sandakan Threnody* and regular appearances in the orchestra's *Shock of the New* series) and concerts with Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli. Cantillation has also appeared in Pinchgut

Opera's productions of Handel's *Semele*, Henry Purcell's *The Fairy Queen*, Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* and Rameau's *Dardanus*.

For ABC Classics, Cantillation has made numerous recordings including Fauré's Requiem, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, a collection of contemplative sacred works from the 20th century entitled *Prayer for Peace*, Handel's *Messiah* (released on CD and DVD), a collection of Christmas carols entitled *Silent Night*, and a disc of great choral masterpieces of the Renaissance, including Allegri's *Miserere* (featured in Bangarra Dance Theatre's production of *CLAN*, seen around Australia in 2004). Cantillation also appears on the ARIA Award-winning CD *The Voice* with Teddy Tahu Rhodes, and on the recently-released disc *Magnificat*, with Emma Kirkby.

In 2006 engagements include Rachmaninoff's *The Bells*, Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloe* and *The Shock of the New* with the Sydney Symphony, recording music for the Commonwealth Games, a recording of the Mozart Requiem for CD release and Mozart's *Idomeneo* for Pinchgut Opera.

Sopranos

Anna Fraser
Belinda Montgomery
Alison Morgan
Hannah Penman
Jane Sheldon
Nicole Thomson

Altos

Jo Burton
Timothy Chung
Jenny Duck-Chong
Anne Farrell [15](#), [16](#)
Kerith Fowles
Melissa Kenny
Natalie Shea
Anna Zerner

Tenors

Richard Black
Philip Chu
Benjamin Loomes
Dominic Ng
John Pitman
James Renwick [3](#), [5](#), [12](#)
Daniel Walker
Raff Wilson

Basses

Peter Alexander
Daniel Beer
Corin Bone
Mark Donnelly
Craig Everingham

Andrew Fysh [3](#), [5](#), [12](#)
David Greco
Julian Liberto
Ben Macpherson [3](#), [5](#), [12](#), [15](#), [16](#)
Sébastien Maury [3](#), [5](#), [12](#)
David Russell

Antony Walker

Antony Walker studied composition, cello, voice and conducting at the University of Sydney. While still a student, he was invited to conduct the Sydney and Melbourne Symphony Orchestras and was a member of the Opera Australia Young Artist Program. He also established the Contemporary Singers and, at 22, became Musical Director of Sydney Philharmonia Choirs.

In 1997 Antony Walker moved to London and was offered a position as Chorusmaster and staff conductor at Welsh National Opera, where he conducted, among others, *Queen of Spades*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Carmen*, *Rigoletto* and *La traviata*. He became a regular visitor to the USA and worked at Wolf Trap Opera and with the opera companies in Minnesota and Cincinnati.

In 2001 with Alison Johnston he formed the professional chorus Cantillation and the chamber orchestras Sinfonia Australis and Orchestra of the Antipodes, all of which have since made numerous recordings for ABC Classics.

In 2002 Antony Walker was appointed Artistic Director and Conductor of Washington Concert Opera. Recent engagements include *Madama Butterfly* and the North American premieres of *The Handmaid's Tale* and *The Elephant Man* (Minnesota Opera), *Dardanus* (Wolf Trap Opera), Handel's *Orlando* (New York City Opera), *Così fan tutte* and *Tosca* (Hawaii Opera Theatre), *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* (Pittsburgh Opera), *Roméo et Juliette* and *La Cenerentola* (Sugar Creek Festival), *Nixon in China* (Minnesota Opera), *The Fairy Queen*, *L'Orfeo* and *Dardanus* (Pinchgut Opera) and, for Washington Concert Opera, *Esclarmonde*, *Luisa Miller*, *Béatrice et Bénédicte*, *Stiffelio*, *Roberto Devereux*, *La donna del lago* and *Tancredi*.

Recently-released CDs include *The Fairy Queen* and *L'Orfeo* (Pinchgut Opera), a disc of Christmas carols entitled *Silent Night, Baroque Duets* with Sara Macliver and Sally-Anne Russell (nominated for a 2005 ARIA Award and winner of the ABC Classic FM Listener's Choice Award), *Teddy Tahu Rhodes – The Voice*, winner of the 2004 ARIA Award for Best Classical Album, and *Magnificat* with Emma Kirkby.

Paul Stanhope

Paul Stanhope studied composition at the University of Sydney with Peter Sculthorpe and at the Guildhall School of Music in London. He has joined forces with Cantillation as guest conductor on a number of occasions, including a Musica Viva CountryWide tour in 2005 and also as chorusmaster in collaboration with the Sydney Symphony in 2004 and 2005. In 2006, Paul Stanhope took up an appointment as Musical Director of the Sydney Chamber Choir.

Engagements in 2006 include a collaborative concert with the Sydney Children's Choir and the Danish Radio National Girls' Choir. He will also be guest conductor for the Sydney-based Sonic Arts Ensemble.

Paul Stanhope studied conducting at the University of Sydney with Peter Sculthorpe and at the Guildhall School of Music in London. Career highlights include first place in the Toru Takemitsu Composition Prize in 2004. His music also featured in the opening ceremony of the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games.

Sinfonia Australis

Violins

Anna McDonald
Michelle Kelly
Alexandra d'Elia

Violas

Amanda Murphy
Greg Ford

Cellos

Jamie Hey
Sally Maer

Bass

Kees Boersma

Flute/Piccolo

Emma Sholl

Oboe

Antony Chesterman

Clarinet

Christopher Tingay

Bassoon

Andrew Barnes

Horns

Robert Johnson
Marnie Sebire
Geoffrey O'Reilly
Rachel Silver

Trumpets

Leanne Sullivan
Helen Gill

Trombones

Scott Kinmont
Ros Jorgensen
Brett Page

Tubas

Carolyn John
Brendon Lukin

Percussion

Rebecca Lagos
Richard Miller
Colin Piper

Guitars

Janet Agostino
Raffaele Agostino

Piano/Keyboards

Phoebe Briggs
Catherine Davis
Sally Whitwell

Executive Producers Robert Patterson, Lyle Chan

Recording Producer, Engineer and Mastering

Virginia Read

Project Coordinator Alison Johnston

Editorial and Production Manager Hilary Shrubbs

Publications Editor Natalie Shea

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