THE ORGAN WORKS OF HEALEY WILLAN

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the North Texas State College in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

Master of Music

By

Robert L. Massingham, B. S., M. S.

Denton, Texas

August, 1957
PREFACE

Healey Willan occupies an unique position in Canadian music and can be considered as that nation's "elder musical statesman." At the time of writing he is a septuagenarian and still very much active in his profession. Born and trained in England, he was well-established there when he was persuaded to come to Toronto, Canada, in 1913 at the age of thirty-three. Since that time he has contributed enormously to the growth of music in his adopted country, carrying on the traditions of his fine English background in music while encouraging the development of native individuality in Canadian music.

Willan has been first and foremost a musician of the church—an organist and choirmaster—a proud field which can boast many an eminent name in music including that of J. S. Bach. Willan's creativity in music has flowered in many other directions—as a distinguished teacher, as a lecturer and recitalist, and as a composer. He has written in all forms and for all instruments, but his greatest renown, at any rate in the United States, is for his organ and choral works. The latter constitute his largest single body of compositions by numerical count of titles, and his organ works are in a close second place.
Willan's Introduction, Passacaglia, and Fugue has been well-known for decades as one of the finest compositions in organ literature, enjoying a position alongside the organ works of Liszt, Franck, and Reubke. During the past decade Willan has increased the number of his published organ compositions with the addition of well over fifty works. He is therefore to be reckoned among the most prolific of composers for organ, and it is apt to survey his output.

What the future will bring forth from Willan in addition to his present large body of organ works only the composer might say. But the existing works make a long list and cover creative periods from quite early years to the present. A comprehensive understanding of Willan as a composer for the organ is thus possible, and whatever additions the composer might make in the future, it is apparent that a sizable body of his organ works is before us now.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE ........................................ 1

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS ........................ 1

Chapter

I. BIOGRAPHY OF HEALEY
SURVEY OF HIS CAREER IN MUSIC ............ 5

II. THE INTRODUCTION, PASSACAGLIA, AND FUGUE ... 11
Critical and His Analysis

III. THE CHORALE PRELUDES
CANTUS FIRMUS SET I & II .......................... 16

Critical and His Analysis

The Three Earliest
Six Chorale Preludes
Five Preludes of Ten Hymn Preludes, Set I
Ten Hymn Preludes, Set II
Ten Hymn Preludes, Set III
Four Recent Miscellaneous Settings

IV. REMAINING ORGAN WORKS .................. 106

The Earlier Works
The Later Works

V. CONCLUSION ................................. 133

BIBLIOGRAPHY ................................ 135
# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Willan, Introduction, measure 1</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Willan, Introduction, measures 11-12</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Willan, Introduction, measure 34</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Willan, Passacaglia, measures 1-8</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Bach, Passacaglia, measures 1-8</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Willan, Passacaglia, measures 9-12</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Willan, Passacaglia, measures 17-18</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Willan, Passacaglia, measures 33-34</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Willan, Passacaglia, measures 41-42</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Willan, Passacaglia, measures 51-52</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Willan, Passacaglia, measures 57-58</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Willan, Passacaglia, measures 65-66</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Willan, Passacaglia, measures 73-74</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Willan, Passacaglia, measures 81-82</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Willan, Passacaglia, measures 89-90</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Willan, Passacaglia, measures 97-98</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Bach, Passacaglia, measures 49-50</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Willan, Passacaglia, measure 105</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure</td>
<td>Page</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Willan, <em>Fugue</em>, measures 1-4</td>
<td>41</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Willan, <em>Fugue</em>, measures 34-36</td>
<td>43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Willan, <em>Fugue</em>, measures 70-72</td>
<td>49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Willan, <em>Fugue</em>, measures 95-97</td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Willan, <em>Chorale Prelude No. 1</em>, measures 4-5</td>
<td>58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Willan, <em>Chorale Prelude No. 2</em>, measures 1-2</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Willan, <em>Chorale Prelude No. 2</em>, measures 48-51</td>
<td>61</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Willan, <em>Six Chorale Preludes</em>, Set I, No. 4, measures 5-6</td>
<td>65</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Willan, <em>Six Chorale Preludes</em>, Set I, No. 6, measures 3-5</td>
<td>67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. Willan, <em>Six Chorale Preludes</em>, Set II, No. 6, measures 7-8</td>
<td>75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Willan, <em>Six Chorale Preludes</em>, Set II, No. 6, measures 34-35</td>
<td>75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. Willan, <em>Five Preludes</em>, No. 1, measures 1-3</td>
<td>78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Willan, <em>Five Preludes</em>, No. 3, measures 6-7</td>
<td>79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. Willan, <em>Five Preludes</em>, No. 5, measures 16-17</td>
<td>81</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. Willan, <em>Five Preludes</em>, No. 5, measures 58-60</td>
<td>82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure</td>
<td>Page</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. Willan, Ten Hymn Preludes, Set I, No. 2, measures 15-16</td>
<td>85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. Willan, Ten Hymn Preludes, Set I, No. 3, measures 38-40</td>
<td>86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Willan, Ten Hymn Preludes, Set I, No. 5, measures 28-29</td>
<td>88</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. Willan, Ten Hymn Preludes, Set I, No. 5, measures 81-82</td>
<td>89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. Willan, Ten Hymn Preludes, Set I, No. 7, measures 1-2</td>
<td>91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. Willan, Ten Hymn Preludes, Set I, No. 9, measures 4-8</td>
<td>92</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. Willan, Ten Hymn Preludes, Set I, No. 9, measures 4-8</td>
<td>93</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. Willan, Ten Hymn Preludes, Set I, No. 9, measures 31-33</td>
<td>94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. Willan, Ten Hymn Preludes, Set I, No. 9, measures 101-102</td>
<td>95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52. Willan, Ten Hymn Preludes, Set I, No. 10, measures 23-24</td>
<td>96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53. Willan, Epilogue, measures 1-2</td>
<td>108</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54. Willan, Epilogue, measures 22-23</td>
<td>109</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55. Willan, Prelude in B minor, measures 1-2</td>
<td>110</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56. Willan, Prelude in B minor, measures 23-24</td>
<td>111</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57. Willan, Fugue in B minor, measures 1-6</td>
<td>112</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58. Willan, Miniature Suite, &quot;Scherzo,&quot; measures 1-3</td>
<td>115</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59. Willan, Miniature Suite, &quot;Finale,&quot; measures 1-3</td>
<td>116</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60. Willan, Fugue in G minor, measures 1-4</td>
<td>122</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure</td>
<td>Page</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61. Willan, Tema Ostinato, measures 1-4</td>
<td>123</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62. Willan, Festival, measure 1</td>
<td>125</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63. Willan, Festival, measures 15-16</td>
<td>126</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64. Willan, Rondino, measures 1-2</td>
<td>128</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65. Willan, Chaconne, measures 1-4</td>
<td>130</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66. Willan, Chaconne, measures 59-63</td>
<td>132</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

BIOGRAPHY OF HEALEY WILLAN AND SURVEY
OF HIS COMPOSITIONS AND HIS
CAREER IN MUSIC

Healey Willan was born at Balham, England, a suburb of London, on October 12, 1880. His parents were of Irish extraction, his mother's name having been Eleanor Healey and his father's James Henry Burton Willan. His early love for music was encouraged, and from the beginning he was fascinated by church music. He received his education at Saint Saviour's Choir School, Eastbourne, on the Channel coast southeast of London, which he entered at the age of eight, remaining until his fourteenth year. By his eleventh year the young Willan was assisting the organist and choirmaster of the school, Walter Hay Sangster, by playing services and taking charge of the choir on occasion.¹, ²

¹Letter with biographical information from Freda W. Ferguson, music librarian, Oxford University Press, Toronto, Canada, June 24, 1957. This is one of two principal sources, the second of which follows immediately below, of biographical information concerning Healey Willan. Citations from either of these sources will be made hereinafter only for direct quotations or in reference to specific information contained in one source but not in the other.

²Louise G. McCready, Famous Musicians, one of an unnumbered series of Canadian Portraits (Toronto, 1957), pp. 103-134.
Willan pursued advanced musical study with William Stevenson Hoyte, organist of the Church of All Saints, Margaret Street, London, from 1868 to 1907 and a composer of church music.\(^3\) By the time he was sixteen Willan had been sufficiently prepared by Hoyte to take the examination for Associate of the Royal College of Organists, and two years later he passed the College’s examination for Fellow, receiving his diploma from Sir Hubert Parry, one of England’s most respected composers, acting as an officer of the Royal College of Organists.

From 1900 to 1913 Willan was organist and choirmaster at churches in London and gave recitals throughout England. He was at Christ Church, Wanstead, from 1900 to 1903, at which time he moved to the Church of Saint John the Baptist, Kensington, where he remained until 1913. During this time he was closely associated with the London Gregorian Association and became recognized as an authority on plainsong, an interest which has continued throughout his life.

In 1913 Willan moved to Canada, where he had become known through his choral works for the church, to become head of the theory department of the Toronto Conservatory of Music (since renamed the Royal Conservatory of Music). He remained at the Conservatory until 1936, and the following year he accepted

---

\(^3\)A. Eaglefield-Hull, editor, A Dictionary of Modern Music and Musicians (New York, 1924). Hoyte (1844-1917) was a pupil of John Goss and George Cooper, was a well-known organ recitalist in England, a teacher at the Royal Academy of Music, and a composer of music in various forms besides church music.
a professorship on the faculty of music of the University of Toronto, from which he retired in 1950, remaining, however, as University Organist, in which capacity he has played for many convocations and given many recitals.

Willan was organist and choirmaster of Saint Paul's Anglican Church, Toronto, from 1913 to 1921, when he moved to the Church of Saint Mary Magdalene, where he has remained to the present time and with which he has achieved prominent identification. Here he has had the opportunity to develop service music in the Anglo-Catholic tradition, in which his great interest in plainsong has a direct application.

From 1919 to 1924 Willan served as musical director of the Hart House Theatre, University of Toronto, and during his tenure wrote incidental music for fourteen classical plays. He founded and directed the Tudor Singers, for many years one of Canada's best-known choral groups. The Singers disbanded during World War II and did not resume their organization afterwards.  

Willan was elected president of the Arts and Letters club of Toronto in 1922, becoming the first musician to hold that office. He served as president of the Canadian College of Organists during two periods, 1921-22, and 1933-35.  

---

4 Letter, Ferguson.

5 McCready, Famous Musicians, p. 117.
Willan has acted as adjudicator at many of the principal competitive music festivals in Canada. He has given recitals and lectures in many of the major cities of Canada and the United States and has been guest lecturer at the University of Michigan and at the University of California at Los Angeles. 6

He was invited to England in 1952 when his anthem, An Apostrophe to the Heavenly Hosts, was performed at the Royal Concert, an annual event in London by the Saint Cecilian Society, and again in 1953 to attend the Coronation Service, for which he wrote the anthem, O Lord, our Governour. In 1956 he was invited again to his native land to receive a Lambeth doctorate from the Archbishop of Canterbury. 7

A large proportion of Canadian musicians and composers, 8 resident both in Canada and the United States, have studied under the "generous and broad-minded guidance of Dr. Willan, and the variety and originality of music composed by his former students is a testament to his critical awareness." 9

6Letter, Ferguson. 7Ibid.
9Letter, Ferguson.
One of Willan's former pupils, Michael Winesanker, states that Willan's method of teaching is primarily by example, and that it is a natural habit of his to work long and tirelessly with his students. He does not merely point out mistakes, so-called, nor cite rules, but instead seeks to explore the different possibilities available or inherent in a particular situation arising in, for instance, counterpoint or free composition. As an academician, as well as a composer, his first strength and cognizance is counterpoint. He thinks and writes fluently in many-voiced counterpoint, and when demonstrating for a student he simply writes as rapidly as his hand can move, revealing that his musical thinking is virtually spontaneous. His musical influence in Canada has been tremendous, and he is widely regarded by his former pupils and by many others as a brilliant teacher. "Many who have not studied under him have sought his aid and counsel, and it can be truly said that his tolerant scholarship has had a profound influence on the maturing music life of Canada."

---

10 Interview with Dr. Michael Winesanker, Professor of Musicology and Chairman of the Department of Music, School of Fine Arts, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas, July 9, 1957.

11 Letter, Ferguson.
"The English tradition is certainly predominant in Canada outside of Quebec. Healey Willan is the dean of English-Canadian musicians."12 Willan regards himself as "a musician who rather likes to compose and has a good time doing it."13 He is a prolific composer, and for every published work there is an unpublished one. In the Church of Saint Mary Magdalene there stands a fireproof locker presented to Willan by a group of friends who wished to see him protect his unpublished manuscripts.14 "Representing the Anglo-Celtic strain in the empire's music, his work . . . has that amiable romantic glow that shines in the Victorian song, of Sir Hubert Parry, for instance."15

Dr. Willan has written some two hundred works (considering only published works) ranging from symphonies to poetic arrangements of folk-songs and including three operas (actually two, another work of similar category probably having been included for brevity) as well as a very large amount of church and organ music. His music has sound architectural construction, and his lyricism . . . is always predominant. The harmonies, though traditional, are always rich and colourful. He is in complete possession of his métier.16


13Letter, Ferguson.


16Beaudet, "Composition," Music in Canada, p. 60.
Willan's organ works constitute a large proportion of his output and include admirable and often brilliant service music for the church, a number of recital works, and, most notable of all, the *Introduction, Passacaglia, and Fugue*, which is one of the most extended and laudable recital works in the organ repertory. The characteristics which all of Willan's organ works share are rich and warm harmonies which are for the most part traditional, a texture which is fundamentally contrapuntal, and cohesiveness of form.

His organ works fall into three different periods, based upon stylistic characteristics and dates of publication. The first period antedates his departure for Canada and includes the *Epilogue*, the *Prelude and Fugue in B minor*, and the *Miniature Suite*, all published in the years 1909 and 1910. Willan's basic style of seriousness, breadth, and warmth is apparent in these works, allowing for the fact that the *Miniature Suite* is intentionally of small dimensions.

The second or middle period covers the years 1919 to 1928, during which time the *Introduction, Passacaglia, and Fugue* and two chorale preludes were published. The same elements of style which are apparent in the first period are present here but now show the sure hand of mastery.

An interim of twenty-one years passed before Willan turned his attention again to organ works. The third period began in 1949 with the publication of an *Elegy* and continues unabated to the present time. It includes by far the greatest
number of compositions of which the largest body is composed of chorale preludes and other cantus firmus settings; however, there are numerous works in other forms in the third period. The works of this period cover a gamut of styles—the reserved and mystical, the warmly romantic, the conservatively contemporary. It is probable that Willan has improvised for decades on church melodies utilizing the techniques and characteristics which he has given permanent form in his many cantus firmus settings, thus creating a rich body of literature which has practical usefulness in the church, in recital, and in instructive values. While many of the works of this period may have germinated from improvisations, their overriding characteristics are contrapuntal fluency, meaningfulness of idea, and a feeling for effective climax, set within a framework of structure and form.

A large proportion of Willan's choral works—anthems, motets, carols, masses and other service music—was written for the services and festivals of the Church of Saint Mary Magdalene in Toronto.

... The part-writing is beautifully idiomatic for voices, and the style has Healey Willan's intimate marriage of the twentieth century and the Renaissance, which fulfills Morley's famous dictum that in truly great religious music the listener is drawn, as it were, 'in chains of gold by the eares to the consid-eration of holie things.'

Although the above statement was made in a specific context,\textsuperscript{18} it can doubtlessly be taken as applicable to the great majority of Willan’s sacred choral music.

His contributions to sacred a capella music are widely known, and among the best-known of these are the Motets to Our Lady—"Fair in Face," "I Beheld Her," and "Rise Up, my Love, my Fair One," and the motets Hodie Christus natus est, Behold, the Tabernacle of God, and An Apostrophe to the Heavenly Hosts, the latter for double choir and semi-chorus. His unaccompanied setting from Longfellow, How They so Softly Rest, is often sung on Armistice Sunday.\textsuperscript{19}

Of Willan’s accompanied anthems, I Looked, and Behold a White Cloud, In the Name of Our God, A Prayer of Rejoicing, and 0 Strength and Stay are especially well known. His anthem from the Coronation Service in 1953, O Lord, Our Governour, has resulted in a general interest in the music of other composers performed on that occasion.\textsuperscript{20}

Among Willan’s larger accompanied choral works are the Festal Te Deum and the Coronation Suite, which was commissioned by the Canadian Government to commemorate the Coronation of Elizabeth II. At a concert of works by six

\textsuperscript{18}Referring to Willan’s Missa Brevis in G (for TTBB) (Saint Louis, 1955).


\textsuperscript{20}Ibid.
Canadian composers in Carnegie Hall, New York, on October 17, 1953, Leopold Stokowski conducted his orchestra and the Westminster Choir in the Coronation Suite, of which the late Olin Downes wrote:

... It takes rank as a first rate composition, one of dignity and substance of thought, majesty and not mere bombast, and done by a composer as accomplished in his writing of a capella music for voices as he is skilled and finely inventive in scoring for the instruments.\(^2\)\(^1\)

Willan has been associated actively in the Anglican Church and its music all of his professional life. Since so large a body of his works was inspired by the Church, its needs and its great liturgy, it is pertinent to know of his practices in his own church. The following description is by Charles Peaker, a former pupil of Willan and organist of Saint Paul's Anglican Church, Toronto, and a teacher of organ at the Royal Conservatory of Music.

At present plain-song is not used to any great extent except in certain churches where the Anglo-Catholic tradition prevails. A classic example and one that sets a standard for many others throughout the country is the Church of St. Mary Magdalene in Toronto, where Dr. Healey Willan has been organist since 1921. Psalms, canticles, office hymns, the Gloria and the Credo are all sung to plain-chant. The Propers of the Mass, as found in the English Hymnal, are sung to their own authentic music in an edition prepared by Dr. Willan himself. The plain-song is sung by a small choir of men in the chancel, and a mixed choir of about sixteen voices in the West Gallery sings a capella the

\(^{21}\) \textit{New York Times}, October 18, 1953. Other composers whose works were played are: Alexander Brott, Colin McPhee, Pierre Mercure, Francois Morel, and Godfrey Ridout.
Kyrie, Sanctus, Benedictus and Agnus Dei together with faux bourdons and motets. Music of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (particularly the Tudor school) is largely drawn upon for the music of the Mass and for the motets. Dr. Willan has written no less than eleven short settings of the Mass in English as well as those motets I have mentioned elsewhere. Recitals of liturgical music are given both within and without the walls of the church as well as in broadcasts; in short, Dr. Willan has here realized an ideal by his skill and devotion, which has helped us all, whatever our own circumstances and practices.22

Willan has written extensively in secular fields—actually, music for the concert hall, to indicate a broad classification as opposed to his church and organ music. His works in the larger forms include two symphonies, a piano concerto, two operas, and a setting for an epic poem. He has written a Trio for piano, violin, and cello and a variety of other instrumental pieces.

Among his many secular songs, which have been highly praised, are the following: Since Thou, O Fondest; To an Isle in the Water; Shamrocks; A Fairy Tale; Music when Soft Voices Die; and The Lake Isle of Innisfree. He has arranged a considerable number of French Canadian carols and folk songs, and among the latter there are: Sainte Marguerite and D'ou viens-tu Bergere?.23


As proof that there is a mischievous wit in the brilliant scholar, Willan has written music of sheer amusement for a number of special occasions. One piece is a "Symphony" for three recorders, composed for an entertainment of the Arts and Letters Club of Toronto. Another is a Suite for Rhythm Band, which has had many performances, among them a performance at a national convention of the Canadian College of Organists "with illustrious members of the College making up the 'band.'" Although these pleasant jests may not find their way into the catalog of works by Willan, they indicate a benevolent and warm spirit in Canada's ranking composer.

Willan's Symphony No. 1 in D minor and his Coronation March, composed in homage to the late King George VI, were both completed in 1936, and the Symphony was played by the Promenade Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Reginald Stewart, at the University of Toronto Stadium in 1936. Willan's Concerto in C minor, for piano and orchestra, has been broadcast by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, as have many of his works, which recorded it in 1945 with an orchestra under the direction of Jean-Marie Beaudet with Agnes Butcher as soloist. This recording was distributed to Canadian embassies abroad and was later released (in 1948) commercially by the RCA Victor Company.

---

24Letter, Ferguson.
25McCready, Famous Musicians, p. 120.
Willan's Symphony No. 2 in C minor was completed in 1948 and received its first performance from the Royal Conservatory Orchestra, Toronto, under the direction of Mazzoleni, in 1950. Willan's Royce Hall Suite, for symphonic band, was given its première by the symphonic band of the University of California at Los Angeles in May, 1949, at which time the composer was giving a series of lectures there.

Of the two operas, Transit through Fire is a short radio opera written to a libretto by John Coulter. Deirdre of the Sorrows is a full-length opera for stage performance, and, as with Transit through Fire, it was commissioned by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation which broadcast its world première during the Easter season of 1946. Deirdre of the Sorrows also was written to a libretto by John Coulter, who based his poetic story on an ancient Celtic legend. Sometimes classified as an opera for the sake of convenience is Willan's incidental music to E. J. Pratt's epic poem, Brébeuf and his Brethren, an historical pageant which deals with the early Jesuit missions to the Hurons in the seventeenth century.

---

27 McCready, Famous Musicians, p. 120.

28 Letter, Ferguson.

29 Ibid.
Although Willan is first and foremost a musician of the church, it is obvious that he has not cloistered himself in the organ and choir loft, as it were. As a composer he has written significantly in many fields, and as a teacher he has had a major influence in shaping the musical thought of a boundless number of Canadian musicians. As a musician of the church he has kept alive the great English traditions and made his own laudable and abundant contributions to church music practices. One of the first Canadian musicians of wide eminence, he has set an example worthy of the attention of younger Canadians who will contribute to the musical development of the nation.
CHAPTER II

THE INTRODUCTION, PASSACAGLIA, AND FUGUE

Critical and Historical Evaluation

The Introduction, Passacaglia, and Fugue is the best-known and most frequently performed, in the United States, of all the organ works by Healey Willan. Its popularity is well-deserved, for it is a nobly conceived work of breadth and grandeur. Pulsing its veins is the abundant Romanticism, the Elgarian richness, the splendor of imperial Britain. Published in 1919 in the composer's thirty-ninth year, the stamp of the era--the last flowering of Victorianism--is on this work, but its spirit is proud rather than pompous, its adornment inherent rather than mere embellishment. The structure of the work is solid and supports its loftiness.

It can be admitted that the greater restraint of mid-twentieth century composition, which sometimes pursues a neo-classical ideal, affords a basis for criticism of the style of writing exemplified in this work. Lesser works might not survive such scrutiny so successfully, for the massiveness of form, harmonic texture, and musical idea of the Introduction, Passacaglia, and Fugue is a part of its attraction. Such qualities are reflections of its era both sociologically and musically and in that context have a significance which might otherwise be absent.
That the general style of the Introduction, Passacaglia, and Fugue is somewhat derivative from the great Romanticists, Brahms, Wagner, Liszt, is apparent. But their characteristics are present not in mere assemblage but rather as assimilated elements of Willan's own style and craft. Such characteristics were present in much of the serious music composed in England for two decades after the turn of the century, and although Willan was resident in Canada during most of that second decade, his musical milieu was thoroughly English.

Parry's splendid anthem for the Coronation in 1907, I Was Glad when They Said unto Me, which has been used at all succeeding Coronations, is to some extent Anglicized Wagner but nonetheless overpoweringly majestic. Such a work as Elgar's Enigma Variations, which has an affinity to Brahms' style, is still of stature, importance, and interest. A fact not to be overlooked is the English love of tradition, a national characteristic so basic in the culture that thought in the arts as well as in other areas could hardly escape being affected toward conservatism.

From the more adventuresome French came Debussy and Ravel, also Stravinsky as a Russian expatriate, while in Vienna there were Schönberg and Alban Berg. All of these, and others, embarked on new paths, but their art was not without numerous threads of contact with that which had preceded—a necessary condition in all art.
The English were not alone in succumbing, at least partially, to the high Romantic art of Brahms and Wagner, which was so magnificent and towering that it was spell-binding. Composers of such stature as Richard Strauss, Max Reger, Saint-Saëns, and Rachmaninoff, while certainly exhibiting their own individualism, reflected the opulence of the high Romantic period for a generation after its peak. Those of the English who were breaking from the shackles of Romanticism were Vaughan Williams, Delius, Holst, Arnold Bax, and Arthur Bliss, but their influence, on the whole, had not yet taken the ascent. It would be a fallacy, however, to assume that all composers must show a marked separation from the past. The qualities of individuality and uniqueness have been achieved by many composers of high rank who have employed basically traditional materials of the musical language and produced works of lasting beauty and importance. Healey Willan is among these.

Willan's Introduction, Passacaglia, and Fugue is a work deserving of high admiration. The late Joseph Bonnet, eminent French organist, described it as one of the greatest organ works since Bach. It is dramatic and effective and has that quality which is most important of all—character. Singular importance can be attached to the Passacaglia in declaring it quite probably the finest organ passacaglia since the

\[1\] McCready, Famous Musicians, p. 130.
monumental work by J. S. Bach. In this achievement Willan has scaled a height, for a composer has been presented with peculiar difficulties in writing a passacaglia or chaconne, an almost interchangeable term, since Bach's example emerged into full view.

Antedating Bach's passacaglia by several decades is the well-known Prelude, Fugue, and Chaconne of Buxtehude, a work of much smaller proportions than Bach's. From well-known composers of organ music after Bach there exist passacaglias and chaconnes by Rheinberger, Reger, Karg-Elert, and Sowerby. The Rheinberger Passacaglia in E minor, which is the final movement from his Sonata No. 8, Op. 132, is admirable in many respects, displaying fluent contrapuntal writing and an appealing spirit. It shows a facileness which is Mendelssohnian and lacks that element of gravity which would give it consequence.\(^2\)

The Reger Passacaglia in F minor, from Op. 63, Vol. II, is somewhat doomed by the composer's rather turgid academicism,\(^3\)

---

\(^2\)Harvey Grace, the late British organist and advocate of Rheinberger, held this opinion: "With a knowledge of the fine passacaglias by Reger and Karg-Elert the present writer does not hesitate to describe this example of Rheinberger's as the only rival of Bach's. Indeed, so far as effect is concerned, the palm may go to Rheinberger, for it can hardly be denied that some passages in Bach's work--e.g., Variations XV and XVI--suffer from its having been written for the clavicembalo. Rheinberger's Passacaglia is organ music of the purest type . . ." Harvey Grace, editor, in his preface to Rheinberger's Sonata No. 8, Op. 132 (London, Novello, 1934).

\(^3\)Another Passacaglia in E minor by Rheinberger, from his Op. 156, known to be of smaller dimensions, was unavailable.
although the counterpoint is excellent and should be effec-
tive but happens not to be. "He writes a contrapuntally
artistic style, which operates extensively with chromaticism,
which latter fact has its inner ground in the frequently
gloomy mood to which the composer is fond of surrendering
himself." Karg-Elert's examples were unavailable for
examination, but anyone familiar with his style might assume
that an over-involvement of harmony, texture, and counter-
point would ultimately defeat otherwise admirable qualities.

Leo Sowerby, the highly respected American organist and
composer, wrote a passacaglia (in G major) of major propor-
tions as the last movement of his Symphony in G minor for
organ (Oxford University Press, 1932). There is no question
of its excellence or distinction among works in this form.
However, its style is not a little severe, is sometimes mildly
astringent and at other times almost ascetic—characteristics

---

4Karl Nef, translated by Carl F. Pfatteicher, An Outline

5There are three examples by Karg-Elert. Concerning the
Passacaglia in E-flat minor, Op. 25B, Godfrey Sceats states:
"This Passacaglia is regarded by some as one of the great
Passacaglias of organ literature, and differs from others in
the lyrical character of some of the treatment, with frequent
changes in mood, tempo, and harmony." (p. 18)

Of the Chaconne and Fugue Trilogy, Op. 73: "The treat-
ment of the thematic material is exhaustive, and also impres-
sive, although there is less recourse than usual to harmonic
colouring and therefore not quite so much immediate attrac-
tiveness." (p. 29)

Of the Passacaglia and Fugue on B-A-C-H, Op. 150, Scoats
does not comment pertinently in regard to the present context.
somewhat typical of Sowerby. Its emotional impact is therefore less than that of the Willan passacaglia, the style of which is virtually antipodal to that of the Sowerby work.

The last movement of the Fourth Symphony of Brahms can be cited as the supreme achievement among passacaglias or chaconnes since Bach, disregarding consideration of medium. This movement has such breadth, cohesiveness, and over-all magnificence that it ranks, along with the remainder of the Symphony, with the greatest achievements in music. Considering only organ passacaglias, with a view to their abstract merits as related to their emotional persuasiveness, Willan's passacaglia is not surpassed and may actually be without peer among organ works in this form since Bach.

The Harvard Dictionary of Music\(^6\) draws a distinction between passacaglia and chaconne according to Bach's application of the terms to his two famous examples. The chaconne referred to is, of course, from the Partita No. 2 in D minor for solo violin.\(^7\) While Baroque composers generally used the terms passacaglia and chaconne interchangeably,\(^8\) Bach's

---


\(^7\)The fame of this chaconne has been further increased through the fine though elaborate piano transcription by Busoni. Leopold Stokowski's orchestral transcription has not been played extensively.

\(^8\)In the Prelude, Fugue, and Chaconne of Buxtehude, for instance, the approach in the chaconne is identical to that of Bach in the passacaglia.
apparent differentiation between the two has been followed by most composers.\(^9\) Bach applied the term *passacaglia* to a work in which a clearly distinguishable *ostinato* appears continuously in the bass of the variations, except for occasional transfers to an upper voice.\(^10\) He applied the term *chaconne* to variations based on a succession of chords which serve as a harmonic basis rather than providing a theme for continuous repetition. The last movement of the *Fourth Symphony* of Brahms, which the composer marked neither *passacaglia* nor *chaconne*, fits more nearly the usage of the latter term, although its repetition of the ascending chromatic "theme," often hidden though omnipresent, takes some precedence over the succession of harmonies, which do not always remain the same.

According to these distinctions Healey Willan has written a genuine *passacaglia*, for his eight-measure theme or *ostinato* appears continuously in the bass for the entire seventeen variations, with two exceptions: once when it is moved to the soprano, and again when it is broken between

---

\(^9\) An exception by Willan is his comparatively small *Chaconne*, published in 1957. Although the technique employed is more nearly that of a *passacaglia*, Willan may have applied the term *chaconne* to avoid confusion with his larger work.

\(^10\) This is a license which succeeding composers of organ *passacaglias* have followed. It is an artistic device, of course, necessary for relief occasionally from the inherent ponderosity of the *ostinato*. 
the alto and tenor. Willan's passacaglia is not so strictly contrapuntal as Bach's, but Bach himself does not employ the technique of writing vocal counterpoint in every variation. Nor is Willan's passacaglia so contrapuntal as those by Rheinberger, Reger, or Sowerby, although they each digress from the stricter contrapuntal approach in several variations. Although Willan's passacaglia is a Romantic work and employs much of the time a semi-homophonic or chordal approach, its first allegiance and basic structure are contrapuntal. Since the passacaglia is inherently a contrapuntal form or style, its basic approach could not be otherwise than contrapuntal.

Analysis

The Introduction

The Introduction, Passacaglia, and Fugue is written in the tonality of E-flat minor. The Introduction is forty-five measures long and has four sections, each of which can be subdivided. The first section is marked adagio, and its opening three measures—widely spread chords for both hands underpinned by a slow-moving, descending pedal (with a soft thirty-two-foot stop indicated)—set a serious tone for the entire composition (Fig. 1).
These opening measures are followed by chords in dotted rhythm, double forte, which lead to an ascending flourish and thence into block chords, now with the addition of the chorus reeds, bringing the first section to a dramatic cadence on a diminished-seventh chord.

The second section, animato, opens with broken chords (arpeggios) in two-measure sequences (Fig. 2, page 24), followed by an imitative, recitative-like passage (Fig. 3, page 24).

The third section, maestoso, begins with harmonies in block chords which can only be described as glorious in character (Fig. 4, page 25). This section lasts for eight measures and employs a decrescendo into the final section, which begins with a return to the pattern of the first three
Fig. 2--Willan, *Introduction*, measures 11-12

```

```

Fig. 3--Willan, *Introduction*, measures 18-19

```

```
measures of the Introduction, but the chords here are somewhat portentous and are marked for the tubas. This leads into two and a half measures of broken chord structures (Fig. 5) and thence to a short recitative and a descending flourish.
The final measures of the Introduction consist of two groups of three measures each. In the first group there are two-note chordal motives in which the top note outlines a descending fifth, foreshadowing the beginning notes of the passacaglia theme shortly to follow (Fig. 6).

![Musical notation]

Fig. 6--Willan, Introduction, measure 39

A fermata is marked after this group, and then the chordal patterns of the first three measures of the Introduction return once again, pianissimo, making a half-cadence on a dominant-seventh chord in first inversion. The mood has been dramatically and expectantly set for the statement of the passacaglia theme.

The Passacaglia

The passacaglia theme is distinguished and has inherent in its structure the possibility for extended variation. Since the passacaglia of Bach is a normal point of reference
from which to consider any serious passacaglia, the themes of both the Willan and Bach passacaglias are given here for the sake of comparison (Fig. 7, Fig. 8).

![Fig. 7 -- Willan, Passacaglia, measures 1-8](image1)

![Fig. 8 -- Bach, Passacaglia, measures 1-8](image2)

It is readily apparent that the Bach theme covers a wider range--nearly two octaves--than the Willan theme, which covers the compass of only an octave. Both themes are in triple meter, an assumed requirement for a passacaglia since it was originally a dance form.\(^\text{11}\) Bach's

\(^{11}\)Willan's Chaconne (1957) is in duple meter (four-four).
theme begins on the dominant in the first measure (actually tonic six-four, which is implied dominant) and ends firmly on the tonic. Willan's theme has the succession reversed by beginning on the tonic in the first measure and ending on the dominant in the last measure.

The most characteristic difference between the themes, however, is in the rhythm and the melodic line. The Bach theme employs only half-notes (one is dotted) and quarter-notes, while the Willan theme uses slow dotted rhythm in two of its measures and ties one note over the bar-line into another measure. Moreover, the Bach theme adheres to the diatonic degrees of the harmonic minor, whereas the Willan theme employs the raised fourth degree (fi) twice, outlining in the first instance (measure three) the augmented second (fi to me to fi) and in the second instance (measure seven) the diminished third (le to fi). Of the two descending fifths which begin the theme, it is interesting to note that the second one is diminished. Finally, the Bach theme carries no implication of modulation, while the Willan theme does actually effect a short modulation during its fifth and sixth measures, going from the minor to the relative major and returning to the minor by the seventh measure.

A passacaglia theme is not only basic literally, it is basic to the spirit of the passacaglia. It must have definition and character and an individuality all its own. The
Bach theme bespeaks of serious beauty from the moment of its ascending leap of a fifth. The same is true of the Willan theme as it unfolds, and it can be considered an equally fine theme.

Variation I and only two other variations, numbers XI and XII, are written in vocal counterpoint, that is, with a consistent use of a certain number of voices. In the first variation there is an example of canon at the sixth (two octaves removed) between the soprano and the bass (pedals) with the soprano entering two beats after the bass has begun. The tenor moves contrapuntally but non-imitatively (Fig. 9).

![Musical notation](image)

Fig. 9—Willan, Passacaglia, measures 9-12

Descending, pulsating two-note figures in parallel second inversion chords constitute the principal idea of Variation II (Fig. 10).
The counter-melody of Variation III is derived from the left hand figures of the preceding variation. The right hand accompanies in an obligato manner utilizing numerous octaves in the harmonization.

Variation IV employs ascending thirds in sixteenth-notes in imitative patterns between each hand (Fig. 11).
Variation V is the most impassioned and climactic so far and represents the conclusion of the first part of the passacaglia (Fig. 12).

Fig. 12--Willan, Passacaglia, measures 41-42

The underlying kinship of Variations I through V is the gradual increase of tension and excitement, which must now subside for the introduction of several contrasting variations.

The next five variations, numbers VI through X, form a group since they are of a quiet character, contrasting with the variations preceding them and with those that follow. In a sense Variations VI through X constitute the "middle section" of the passacaglia, which would thus have a loose resemblance to tripartite construction so far as groupings of the variations is concerned.

Variations VI and VII form a pair since they are both written for the softer stops of the organ. In Variation VI the passacaglia theme is moved to the soprano, with an
obligato melody played by the right hand thumb on the next lowest manual, with the left hand supplying very soft chordal accompaniment (Fig. 13).

Fig. 13--Willan, Passacaglia, measures 51-52

Variation VII calls for the softest stops of the organ and is marked for the echo, if available. It is a sustained bit of writing, the most *sotto voce* in the entire composition, and is closely related in structure to Variation V (Fig. 12, page 31), of which it is, in effect, a quiet version (Fig. 14, page 33).

Variation VIII employs a flowing idea in eighth-notes with one hand in imitation of the other (Fig. 15, page 33). Variation IX extends this idea, without the imitation, into a quasi-scherzo figuration in sixteenth-notes (Fig. 16, page 34).
Fig. 14--Willan, Passacaglia, measures 57-58

Fig. 15--Willan, Passacaglia, measures 65-66
The musical idea in Variation X is pianistic and capricious and calls for percussion (harp) in rolled chords for the left hand while the right hand plays figures in sixteenth-notes (Fig. 17).

Fig. 16--Willan, Passacaglia, measures 73-74

Fig. 17--Willan, Passacaglia, measures 81-82
Variation XI is one of the finest of the variations and, along with Variation XII, is written in four-voiced counterpoint. In Variation XI the theme is broken between the alto and tenor, and the contrapuntal movement is in triplet eighth-notes (the meter for this one variation is nine-eight). The over-all effect of this variation is that of a quiet, dignified chorale prelude (Fig. 18).

Variation XI serves as a bridge between the quieter variations—numbers VI through X—and the final group of variations, numbers XII through XVII. From Variation XI onward to the end of the passacaglia each variation increases in intensity and climactic characteristics. However, because of its rhythmic individuality and its undisturbed sobriety, Variation XI falls into a category all its own.
Variation XII employs ascending, step-wise, four-note figures in sixteenth-notes and bears a remarkable resemblance to Variation VI of the *passacaglia* by Bach (Fig. 19, Fig. 20).

Fig. 19--Willan, *Passacaglia*, measures 97-98

Fig. 20--Bach, *Passacaglia*, measures 49-50
Variation XIII develops the ascending figures of the preceding variation through the addition of chords, somewhat in the style of a French toccata (Fig. 21).

Variation XIV (Fig. 22) is one of genuine vigor, and the succeeding variation, number XV, continues largely along the same lines with the intermittent appearance in the left hand of short motives for the tubas in dotted rhythm including the leap of a fourth or fifth, foreshadowing the next variation.
Variation XVI employs chordal motives on the tubas and is marked quasi marcia funebre. It is to be noted that the pedal carries the theme broken in rhythm in such a way that the intervalic leaps are made more prominent, although they are filled-in with grace-notes (Fig. 23).

Fig. 23--Willan, Passacaglia, measures 129-130

The motive of the marcia funebre is utilized at triple forte in the militant final variation, number XVII. The left hand is given the motive to be played on the tubas (nowadays the trompette-en-chamade would be indicated), and the right hand is given scale-like flourishes and cascading chords (Fig. 24, page 39).

An extension of nine measures is added without break to the final variation, achieving in the third measure an expansive, magnificent climax--impassioned, eloquent, and exalted (Fig. 25, page 39).
Fig. 24--Willan, *Passacaglia*, measure 137

Fig. 25--Willan, *Passacaglia*, measures 145-147
After the climax is reached there are six measures of a gradual lessening of intensity. A rallentando is marked, and the Passacaglia comes to rest on a half-cadence, the dominant of E-flat.

Before the entrance of the Fugue there is an epilogue to the grandiose Introduction and Passacaglia—a section marked quasi chorale which takes twelve measures in a slow, meditative tempo. The tonality is E-flat major, the first major tonality so far other than the transitory modulations of the passacaglia and a few brief flashes of major in the Introduction; the effect, therefore, is particularly warm. The passacaglia theme is employed in broken sections in the pedal; the right hand melody is drawn from the passacaglia theme, and the contrapuntal movement is in five voices. The tonality of E-flat minor is approached, in preparation for the Fugue to follow, in the last four measures, and the cadence is on the dominant of E-flat, marked triple piano. In providing a short span of calm and serenity, interest in the entrance of the fugue subject is heightened and enhanced.

The Fugue

The Fugue is in four voices and returns to the tonality of E-flat minor, after the digression into E-flat major of the transitional section above. The fugue subject is built upon the passacaglia theme, as would befit companion pieces of passacaglia and fugue. With reference again to the Bach
Passacaglia and Fugue, the principal fugue subject of that work is a verbatim statement of the first four measures of the passacaglia theme. Since the Bach fugue is a double fugue, a second subject is added from the first measure.

Willan changes the meter from triple to duple (four-four) for the Fugue, and in the fugue subject (Fig. 26) employs only the first five notes of the passacaglia theme (Fig. 7, page 27).

![Fig. 26--Willan, Fugue, measures 1-4](image)

The first five notes of the fugue subject, covering the intervals which give such definition to the passacaglia theme, thus clearly show their derivation, even with the meter changed, and their unity with the passacaglia theme, and therefore furnish the cohesiveness expected in a passacaglia and companion fugue.

The last measure and a half of the fugue subject can be considered a codetta (Fig. 26, above) rather than a part of the subject proper, although, in the exposition, it is used consistently in each statement of the subject. In two of
these (the answers on the dominant), however, a minor mutation is made. Afterwards in the fugue the subject appears sometimes with little or no codetta but more frequently with a codetta which is rhythmically related (continuous eighth-notes) and occasionally bears a melodic resemblance to the original. In the latter case the codetta usually trails off into the contrapuntal texture, so that placing a mark at a point where it supposedly ends is virtually impossible.

The fugue is somewhat unusual in structure and does not fit closely any of the so-called textbook definitions of a fugue.\textsuperscript{12} Willan's fugue has seven well-defined sections, although the last two sections, as will be seen later, belong more to the entire composition than to the fugue alone. Considering Willan's fugue along broad lines, it has the impact of tripartite construction in that, what is actually experienced, is an exposition of themes, a development, and a return, and for this, five sections are used. There is a double exposition: the first is the traditional and strict exposition of the subject in all the voices, which enter successively without episodes—soprano, alto, tenor, and bass.

\textsuperscript{12}Apel, "Fugue," op. cit.: "The question may well be raised whether there really exists such a thing as the 'form of the fugue,' and whether it would not be more proper to speak of 'fugal procedure' rather than 'fugal form.' At any rate, the statement repeated in numerous books that 'a fugue is a three-part form' is rather misleading."
Since the *codetta* appears consistently with each entrance of the subject in the exposition, it can here be considered a part of the subject, with entries thus following one upon the other without intervening measures.

The second section of the *fugue* is a counter-exposition, beginning at measure seventeen, in which there are three statements of the subject centering on and around the relative major (G-flat). The counter-exposition actually begins in the tonality of D-flat, but in this instance the entrance on the dominant has merely preceded the entrance in the tonic (G-flat major). The counter-exposition concludes with several measures of episode and makes a definite cadence in B-flat minor (the dominant minor) at measure thirty-four.

In the development which follows there are two clearly defined sections. The first, beginning in measure thirty-four, presents the *fugue* subject in *stretto* in triple canon at the octave (Fig. 27).

![Fig. 27--Willan, Fugue, measures 34-36](image-url)
The first note of the subject is reduced to a quarter-note (Fig. 27, page 43) and the entrances--soprano, alto, and tenor (all in B-flat minor, the dominant minor)--are one measure apart. By the time the bass enters (in the pedals) two measures later, a modulation has been made to the tonic minor (E-flat minor), and the other voices enter successively--tenor, alto, and soprano--with the subject each time in the tonic minor. Although there are four voices, the canon here is only between the first two entrances, since in the third entrance (in the alto) the subject is not completed, and by the time the soprano enters with the subject the bass and tenor have completed their entries. Actually, although the voices in this section do enter in canon, the diagonal threads of the canon are not so apparent as the points of imitation. This is true because of the wide leaps of the first notes of the subject, calling attention away from the canonic structure, and because the canon is short and finally proceeds as mixed canon\textsuperscript{13} rather than as strict canon. A definite cadence in F major marks the end of this section in measure forty-six. The use of \textit{stretto} in this section, somewhat unusual in appearing so early in the fugue, is very effective and prepares for the added intensity of the second section of the development which follows.

\footnote{Apel, "Canon," \textit{op. cit.}: "A canon is called mixed if parts are added (usually in the bass) which do not participate in the imitation (e.g., the canons in Bach's \textit{Goldberg Variations})."}
In the second section of the development *stretto* occurs twice, but this is of secondary importance to the running sixteenth-notes which have replaced eighth-notes as the smallest unit of value. The section is marked *animato* and an increase in intensity of registration is indicated. These factors, plus the fact that the section has a suspended quality since there is no pedal present, make this section one of increasing tension to prepare for the dramatic return of the subject in the tonic minor.

This return begins at measure sixty-one, and the marking for this section is *maestoso*. The pedals take the final entrance *double forte* while the soprano answers with an incomplete canon at the twelfth (one octave removed), with the alto and tenor voices continuing the contrapuntal flow in sixteenth-notes. After the pedal entrance is completed there are five more measures (episode) during which another voice is added on the manuals, making the counterpoint five-voiced. The manual parts ascend climactically while the pedal descends, in chromatic figures, finally reaching the fifth degree of the scale on which it makes a dominant pedal-point. The manual parts reach dominant harmony presently and make a dramatic half-cadence, releasing the chord while the pedal continues its point on the dominant.

The *fugue* proper has now ended, albeit on the dominant. That which follows, beginning at measure seventy, is nothing less than a cadenza of twenty-five measures over a dominant
pedal-point. The dominant chord at which point the fugue ends is in this instance the equivalent, with similar effect, of the usual tonic six-four chord of the nineteenth century concerto which marks the entrance for the cadenza.

It would be natural to assume that there is no historical precedent for a cadenza in a fugue, for the term cadenza usually denotes abandon and flamboyance, qualities not often to be admitted, presumably, to the serious realm of the fugue.

However, there are two notable examples by Bach in which there exist brilliant cadenzas, which may be often overlooked as such since they appear as logical, succeeding steps in their respective settings. In the Prelude and Fugue in A minor for organ there is, near the end of the Fugue, a cadenza of twelve measures which begins with a pedal solo of seven measures and ends with five measures of incandescent manual work, leading to the final cadence of one measure. Near the end of the Toccata and Fugue in D minor for organ there is a fermata chord on the submediant which is very dramatic, and following there is a cadenza of fourteen measures, utilizing manual display, pedal solos, and manuals and pedals together, culminating in a solemn but vibrant cadence of three measures.
According to Gilman Chase\textsuperscript{14} there are numerous \textit{fermata} chords in \textit{fugues} (also \textit{preludes}) by Bach--both organ works and those of both volumes of the \textit{Well-Tempered Clavier}--which are open invitations to the performer to add an improvised \textit{cadenza}. The "Great" \textit{Fugue in C major} for organ has a \textit{fermata} chord near the end (in measure seventy-one)--a diminished chord over a dominant pedal-point--after which there is a momentary break in the movement of the \textit{fugue}. The most notable example of such a \textit{fermata} chord occurs in the \textit{Passacaglia} and \textit{Fugue in C minor} near the end of the \textit{Fugue} (in measure 117), on the dramatic Neapolitan-sixth, after which there is a slight interruption of movement, as in the case of the \textit{fugue} above.

In support of his argument Chase cites a clavier \textit{Fugue in D minor} in the authoritative edition of the Bach-Gesellschaft (Vol. 36, pages 167-168). This \textit{fugue} appears in two versions--one with a \textit{fermata} chord (leading-tone diminished-seventh) followed by the final cadence, and the other with the same \textit{fermata} chord, followed by a written-out \textit{cadenza}, to which is added the same final cadence. Chase draws the conclusion that in the written-out version Bach was demonstrating an approach for a student to use in that and similar instances. There is growing evidence that musical performance during the Baroque period was expected and intended to

be considerably improvisatory, especially in regard to ornamentation. If freedom was exercised in that area, it seems logical that it would have extended to other areas also, including the improvised cadenza.

While a cadenza in a smaller fugue would amount to only a flourish, in the larger fugues the cadenza, if improvised, could achieve some proportions, depending upon the context in which it is placed. It is difficult to imagine an improvised cadenza in the "Great" Fugue in G major or in the Passacaglia and Fugue, among others, in actual performance today, since performers and audiences are habituated merely to a pause after the fermata chord. But the historical documentation and the logic, both musical and comparative, for placing a cadenza after certain fermata chords appears to be a well-made case.

Whether Willan had in mind the dramatic fermata in the Bach Passacaglia and Fugue, and other instances in Bach, is an open question of considerable interest. Willan may have arrived at the conclusion, from his close attention to the keyboard works of Bach, that a tradition existed for a cadenza within a fugue. More probable, however, is that Willan felt innately that a cadenza would be effective at a point near the end of his expansive work. Whether there had been an historical precedent or not would hardly have been pertinent since a composer is his own free agent, and if of sufficient stature, often sets new precedents.
Willan was familiar, without any doubt, with the Chorale No. 3 in A minor of Cesar Franck which, three fourths of the way through, develops into a mighty climax, culminating on a chord in the relative major (measure 146) in which the pedal remains on a point while the hands release the chord, as in the Willan Fugue. A cadenza of brilliant figurations and development on the manuals follows over various points in the pedal and lasts for twenty-six and a half measures (ending in measure 173).

Whatever the source of Willan's inspiration for his cadenza, it is most effective and striking. The tonality of E-flat major is employed, lending a brighter temperament. The original triple meter of the passacaglia is resumed, and the marking is animato. Points of imitation in stretto are built from the opening notes of the principal subject (Fig. 28).

Fig. 28--Willan, Fugue, measures 70-72
In the seventh measure of the cadenza the left hand enters on the tuba with the subject, repeats it a step higher, then goes on to ascending sequential patterns built upon the prominent leaps of the subject. Two voices are written for the right hand while the left hand has only one voice which is soon doubled for added strength. Several times the top voice has the motive of leaps from the first notes of the subject, and it goes on to utilize, in patterns of eighth-notes and subsequently triplets, material from the codetta of the fugue subject.

The cadenza has been true to the tradition of developing thematic material. It ends on the dominant of E-flat as a preparation for the dramatic final section. The cadenza is the sixth section of the seven which could be considered as belonging to the fugue. However, in view of the length and general development of the entire composition and the fact that the fugue is actually completed at the end of the fifth section (measure sixty-nine) with the exception of its ending on the dominant, the cadenza and the final section, which in its breadth recalls the Introduction, belong to the entire structure.

The final section of thirteen measures is marked nobilmente and returns to the tonality of E-flat minor. The most massive chords of the composition are employed in both hands over the principal passacaglia theme in octaves on the pedal, which must be full to mixtures and reeds. The top voice of
the right hand, often doubled at the lower octave by the thumb, employs the passacaglia theme in canon at the sixth (Fig. 29), as in Variation I of the Passacaglia.

Fig. 29—Willan, Fugue, measures 95-97

At the fifth measure of the final section the left hand is given a counter-melody in octaves on the tubas. After the passacaglia theme has been presented in its entirety, a coda of five measures, marked adagio during the final two measures, culminates in one of the most massive and triumphant cadences in all organ literature. The final two measures appropriately employ the tonic major.

Comparatively few organs have the power and grandeur to do justice to the last thirteen measures of this work, and even so, certainly in the concluding measures orchestral brass and tympani are the mediums, which the mind easily conjures, through which the exultance of these measures could soar.
The final measures are not only commensurate with all that has gone before but actually add the final crown.

The Introduction, Passacaglia, and Fugue is a magnum opus on which abundant musical craftsmanship and inspiration were surely lavished at its conception. It deserves its place, which it has long since taken, in the galaxy of organ masterworks.
CHAPTER III

CHORALE PRELUDES AND OTHER CANTUS FIRMUS SETTINGS

Critical and Historical Evaluation

The Chorale Prelude, or the cantus firmus setting, to use a more inclusive term, constitutes the largest single group of organ compositions by Healey Willan, coming to a total of fifty-four.¹ Two chorale preludes appeared in the late 1920's preceded by a fantasia on a plainsong melody sometime earlier, but the remainder of the cantus firmus settings has been published since 1950. For his canti firmi Willan has employed plainsong melodies, chorale tunes, and hymn tunes, and of the fifty-four settings thirty-eight of the canti firmi are from the seventeenth century or earlier while the remaining sixteen are from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

¹Computed in this figure are twenty Hymn Preludes by Willan, scheduled for publication about January, 1958, by the C. F. Peters Corporation, New York. They will be issued as Ten Hymn Preludes, Set II, and Ten Hymn Preludes, Set III, the earlier volume, Ten Hymn Preludes, Set I, having been published by the same firm in 1956. The actual music of the twenty settings of Sets II and III was, of course, not available at the time of writing (August, 1957). However, the publisher supplied a list of the twenty tunes employed for the Hymn Preludes, thereby making it possible to bring them into consideration to some extent.
At the time of actual writing a total of thirty-four cantus firmus settings by Willan had appeared, and of these thirty-three were available for examination. The over-all aspect which these settings of Willan share is their churchly spirit. With the possible exception of one or two their basic character is that of liturgical service music. Of the thirty-three, twenty are primarily quiet in character and thirteen are either forceful or brilliant. All are admirable for scholarly and inventive musical craftsmanship, and a goodly proportion carry that indefinable spark which gives them an individuality and persuasiveness all their own. Quite a number would be effective for use as recital pieces, especially the more brilliant ones. Most of the settings, however, would appear to achieve their finest and most characteristic use in connection with the church service, for which they are remarkable examples of stylistic appropriateness. They spring vividly to life when considered as voluntaries either for the beginning or the end of a service or for use during the Holy Communion, depending upon their character, and in the context of the church service a large number cannot be surpassed.

In his many chorale settings Bach traversed the range from the simply elaborated chorale melody to the art-form

2The remaining setting, the Fantasia on Ad coenam Agni, an early work, is out of print. See page 57.
setting, which is more appropriate in recital, or sometimes even in the abstract, than in the church service. Willan has remained spiritually in the organ loft in his settings, but he has employed techniques of writing which are imaginative and often elaborate and in many instances has made considerable demands upon the player from a technical standpoint.

The most basic structure employed by Willan in his *cantus firmus* settings is that of an introduction, usually based or beginning on a motive from the chorale, hymn tune, or plainsong, followed by phrases of the tune alternating with interludes, and concluding with a postlude. There are many variations of approach within this structure and quite a number of diversions from it, among which are the following: one setting which is virtually a free fantasia on the chorale tune, one setting which concludes with a fughetta, and another which is a partita or set of chorale variations.

In the tradition of the master contrapuntist which he is, Willan makes extensive use of imitation in his *cantus firmus* settings, and in six of these he employs canonic imitation of the chorale tune. About half of the settings are written for four or five voices while the remainder do not adhere slavishly to a certain number of voices, adding notes at various points for strength or color, or in some cases adopting an outright chordal procedure which is still governed by contrapuntal principles. The chorale tune, hymn tune, or
plainsong appears in the soprano or the tenor in approximately equal proportion, somewhat less frequently in the bass (pedals), and only occasionally in the alto.

The harmonic usage in many of the settings is essentially traditional but nonetheless interesting and alive, and in others the harmonic structure is contemporary in spirit although without any harsh dissonances. In character and mood the settings range from the mystical or the quietly meditative to the stately or the stirring. In the technical demands made upon the player they range from the comparatively easy to the difficult, although the majority can be termed moderately difficult. In the type of organ required some would be successful on a small instrument while others require a comprehensive organ and the spacial acoustics associated with such an instrument. Some were evidently conceived for the small parish while their companions took their inspiration from the rich appointments of a large edifice and would be at home in any church of larger dimensions.

The cantus firmus settings of Willan constitute a rich storehouse of service literature which should not escape the attention of the serious church organist, whatever his parish, nor the recital organist in search of new materials.

The cantus firmus settings will be considered chronologically in the order of their dates of publication, except for several recent miscellaneous settings which are grouped
together. Information concerning the tune and its source, and the tonality, meter, tempo and stylistic marking of the setting will be given without the accouterment of sentence structure. Twenty-two of the tunes appear, some more than once, in The Hymnal (1940) of the Protestant Episcopal Church (to be hereinafter referred to as the Episcopal Hymnal), one of the most complete and easily available of fine hymnal references, and their hymn number will be given.

The Three Earlier Settings

Fantasia on Ad coenam Agni

As previously stated (see footnote, page 54) this setting is out of print and unavailable for examination. It is believed to be an early work of rather small proportions and was included in a collection of pieces by various composers by the Novello Company of England. It is interesting to note that Willan's interest in plainsong was applied in an early work. The tune, Ad coenam Agni, is ancient and is found frequently in neumatic notation.

---


4(New York, 1940, 1943)

5Letter, Ferguson.

Chorale Prelude No. 1

Tune, Puer Nobis Nascitur from Piae Cantiones, 1582, a collection by Didrik Pedersen (Theodoric Petri).

Tonality, D major; meter, three-four; marked, Andante e teneremente. Episcopal Hymnal, 34.

This chorale prelude is the first of two somewhat extended cantus firmus settings by Willan, having appeared in 1926. The composer has evidently followed the spirit of the words which appear with this tune in the Episcopal Hymnal:

Unto us a boy is born!
The King of all creation,
Came he to a world forlorn,
The Lord of ev'ry nation.

It is a Christmas hymn, of course, and Willan has written an accompaniment of two-note figures which have the quality of a lullaby. Parallelism in second inversion triads is used intermittently but consistently throughout (Fig. 30).

Fig. 30—Willan, Chorale Prelude No. 1, measures 4-5
The chorale tune is carried in the alto with the tenor entering two measures later in each phrase in canonic imitation. Both accompanimental figures and the chorale tune are scored for separate manuals for the right hand while the left hand plays the canonic imitation on a third manual. In several instances the right hand must manage itself skillfully, along with some help from the left hand, to play all the notes.

In its quiet and flowing character and the periodic entrances of the chorale tune, as well as in length, this chorale prelude has a similarity to Bach's Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring, although there is no thematic relationship.

Chorale Prelude No. 2

Tune, Andernach.

Tonality, G major; meter, twelve-eight; marked, Allegro vivace ed energico.

This brilliant chorale prelude on Andernach appeared in 1928, and it was the last cantus firmus setting from Willan until 1950. It is a setting of flamboyance and force, almost in the style of a French toccata.

It begins with a fourteen-measure introduction with each of the voices, not counting the pedal which has a point on the tonic for the entire time, entering separately on points of imitation from the first phrase of the chorale melody. Again the use of parallel triads, this time in first inversion, will be noted (Fig. 31, page 60).
The Chorale melody enters first in measure fifteen in the pedals, imitated in canon at the twelfth in the soprano. Each succeeding phrase of the chorale is preceded with brilliant manual display, beginning on points of imitation taken from the chorale phrase to follow. There is no pedal in these interludes, so that when the pedal does enter with the chorale melody it appears all the more prominently. In the second phrase of the chorale melody the soprano imitates with canon at the seventh.

The third phrase of the chorale is preceded, as in the other phrases, by manual display. However, when the third phrase enters in the pedal, instead of the triplet figuration on the manuals as before, the rhythmic structure is reduced to note-against-note. The tenor follows the pedal entry with canon at the tenth, followed by three false
entries in inner voices (the texture is now many-voiced), with the soprano entering last with a restatement of the phrase, largamente, in a structure which now is more chordal than contrapuntal. This presentation of the third phrase is unique and of great force (Fig. 32).

The fourth phrase, preceded by an interlude built on points of imitation, is given to the pedals, as before, while the manuals continue triplet figuration. The composition ends with a dazzling coda of twelve measures, with the final three measures including a double pedal (the right foot on an independent line), marked rallentando and triple forte.

This is an extremely effective composition and would serve well as a postlude for festive occasions in the church as well as provide a tour de force for recital use.
Six Chorale Preludes, Set I

This group of chorale preludes was published in 1950, and a companion volume, Six Chorale Preludes, Set II, appeared in 1951. Both are from the Concordia Publishing House, Saint Louis, Missouri, a firm which specializes in music for the several bodies of the Lutheran Church. As could be expected the tunes on which the twelve chorale preludes of Sets I and II are based are principally of German origin, and of these, most are from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the period when the German chorale was in its greatest ascendancy. However, two tunes are of English origin, one from the seventeenth century and the other from the nineteenth century, and one tune is a plainsong melody from the sixth century.

Several of the chorale preludes of Sets I and II appear to have been composed primarily for the non-professional church organist who has an organ of only modest resources. This is an admirable direction for any composer of ability to address himself on occasion. However, a composer of Willan's ability could not long express himself adequately while supposedly bound by restrictions, and so several chorale preludes of considerable scope are to be found in these two sets. Perhaps only a few could be described as easy in regard to the technical equipment demanded of the player, while the majority could be termed moderately difficult,
although one or two perhaps go beyond this level. They vary in the demands they make for stylistic knowledge, registrational imagination, and the ability to handle rather complex rhythms.

No. 1, Set I

Tune, *Quem Pastores*, of fourteenth century origin (Hohenfurth Ms., 1410); first published in Valentin Triller's *Ein Christlich Singebuch für Layen und Gelerten*, Breslau, 1555.

Tonality, F major; meter, three-four; marked, *Moderato quasi pastorale*. Episcopal Hymnal, 35, 322.

The character of the Willan setting, in four voices, is quiet and meditative. The four phrases of the chorale appear in pairs in the tenor within the framework of flowing, pastoral accompaniment in eighth-notes. There is a short introduction before the tune appears, an interlude, and a short postlude.

No. 2, Set I


Tonality, F major; meter, four-four; marked, *Allegro energico*.

In this forceful setting, in four voices, the chorale tune appears in the pedal in each of its four phrases. The
phrases are separated by interludes for the manuals only and are built on points of imitation from the chorale phrase which follows, forming little fugati. The pedals have a tonic point during the last five measures, and the cadence is made at double forte.

No. 3, Set I

Tune, Song 13, written by Orlando Gibbons for George Wither’s Hymns and Songs of the Church, 1623.

Tonality, E-flat major; meter, four-four; marked, Lento e molto sostenuto. Episcopal Hymnal, 451.

This is another quiet and meditative setting in four voices, and in style and treatment it is similar to the first chorale prelude of this set. It begins with an introduction, and each of the four phrases of the tune, which is in the soprano, is separated from the next by an interlude; a short postlude is added after the last phrase of the tune.

No. 4, Set I

Tune, Gelobt sei Gott, also called Vulpius, by Melchior Vulpius, appearing in his Ein schön geistlich Gesangbuch, Jena, 1609.

Tonality, C major; meter, three-four; marked, Molto maestoso.

The chorale tune used here is militant in character and is given to the tenor to be played on a heavy reed.
The phrases of the chorale are separated by interludes, the work beginning with an introduction and concluding with a proportionately longer postlude. The chordal accompaniment played by the right hand, sometimes with help from the left hand, is in a style suggesting three orchestral trumpets (Fig. 33).

![Fig. 33--Willan, Six Chorale Preludes, Set I, No. 4, measures 5-6](image)

The postlude of eleven measures recalls the first phrase of the chorale in unison, goes into majestic block chords for both hands, and concludes with several measures of the trumpet-like figures.

**No. 5, Set I**

Tonality, E-flat major; meter, four-four; marked, *Quasi adagio e molto legato*.

The soprano carries the tune in this setting for four voices while the tenor imitates a measure later in each phrase in canon at the octave and once in canon at the twelfth. The tune is stated a phrase at a time, each separated from the other by about two measures of accompanimental figures in triplet eighth-notes which are present also during the presentation of the tune. The mood is quiet, sustained, and pastoral.

No. 6, Set I


Tonality, E-flat major; meter, four-four; marked, *Quasi adagio*.

This chorale prelude is inscribed in memoriam to Francis Henry Coombs. In its quiet and meditative mood it is similar to numbers one, three, and five of this set, although in form it is different. The chorale tune is stated twice, the first time in four voices in a straight-forward manner with very little elaboration save for a double echo effect at the end of the first, second, and fourth phrases (Fig. 34, page 67). This is done in the same manner as that of Brahms in his last chorale prelude, *O Welt, Ich Muss Dich Lassen*, Op. 122, No. 11.
Brahms also wrote a chorale prelude to a tune called O wie selig, but the tune he used is by Crüger. The hymn text for both the Crüger and the Stölzel tunes is, however, the same and was written by Simon Dach, 1635.

The second statement of the chorale tune in the Willan setting employs the tune in the soprano with underlying harmony, all played by the right hand, while the left hand plays quiet triplet figurations. The setting ends with a short coda which recalls the first phrase of the chorale.

Six Chorale Preludes, Set II

This group of chorale preludes has already been considered to some extent along with the companion volume, Six Chorale Preludes, Set I. The chorale preludes of
Set II display basically the same approach in writing as those of Set I. However, in Set II there is an increased individuality of style and the employment of a greater variety of compositional techniques. The first chorale prelude of this set is practically a chorale fantasia, and the sixth of this set has a fughetta as its most outstanding feature; each of the others has a certain distinctness which will be considered below.

**No. 1, Set II**


Tonality, F major; meter, three-four; marked, Allegro festivo.

This is one of the longest chorale preludes of both Sets I and II, having eighty-four measures. As stated above it is virtually a chorale fantasia on the tune, which is barely distinguishable. After an introduction of seventeen measures the first half of the tune is stated (measures eighteen through twenty-five), after which there is an interlude of twenty-seven measures utilizing motives from the chorale tune. Then the second half of the chorale tune is stated (measures fifty-three through sixty-one), followed by five measures which lead to a return of the original seventeen measures of the introduction, plus one measure for the
final cadence, constituting in effect a ritornello. The lines are contrapuntal with much use of fragmentary imitation, but there is no strict adherence to the use of a certain number of voices, and block chords are used occasionally in the style of brass instruments.

No. 2, Set II

Tune, O Traurigkeit, composer unknown; appeared in the Mainz Roman Catholic collection Himmlische Harmonie, 1628, the Würzburger Gesangbuch, 1628, also in Johann Rist's Himmlische Lieder, 1641, 1652.

Tonality, F minor; meter, four-four; marked, Adagio e molto espressivo. Episcopal Hymnal, 83.

The text of the first stanza of this Easter Even lament indicates the impassioned setting Willan has given the tune:

O Traurigkeit!
O Hertzeleid!
Ist das nicht zubeklagen?
Gott des Vaters einigs Kind,
Wird ins Grab getragen.

O sorrow deep!
Who would not weep
With heart-felt pain and sighing!
God the Father's only Son
In the tomb is lying. 8

The chorale tune is given to the tenor, and after an introduction the first half of the tune appears, followed by a short interlude, after which the chorale tune is


8Translated by Winfred Douglas, 1939: The Hymnal (1940) of the Protestant Episcopal Church (New York, 1940, 1943), hymn number 83.
completed and a short coda added. The writing is essentially that of a harmonized soprano line which forms a sort of two-voiced counterpoint with the chorale tune in the tenor, while the pedals merely support the harmonic structure thus resulting. The quiet grief of the text is effectively portrayed in this setting.

No. 3, Set II

Tune, Mit Fried' und Freud, composer unknown; appeared in Geistliches Gesangk Büchlein, Wittenberg, 1524.

Tonality, Dorian mode; meter, four-four; marked, Poco adagio e legato.

In this quiet and effective setting the pedal is given the chorale tune unadorned, with the phrases separated by interludes on the manuals which are actually a part of the continuous flow of four-voiced counterpoint. The soprano carries the tune in anticipation of each pedal entrance, but the tune is so interwoven with the general texture, from which it assumes its elaboration, that it is distinguishable only upon close analysis (except for the first phrase, which is quite recognizable). Occasionally there are five voices present, and there is a section of seven measures in three-four meter. This is one of the longer settings, running to forty-five measures in a slow tempo. The mood is contemplative, and the chorale tune serves more as a point of departure for a fantasia since the pedal entries are not marked for prominence.
No. 4, Set II

Tune, Lobt Gott, ihr Christen, also known as Hermann, Lutzen, and Nicolaus, by Nikolaus Hermann; published separately in 1554 by the composer to his own text, O Jesu wahrer Gottes Sohn.

Tonality, F major; meter, four-four; marked, Andante con spirito. Episcopal Hymnal, 435 (first tune).

This is a joyous setting marked for forte throughout. The soprano takes the chorale tune (in quarter-notes) and the pedal imitates canonically, while the alto and tenor furnish elaboration in running sixteenth-notes. The tune is presented from the first measure through to the last without interruption, except that the last note of each phrase is held about two measures for elaboration in the inner voices. After the tune has been completed there is a postlude of six measures in the same style as that which has preceded.

No. 5, Set II

Tune, Christum wir sollen loben schon, which appeared in the Erfurt Enchiridion, 1524, and based in turn on the ancient plainsong, A solis ortus cardine.

Tonality, Phrygian mode; meter, basically free but with measures in four-four, five-four, and three-two; marked, Andante moderato alternating with Grave.
There is a very individual character to this setting. A short pedal solo introduction would appear to set the tonality as D minor or Dorian mode. However, the plainsong melody, from which the chorale is derived, is in the Phrygian mode, while the chorale tune as presented here centers perhaps in the Dorian. Since both the plainsong and the chorale are used in this setting, an interesting and rather mystical ambiguity of tonality is present.

The setting consists of a phrase of the plainsong in the soprano, harmonized and for manuals only (except for a short section in the first phrase) (Fig. 35), followed by the corresponding phrase of the chorale tune, harmonized contrapuntally in a different character and employing the pedals (Fig. 36, page 73).

![Figure 35](image_url)

Fig. 35--Willan, *Six Chorale Preludes* Set II, No. 5, measures 15-16

The plainsong and chorale alternate in this manner for the four phrases of each, making, therefore, a total of eight short sections. A short postlude which combines the
plainsong and chorale harmonization styles completes this very effective setting.

No. 6, Set II

Tune, Vexilla Regis, a plainsong melody from the sixth century, and here, from Sarum Plainsong.\(^9\)

Tonality, F minor; meter, four-four; marked, Maestoso.

Episcopal Hymnal, 63 (first tune).

---

\(^9\)Cf. Apel, "Sarum use," op. cit.: "The practice of the cathedral of Salisbury (L. Sarum) in England which differed in details from that of the Roman liturgy. It prevailed during the later Middle Ages throughout a great part of England, until it was abolished by decree in 1547. Two plainsong MSS, dating from the 13th century, have been published in facsimile by W. H. Frere under the titles Graduale Sarisburiense (1894) and Antiphonale Sarisburiense (1901-25) Cf. his The Sarum Gradual and the Gregorian Antiphonale Missarum (1896)."
This great processional hymn is supposed to have been composed by Venantius Honorius Fortunatus for the occasion on November 19, 569, when the relics of the True Cross, sent by the emperor Justin II to Queen Rhadegonda, were received in the monastery at Poitiers. The scene is described by Gregory of Tours (Migne, Patrologia Lat., LXXI, 518).

Eufronius, Bishop of Tours, came with his clergy with much singing and gleaming of tapers and fragrance of incense, and in the absence of the bishop of the city brought the holy relics to the monastery.

Since the tenth century it has been the Vesper office hymn from Passion Sunday to Wednesday in Holy Week. The "vexillum" was the old Roman cavalry standard which, after Constantine, was surmounted by a cross instead of the Roman eagle.¹⁰

This description of the occasion and setting for this hymn, with words beginning, "The royal banners forward go," has been followed by Willan with great faithfulness. His setting is militant and has the sound of ceremony about it. It is extremely effective and purposeful writing, and of the twelve chorale preludes, Sets I and II, presently considered, it is the most difficult and complex. It serves as a very fitting conclusion to the two sets.

There is a short introduction, built upon the opening notes of the plainsong melody, and, as a bridge into the entrance of the tune, there is an ascending flourish on the manuals followed by a quasi recitative for the pedals. The first phrase of the plainsong is set chordally with a fairly florid pedal (Fig. 37, page 75).

¹⁰The Hymnal (1940) Companion, pp. 48-49.
Fig. 37--Willan, Six Chorale Preludes, Set II, No. 6, measures 7-8

The second, third, and fourth phrases begin with two to three measures of fugato on the tune which follows, given on the pedals in the second phrase and in the soprano in the third and fourth phrases. After a solid cadence in F minor a stirring fughetta is added, so that what has preceded has been in effect a prelude to the more important business of this setting.

The fughetta subject is built from the first phrase of the plainsong (Fig. 38) (Cf. Fig. 37, above).

Fig. 38--Willan, Six Chorale Preludes, Set II, No. 6, measures 34-35
A traditional exposition, with entries in all four of the voices, takes the first twelve measures. An episode of six measures, in which there is no thematic development or imitation (except, perhaps, fragmentary inferences), leads to a statement of the subject in the relative major (A-flat) in augmentation on the pedal, constituting a fifth voice.

After this statement of the subject the counterpoint assumes a somewhat chordal texture. An episode of six measures, during which the pedal has two entries of the subject in diminution, is followed by a final statement of the subject, in the home tonality of F minor, climactically and in augmentation in the soprano. The fughetta is completed with a coda of eight measures, utilizing motives in the left hand and on the pedal which recall the subject in diminution, and concluding with grandeur and brilliance.

Five Preludes on Plainchant Melodies

The most obvious feature which these Five Preludes share is their having all been founded on plainchant, or plainsong. Moreover, in two of the Preludes the plainsong is presented non-metrically while in the remaining ones, although written metrically, the plainsong follows the free rhythm of the original very closely. These Preludes have an individuality and distinctiveness which may be attributed to the composer's life-long interest in plainsong, whose solemn mystery doubtless provided a stimulating point of departure.
These are five simple and telling pieces, in all but the last of which harmonic tranquillity gives a sense of dignity and repose. In the last piece, labelled "Processional," a certain chromatic element is introduced for the first time. The writing of these preludes has been most carefully considered to accommodate devotional requirements, and the result is a tactful combination which will interest the player.\[11\]

Each of these Preludes is cast in similar form, although two are rather long while the remaining three are somewhat shorter. In each there is an introduction followed by a presentation of the plainsong phrases alternating with interludes, and after the fourth and final phrase has been given there is a postlude. There is extensive use of imitation on motives from the plainsong, but there are no fugal sections in these Preludes. The writing is a judicious combination of polyphony and homophony, but the basic approach is decidedly contrapuntal. In two of the Preludes the plainsong appears in the soprano, and in the remaining three it appears in the tenor.

No. 1

Tune, *Aeterna Christi munera*, traditional plainsong for this text; mode VII.

Tonality, F major; meter, four-four; marked, Allegro energico. Episcopal Hymnal, 132 (first tune).

The writing in this setting is extremely fluent, and the flow of the piece is a pleasant but not overstressed *energico*. The plainsong is given chordally in the soprano while the left hand and pedal move along in eighth notes utilizing the motive shown below (Fig. 39) quite extensively.

![Musical notation](image)

**Fig. 39—Willan, Five Preludes**

*No. 1, measures 1-3*

The form is that of introduction, alternating sections of plainsong tune and interludes, followed by a postlude. This Prelude would make a very fine outgoing voluntary, or for festive occasions, an equally fine prelude for the church service. Palestrina used this plainsong for the *cantus firmus* of his *Mass, Aeterna Christi munera*.

**No. 2**

*Tune, Christe, Redemptor omnium, Sarum Plainsong, mode I.*

*Tonality, C major; meter, three-four; marked, Andante moderato. Episcopal Hymnal, 485 (second tune).*
This is a solemn setting in the form shared by this set of Preludes—that of introduction, plainsong and interludes alternating, and a postlude. The plainsong tune is in the tenor throughout and is given in free rhythm using quarter-notes, during which time the usual meter of three-four is suspended in all parts. There are four voices, treated contrapuntally with some imitation, until the last five measures, when a chordal approach is introduced for breadth and richness, although the dynamic marking is still piano. The plainsong is in the Dorian mode and the Prelude makes its final cadence in D (on a major chord), but the feeling of tonality is, most of the time, that of C major.

No. 3

Tune, Ecce jam noctis, Sarum Plainsong, mode IV.

Tonality, D major; meter, four-four; marked, Moderato—Sostenuto e placido. Episcopal Hymnal, 71 (second tune).

This setting is one of the most interesting for the manner in which the plainsong is presented—in the soprano over light harmonization on the manuals only (Fig. 40).

Fig. 40--Willan, Five Preludes, No. 3, measures 6-7
The last note of each phrase of the plainsong is elongated while the inner voices taper the phrase to an ending somewhat melismatically. The plainsong phrases alternate with interludes which are almost pastoral and which in each instance are built over a point in the pedals. The postlude, nine measures long, is conceived chordally along contrapuntal lines over several different points in the pedals. The hands build to a subdued climax after which a quiet descent is made, ending triple piano.

No. 4

Tune, Ave maris stella, ancient and often-used plainsong.

Tonality, Dorian mode; meter, four-four; marked, Andante mistico.

This setting of a tune to the old Gregorian hymn, Ave maris stella, retains the stark character of the plainsong melody, which is given to the tenor throughout. The setting begins with imitation of the first phrase of the plainsong, which begins with the leap of a fifth between the first and second notes. The pedal has a tonic point for twenty of the thirty measures of the setting. The right hand weaves a harmonic background in thirds and sixths rather high on the manual, and when the left hand is not playing the plainsong, the phrases of which are separated by short interludes, it assists the right hand in patterns which are often parallel. Willan has given a mystical and archaic setting to this tune.
No. 5

Tune, Urbs Hierusalem beata, Sarum Plainsong, mode II.

Tonality, G minor; meter, four-four; marked, Molto maestoso e marcato. Episcopal Hymnal, 383 (first tune).

This Prelude and the sixth setting (on Vexilla Regis) of Six Chorale Preludes, Set II, bear a strong resemblance. Each describes a scene of grandeur, which in this instance is the heavenly city of Jerusalem. Chromaticism and a militant rhythm are here employed with an almost entirely chordal approach. After an introduction of sixteen measures the plainsong enters in the tenor (Fig. 41).

Fig. 41—Willan, Five Preludes
No. 5, measures 16-17

Phrases one and two of the plainsong are given without break, after which there is an interlude of four and a half measures. The tenor then resumes the plainsong, giving another two phrases, which are followed by an interlude of five
and a half measures. There are several measures of three-two meter appearing intermittently although the basic meter is four-four. The final two phrases of the plainsong are given by the tenor followed by a short coda of chromatic progressions, ending triple forte (Fig. 42).

This setting is marked Processional and will be found a very useful work in that category of music where additions are so badly needed. It will also be found effective for use as a church postlude at festive services when music of pomp and grandeur is specifically needed.

Ten Hymn Preludes, Set I

This collection of Ten Hymn Preludes, Set I, appeared in 1956, and two companion volumes, Ten Hymn Preludes, Set II, and Ten Hymn Preludes, Set III, are scheduled for publication.
about January, 1958 (see footnote, page 53). Set I contains what is quite probably the finest cantus firmus setting by Willan since he resumed composition in this form in 1950, or to be probably more accurate, since he resumed publication of cantus firmus settings. The setting referred to is the Prelude on O Filii et Filiae, number nine of this collection, an example of spirited and inventive writing of the utmost interest. There have been many settings of this famous tune, but none surpasses this setting by Willan.

This collection is further distinguished by containing the only partita or set of chorale variations by Willan. This is number five on the tune Saint Flavian and certainly recalls the approach if not always the texture of Baroque composition.

As one has come to expect from Healey Willan, this composer's Ten Hymn Preludes for organ . . . reveal expert workmanship and high musical intelligence. Some artists startle us with the boldness and novelty of their ideas; others with the bold and novel touches which they bring to more or less traditional materials. It is to this latter category that Willan belongs; he uses nothing without making it his own and handling it extremely capably. 12

Since this collection is based on hymns, rather than chorales or plainsong, Willan has apparently let the spirit of the Anglican Church enter a little more freely than in some of his other settings. This quality is indefinable and would defy analysis. Nevertheless, in quite a number of

these settings the genial sobriety of the Anglican Church seems to have dictated the basic spirit.

No. 1, Set I

Tune, Song 24, by Orlando Gibbons, written for George Wither's Hymnes and Songs of the Church, 1623.

Tonality, E minor; meter, four-four; marked, Moderato.

This is a quiet setting, basically in four voices although extra notes are added occasionally, written very straightforwardly for quarter-notes and half-notes with an intermittent use of triplet quarter-notes for contrast. The hymn tune is in the tenor, and the four phrases are presented separately with intervening connecting interludes of several measures. The setting begins with an introduction of ten measures and ends with a short coda.

No. 2, Set I

Tune, Richmond, by Thomas Haweis, first appeared in his Carmina Christo, 1792.

Tonality, G major; meter, three-four; marked, Andante.

A dominant pedal-point for the first five measures of this setting, with the manuals outlining the harmony of the tonic six-four, provides an unusual beginning. The counterpoint is in four and five voices, and there is considerable imitation on a motive derived from the first phrase of the hymn tune, the motive which appears at the beginning of the composition. The tune enters in the soprano in the
thirteenth measure, but in the elaboration which it assumes, in the style of the preceding material, the tune becomes largely disguised (Fig. 43).

Fig. 43--Willan, Ten Hymn Preludes, Set I, No. 2, measures 15-16

Thus, the interludes between the phrases of the hymn tune cannot be actually discerned as such. There is a postlude of nine measures, and the setting ends solidly at forte strength, at which level it has been since the first note.

No. 3, Set I

Tune, Hyfrydol, by Rowland Hugh Prichard, composed ca. 1830, appeared in Griffith Roberts' Haleliwiah Drachefn, 1855.

Tonality, D major; meter, three-two; marked, Festivo. Episcopal Hymnal, 347 (second tune), 479 (first tune).

The tune Hyfrydol is a famous one and is among the most stirring of all hymn tunes. It is remarkable in that it
utilizes the compass of only a fifth until the last phrase, when the sixth degree of the scale is approached for one note.

After a nine-measure introduction on the manuals, the hymn tune enters in the tenor over a tonic point in the pedals. The second phrase, which in the hymn tune is identical to the first, enters forcefully in the pedals while the third phrase, which is separated from the second by a short interlude, is exchanged between the soprano and tenor. After a two measure interlude the soprano takes the final phrase over solid harmony in both hands and a constantly moving pedal (Fig. 44).

There is a coda of three measures which gives the piece a very affirmative ending. Willan's setting takes full cognizance of the strength and glory of this splendid tune.
No. 4, Set I

Tune, Cape Town, by Frederich Filitz, appearing in his Vierstimmiges Choralbuch, 1847.

Tonality, D major; meter, twelve-eight; marked, Placido. Episcopal Hymnal, 275, 379.

There is an uniqueness about this setting because it is a Siciliano, although a very slow one. The Siciliano has such a pastoral quality that it has become associated with Christmas music to some extent. This hymn tune is coupled with texts, however, which are of non-seasonal Christian sentiment, and Willan doubtless intends it for general use. The hymn tune is in the tenor throughout, separated by interludes; it is preceded by an introduction and followed by a coda of six measures over a tonic pedal point. The setting has an appealing lyric character.

No. 5, Set I

Tune, Saint Flavian, from the English Psalter, 1562, popularly known as Day's Psalter from the name of the printer. Appeared in its present form, Richard Redhead's Church Hymn Tunes, 1853.

Tonality, F major; meter, four-four (first statement, Variations I, II, V), three-four (Variations III, IV). Episcopal Hymnal, 59, 198 (first tune).

This is somewhat the most formal of all the cantus firmus settings by Willan and recalls the partitas, or
chorale variations, of German Baroque composers—Pachelbel, Kuhnau, and Bach, who wrote several outstanding partitas for organ.

The hymn tune is first stated in the manner of a German chorale, with the soprano giving the tune unadorned while the other voices supply moderate elaboration. There are five variations which follow.

Variation I, Andante, presents the hymn tune in the alto with the soprano supplying the figuration. The tenor answers canonically with the tune, and the pedal enters briefly at the end of each phrase.

Variation II, Andante, states the hymn tune in the pedals on a four-foot stop, while the soprano has figures in continuous sixteenth-notes, with the tenor voice, in the left hand, providing a typically Baroque, "walking bass" type of movement in eighth-notes (Fig. 45).

![Musical notation]

Fig. 45—Willan, Ten Hymn Preludes, Set I, No. 5, measures 28-29
This variation is reminiscent somewhat of Bach's *Rejoice, Beloved Christians*, although it is more subdued in style than the Bach.

Variation III, *Moderato*, changes the meter to three-four. The hymn tune is given in the soprano with the alto, tenor, and bass (pedals) furnishing eighth-note movement.

Variation IV continues the same style as the preceding variation employed, but the hymn tune is moved to the tenor and is elaborated in the style of the other voices so that it is considerably disguised.

Variation V, *Andante*, returns to the original meter of four-four and is a powerful variation, *double forte* throughout (Fig. 46).

![Fig. 46--Willan, Ten Hymn Preludes, Set I, No. 5, measures 81-82](image)

The hymn tune is given to the pedals, and the manuals provide florid figurations with the sixteenth-note as the basic unit of movement. There is a short coda and a solid cadence.
No. 6, Set I

Tune, Welcombe, by Samuel Webbe, 1782, appearing anonymously in Essay on the Church Plain Chant, 1782, and with Webbe's name, in R. Harrison's Sacred Harmony, 1791, also in Webbe's own Collection of Motetts, 1792, 1840.

Tonality, E-flat major; meter, four-four; marked, Sostenuto. Episcopal Hymnal, 111, 155, 256.

This Prelude is a typical example of a quiet setting by Willan and is very similar to the third of Six Chorale Preludes, Set I, also in E-flat major and previously discussed. There is a short introduction, then the hymn tune is given in the soprano, followed a measure later with canonic imitation by the tenor. Between each phrase of the tune there is a short interlude, and the piece closes with a brief coda. There are four voices.

No. 7, Set I

Tune, Old Hundredth, by Louis Bourgeois, 1551, Genevan Psalter and many other sources.

Tonality, A major; meter, four-four; marked, Andante maestoso. Episcopal Hymnal, 139, 277, 278, 540.

Old Hundredth, by Louis Bourgeois, is the only tune which has been preserved intact throughout the entire history of metrical psalmody and modern hymnody, and as such deservedly ranks at the head of all Protestant church music. . . .

The tune entered the Geneva Psalter in 1551, with a first line which Douen has located in a secular song.13

Willan has given this famous tune one of his finest and most stirring settings. In the six and a half measure introduction the first phrase of the tune is given in augmentation on the pedals while the manuals, in three voices, begin in fugato style, using the descending motive from the first part of the hymn tune (Fig. 47).

![Musical notation](image)

**Fig. 47**—Willan, *Ten Hymn Preludes*, Set I, No. 7, measures 1-2

After a *fermata* which marks the close of the introduction, the hymn tune is given in the soprano. As with the first phrase the second, third, and fourth phrases are all preceded by florid, imitative sections built upon material from each successive phrase. There is a short coda and the setting ends quite grandly at *double forte*.

**No. 8, Set I**

Tune, *Saint Columba*, set by Robert Stewart to two different texts in the *Irish Church Hymnal*, 1873, 1877, and
marked "Hymn of the Ancient Irish Church." It appears in Stanford's Complete Collection of Irish Music as Noted by George Petrie, 1902.

Tonality, E-flat major; meter, three-four. Episcopal Hymnal, 345 (first tune).

This beautiful Irish melody is given a particularly effective setting which certainly has an "Irish" sound about it. The tune is given to the tenor throughout, and the soprano is the only other important line, the other voices completing the harmony. The soprano achieves its individual character by avoiding scale tones fa and ti, although fa is used prominently in the hymn tune, and also through the rhythmic devices of syncopation and occasional triplet eighth-notes (Fig. 48). The subdominant is used in lieu of dominant harmony, which is rarely used and then only in passing. The setting is quiet, and the unexpected full ending is most effective.

Fig. 48--Willan, Ten Hymn Preludes, Set I, No. 8, measures 5-6
No. 9, Set I

Tune, O Filii et Filiae, French melody, fifteenth century; in its earliest known form is a four-part setting in Airs sur les Hymnes Sacrez, Odes et Noels, Paris, 1623. Solesmes version, mode II.

Tonality, Dorian (on G); meter, three-four; marked, Con spirito e marcato. Episcopal Hymnal, 99.

It has already been mentioned that this is one of the finest cantus firmus settings of Willan's entire thirty-three settings presently available. It has a brilliance and use of conservative contemporary harmonies which make it not only a very effective voluntary for church use at Easter and weeks following but also an arresting recital piece.

The pedals begin the Prelude using the first phrase from the tune, marked before the stanza. The manuals enter with block chords on the same portion of the tune (Fig. 49).

Fig. 49--Willan, Ten Hymn Preludes, Set I, No. 9, measures 4-8
In measure fourteen a non-exact sequence of the first eight measures is begun a whole step lower. In measure twenty-two a tonic point is taken in the pedals and lasts for ten measures, during which time the manuals taper for a quiet entrance of the tune.

The tune enters in the soprano in measure thirty, with running eighth-notes in the alto and tenor and without pedal for a few measures (Fig. 50).

![Musical notation](image)

*Fig. 50--Willan, Ten Hymn Preludes, Set I, No. 9, measures 31-33*

The pedal enters presently and the tune is completed to its last measure in the soprano, after which there follows a long interlude of twenty-eight measures. The tune is stated again completely through in the soprano but is interrupted along with the other manual parts while the pedal has a brilliant six-measure cadenza in eighth-notes. The tune is carried to its conclusion on a solid cadence in G minor which in itself would have been an effective ending (Fig. 51, page 95). However, a coda of five measures, marked *largo*, comes as a surprise and adds measurably to the climactic fervor,
Fig. 51—Willan, Ten Hymn Preludes, Set I, No. 9, measures 101-102

concluding with great force on a G major chord. This setting is clearly one of Willan's finest.

No. 10, Set I

Tune, Aberystwyth, by Joseph Parry, for the Welsh hymn, Beth sydd i mi yn y byd, appearing in Stephen and Jones' Ail Llyfr Tonau ac Emynau, 1879.

Tonality, E minor; meter, four-two; marked, Andante sostenuto. Episcopal Hymnal, 415 (first tune), 440 (second tune).

This beautiful and soulful tune, which is named for the Welsh town in which it was composed, is given a sober and almost scholarly setting in four voices. The tune is alternated between the soprano and tenor. Considerable use of imitation is made using the ascending pattern which
appears at the beginning of the tune, while the counter-
point is essentially note-against-note (Fig. 52).

![Musical notation]

Fig. 52—Willan, Ten Hymn Preludes,
Set I, No. 10, measures 23-24

This is probably the finest of the quiet Preludes in
this set of ten, and, like virtually all of the Willan
settings, is designed admirably for use in the church.

Ten Hymn Preludes, Set II

Although Ten Hymn Preludes, Set II, and Ten Hymn Preludes, Set III, are not available at the time of writing,
they are scheduled for publication about January, 1958 (see
footnote, page 53) according to information received from
the publisher. A listing of the hymn tunes employed, with
their sources, will be given in alphabetical order without
being numbered, since it is not known if what order they
will appear when published.
It will be noted that five of the tunes of Set II are from the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries, while of the remaining earlier tunes none is of Gregorian origin. In Set III the balance is in favor of older tunes with three from the eighteenth century, none from the nineteenth century, and of the remaining tunes from earlier sources, all are from the sixteenth century or before except one from the seventeenth century.

The first of the tunes from Ten Hymn Preludes, Set II, to be considered is **Agincourt**. On the basis of its not being included in either of the two principal sources referred to in this context (see footnotes, page 57), as well as in several other references, it is believed that it may be from the twentieth century. This is only conjecture, but it does seem a safe assumption that it is, at any rate, from comparatively modern hymnody.

The tune **Bristol** appeared in the *Whole Booke of Psalms*, 1621, edited by Thomas Ravenscroft. Episcopal Hymnal, 7.

The tune **Martyrdom**, by Hugh Wilson, ca. 1800, was originally in duple meter but was changed to triple meter, harmonized, and published by Robert A. Smith in his *Sacred Music Sung at Saint George's Church, Edinburgh*, 1825. Episcopal Hymnal, 410 (second tune), 450.

**Old Hundred-fourth** also is from Thomas Ravenscroft's *Whole Booke of Psalms*, 1621, and may be his own hymn. Episcopal Hymnal, 260 (first tune).
Old Hundred-twenty-fourth, composed or adapted by Louis Bourgeois for the Geneva Psalter of 1551, has received considerable renown in an anthem setting by Gustav Holst in 1919. The familiar words were written especially for that setting by Clifford Bax and begin, "Turn back, O man, forswear thy foolish ways," and appear with the tune in the Episcopal Hymnal, 536. A shortened form of the tune, called Toulon, appears in the Episcopal Hymnal, 220.

Saint Philip was written by William H. Monk for the original musical edition of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, 1861. Episcopal Hymnal, 57 (second tune).

Tallis' Ordinal appeared with eight other tunes by Tallis in Archbishop Parker's Psalter, ca. 1567. Tallis' original harmonization, except for the addition of the third in three chords, appears in the Episcopal Hymnal, 298 (first tune), 302.

The tune This endris nyghte bears a close resemblance to Tallis' Ordinal and is from a fifteenth or sixteenth century manuscript at the British Museum. The question is raised whether Tallis had this tune in mind when he wrote the tune known as Tallis' Ordinal.\(^\text{14}\)

The well-known tune, Tony Botel, or Ebenezer, is most frequently sung to words by James Russell Lowell—"Once to ev'ry man and nation Comes the moment to decide"—written in 1845. An interesting light is thrown on this tune in the following quotation:

\(^{14}\) *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, p. 104.
The tune, Ebenezer, or Ton-y-botel, is from an anthem, "Goleu yn y Glyn" ("Light in the Valley") by Thomas John Williams. It was first published as a hymn-tune in Llawlyfr Moliant, 1890. It was sung widely throughout Wales before publication, during which time the legend sprang up of its having been washed ashore on the coast of Lleyn in a bottle, hence the name Ton-y-botel (Tune in a bottle).\footnote{The Hymnal (1940) Companion, p. 313.}

The melismatic triplet eighth-notes on the second beat of every measure, except three, help to give this tune a very distinctive character. It is found in the Episcopal Hymnal, 519.

The tune Wareham is named for the birthplace of its composer, William Knapp, who included it in his Sett of New Psalm Tunes and Anthems in Four Parts, 1738. It appears three times in the Episcopal Hymnal, 119, 381, 520.

Ten Hymn Preludes, Set III

For a brief consideration of this set, refer to Ten Hymn Preludes, Set II. The hymn tunes employed are listed with information regarding their sources.

The tune Christ is erstanden is a German melody from the twelfth century. It appears in Bach's harmonization in the famous collection of 371 chorales.

Iste Confessor, or Rouen appears in the Rouen Paroissien. In the 1912 Festival Service Book of the London Gregorian
Association it is set in a five-part fauxbourdon. Later it appeared in Athelstan Riley's *Collection of Fauxbourdons and Descants*, 1916. It appears in the Episcopal Hymnal, 228 (second tune), harmonized by Healey Willan in 1918.

The tune *Newbury* appeared anonymously in Chetham's *Psalms*, 1718, and with the name Newbury in Gawthorn's *Harmonia Perfecta*, 1730.

*Nun lasst uns Gott, dem Herren*, or *Selnecker*, by Nicolaus Selnecker, appearing in his *Christliche Psalmen Lieder, und Kirchengesenge*, 1587. Episcopal Hymnal, 149.

The tune *Saint Thomas* is from Samuel Webbe's *Collection of Motetts and Antiphons*, 1792. Two different tunes with the name of *Saint Thomas* appear in the Episcopal Hymnal, but Webbe's tune is different from either of these.

*Song 22* was composed by Orlando Gibbons for Wither's *Hymnes and Songs of the Church*, 1623. It appears in the Episcopal Hymnal, 433 (first tune) in Gibbons' own harmonization.

The tune *Tunbridge* is by Jeremiah Clarke, and there can be some conjecture that it appeared in Henry Playford's *Divine Companion*, 1709. Its derivation is obscured unless *Tunbridge* happens to be an alternative name for *Saint Magnus*, appearing in the Episcopal Hymnal, 106.

*Windsor* is a tune which appeared in various of the Scottish Psalters. It was found in Damon's Psalter of 1591
and is here employed according to the rhythm of the Scottish Psalter of 1633. The Psalter of 1635 represented the series of Psalters in its best form musically. It was reprinted in a critical edition by Neal Livingston in 1864 and by Richard R. Terry, 1935, both employing modern notation.

Two listings defy detection as to source. One is called Prelude on a Rouen Melody, which is insufficient information except to locate the tune in a general way as to time and country of origin. The other is a tune called Saint Venantlus and is described as a Rouen melody. Both of these are probably to be found in the Rouen Paroissien.

Four Recent Miscellaneous Settings

Chorale Prelude on Te Lucis

Tune, Te Lucis, which appeared in the Catholische Geistliche Gesänge, Andernach, 1608.

Tonality, E-flat major; meter, four-four; marked, Slow and smooth.

The tune Te Lucis, which appears as number 164 (first tune) in the Episcopal Hymnal, is from the Sarum Plainsong. It shares the same text (Latin, ca. seventh century, translated by John Mason Neale, 1852) with the metrical tune, Te Lucis, employed by Willan.

To thee before the close of day,
Creator of the world, we pray
That, with thy wonted favor, thou
Wouldst be our guard and keeper now.
Although there appears to be a vague resemblance between the plainsong and the metrical tune to these words, it is thought that the metrical tune is probably a new one.\textsuperscript{16}

Willan's setting of this well-known evening hymn is appropriately quiet and reflective. Written throughout for four voices, the accompaniment to the tune is in smoothly flowing eighth-notes with a scattered use of sixteenth-notes. There is a short introduction which sets the mood, followed by entrances of the tune separated by interludes; a short coda brings the setting to a quiet conclusion.

Each of the four phrases is exchanged among the different voices and is imitated in another voice. The first phrase appears in the Bass (pedals) and is imitated at the tenth in the soprano. The second phrase is in the tenor, imitated at the twelfth by the soprano. In the third phrase the tune again appears in the bass (pedals), imitated at the eleventh by the tenor. In the last phrase the tune is in the alto, imitated at the fourth by the soprano.

Technically these imitations constitute a canon, but the tempo is so slow and the imitation is begun so late in the principal phrase of the tune that the effect is that of reflecting the tune proper than of actual canonic imitation. Tender in mood, this setting is particularly suited for an evening service. It is not difficult to play.

\textsuperscript{16}Hymns Ancient and Modern, p. 43.
Prelude on Adoro Te

Tune, Adoro te, Benedictine Plainsong, mode V, from the thirteenth century (Solesmes version).

Tonality, D major; meter, three-four; marked, Moderato.
Episcopal Hymnal, 204, 223.

This Prelude was published in 1956 in a collection by various composers, some contemporary and others from the Baroque period, designated Music for the Communion Service, published by the Concordia Publishing House, Saint Louis. The setting is of a well-known tune used regularly in the Episcopal Church. The accompaniment is in two-note figures with considerable use of parallelism. It recalls quite strongly Willan's Chorale Prelude No. 1 on Puer Nobis Nascitur although it is shorter and less involved. The occasional use of parallel fifths adds to the archaic character of this setting. The plainsong is in the tenor throughout; the four phrases are separated by interludes, and there is an introduction and a short coda. It is strictly service music but as such is effective and useful.

Epilogue on Saint Theodulph


Tonality, C major; meter, four-four; marked, Maestoso.
Episcopal Hymnal, 62.

For a consideration of this setting refer below to the Prologue on Ascension.
Prologue on Ascension


Tonality, A major; meter, three-four; marked, Andante sostenuto. Episcopal Hymnal, 104 (first tune).

The setting above on Ascension and the one preceding it on Saint Theodulph are for church use. They appear in the series called Festival Voluntaries, published by the Novello Company of England in 1956, of which there are six volumes for various seasons of the Church Year.

The Epilogue is the final work in the volume for Lent, Passiontide, and Palm Sunday. It is built on the militant and famous tune associated with the stirring words, "All glory, laud, and honor." There is an introduction of ten measures after which the first half of the tune is carried in the soprano. The tenor then takes the tune to its conclusion and reaches a cadence, which is immediately extended into a coda. There are nineteen measures in the coda with increasingly climactic writing utilizing the first phrase in the pedals and then in the soprano, ending finally in a mood which is decidedly triumphant.

The Prologue is the first work in the volume for Ascension, Whitsun, and Trinity. There is some genuine "tone painting" in the opening of this setting as the essentially scale-wise movement begins low on the manuals, over a tonic
pedal-point, and ascends into a statement of the hymn tune in the soprano. The tune is actually in four-four meter, but Willan has placed it in a three-four setting and retained its even flow by writing it in dotted quarter-notes. The measures look as if they were in six-eight meter, but since the hymn is solemn although joyful the slower pulse of three-four is the more appropriate. The tune is carried straight through to its conclusion with the exception of a four measure connecting link midway in the presentation of the tune. A postlude of seven measures, the last of which is marked largo, provides this useful church prelude with a very affirmative conclusion, ending, indeed, on a note of ascension.
CHAPTER IV

REMAINING ORGAN WORKS

The organ works of Willan to be last considered are among both his earliest and most recently published compositions and cover a time span from 1909 to 1957. Their stylistic range is from the essentially homophonic to the scholarly contrapuntal, from the serious to the rather light. The harmonic usage, whether within the framework of counterpoint or homophony, is fundamentally traditional, as in Willan's other organ works, and the forms employed cover the gamut from a prelude and fugue to harmonized melodies.

Actually two very widely separated periods in Willan's works for organ are here represented. His earliest active period in publishing for organ occurred in 1909-10, and his recent period of renewed publishing for organ began in 1949. During a period of twenty-one years, from 1928 to 1949, Willan did not publish any organ works, apparently giving most of his attention to composition in other fields, namely, the choral, orchestral, and operatic fields.

Willan's compositions here considered from his earliest period of publishing for the organ are his Epilogue, Prelude and Fugue in B minor, Prelude and Fugue in C minor, and
Miniature Suite. His most significant group of works since 1949 are his chorale preludes and other cantus firmus settings, but the following organ works from this recent period constitute a sizable group: Elegy, Barcarolle, Prelude and Fugue in G minor, Tema Ostinato, Festival, Soliloquy, and Rondino, Elegy, and Chaconne.

The Earlier Works

Epilogue

The Epilogue bears a publication date of 1909 and is a work typical of that period. Its texture is considerably more homophonic than contrapuntal and its harmonies are quite traditional. It is marked allegro energico, and while its general merit of musical idea, craftsmanship, and vigor can be acknowledged, it is a piece which nowadays sounds somewhat dated.

The form of the Epilogue is sonata-allegro, and for this reason it is easy to imagine that it may have been contemplated as the first movement of a sonata. The first subject group takes twenty-one measures and utilizes a very sturdy principal motive (Fig. 53, page 108). There is no episode following the first subject group. The second subject is in the subdominant, deviating therefore from the more usual practice of employing the dominant. The second subject has a hymn-like quality, is of eight measures, and
is given first on the manuals only, quite high, imbuing it with the quality of an angelic choir (Fig. 54).
The eight measures of the second subject are repeated on the manuals exactly as in their first appearance but with the addition of pedal eighth-notes on the second half of each beat. The closing group is of seven measures and is a stylistic continuation of the second subject although its motives are actually different. The cadence which marks the end of the exposition is on the subdominant.

The development section is twenty-seven measures in length and uses for the first nineteen measures material from the second subject, combined with sixteenth-notes and dotted rhythms reminiscent of the first subject group. The remaining eight measures of the development group or section are built over a dominant pedal-point and utilize the principal motive of the first subject (Fig. 53, page 108) in sequential patterns which increase in intensity for the forceful return of the first subject group in the recapitulation.

Upon its return in the recapitulation the first subject group is presented exactly as it appeared in the exposition for the first sixteen measures (except for one minor modification). At the sixteenth measure a dominant pedal-point is introduced and lasts for eight measures. Sequential patterns built upon the principal motive of the first subject group, similar to the final eight measures of the development section, form the basis for another
increase in intensity to lead this time into the second subject, now in the tonic and presented *triple forte* in heroic style

As in the exposition the second subject is given twice. The repetition here is marked *animato* and is provided with a rather florid pedal line. In the coda of eight measures, marked *stringendo* and later *largo*, a forceful climax is reached and the composition ends solidly on a D major chord.

*Prelude and Fugue in B minor*

This serious composition also bears a publication date of 1909, and like the *Epilogue* it can be considered rather typical of its era although very admirable in many respects.

The Prelude is marked *largo* (*poco rubato*) and is cast predominantly for full-organ registrations. It is essentially homophonic with the employment of contrapuntal devices. The principal motive (Fig. 55) which opens the Prelude returns twice, each time in a different tonality.

![Fig. 55--Willan, Prelude in B minor, measures 1-2](image-url)
The Prelude is in a free binary structure (A A B A) which is apparent mostly from the return of the opening motive since in each of its two succeeding statements it is not followed with any thematic development but instead by different material than that used in its original appearance although of similar character. Section B opens quietly and after four measures begins a crescendo and accelerando in sequences of Wagnerian coloring which are effective (Fig. 56). The Prelude makes its cadence on the dominant in preparation for the Fugue.

**Fig. 56--Willan, Prelude in B minor, measures 23-24**

The subject of the Fugue, which has four voices, has an interesting mold and uses a chromatic tone (f1) and syncopation (Fig. 57, page 112). The subject is real (as opposed to tonal) in all its appearances, which total eleven. The counter-subject appears with such frequency, and
later with such emphasis, that this can be considered a double fugue (Fig. 57).

In this fugue the usual juxtaposition of the counter-subject is above the (principal) subject. Twice, however, the counter-subject appears below the subject, revealing its properties as invertible counterpoint.

The structure of this fugue is in the usual three sections. There are five entrances of the subject and four of the counter-subject in the exposition, which takes fifteen measures. The middle section, ten measures long and without pedal except for one measure, contains three entrances of the subject in somewhat foreign tonalities and no appearances
of the counter-subject, although material which is reminiscent of the counter-subject is employed.

The final section of the fugue contains three entrances of the subject, two of which have the counter-subject present. The final entry of the subject is in the soprano with the counter-subject in the pedal, showing the importance of the counter-subject in this fugue. The cadence uses the picardy third.

**Prelude and Fugue in C minor**

This work was temporarily out of print at the time of writing and therefore unavailable for examination.\(^1\) It is quite probably from approximately the same period of composition\(^2\) as the **Prelude and Fugue in B minor** above, since it is from the same original publisher, Novello, whereas by 1919 Willan had switched to another publisher.\(^3\)

It can be assumed that it is a stately work of some proportions, for the description, "first mighty chord," was used in context with the **Prelude and Fugue in C minor** on the occasion of its performance by Charles Peaker at a

\(^1\)The **Prelude and Fugue in C minor** is listed in the current catalog of the Novello Company, London, and will presumably be available again in the near future.

\(^2\)Cf. A. Eaglefield-Hull, *A Dictionary of Modern Music and Musicians* (New York, 1924). The work in question is listed herein and probably had been published at least a decade previous to Eaglefield-Hull's reference book.

\(^3\)To wit, G. Schirmer of New York, original publisher of the **Introduction, Passacaglia, and Fugue** in 1919, now published by Oxford University Press, London.
concert of organ and choral works by Willan. The concert was in honor of the composer's seventy-fifth birthday and took place at Saint Paul's Anglican Church, Toronto, on October 15, 1955.4

Miniature Suite

This is an appealing work of minor proportions, as the title would indicate, and was published in 1910. It consists of six short movements: "Prelude," "Scherzo," "Communion," "Trio," "Intermezzo," and "Finale." Its style is reminiscent of Rheinberger and Mendelssohn and in that tradition very charming.

The "Prelude" has thirty-two measures, is in ternary form, and is written for four voices. It is marked *andante moderato e sostenuto* and begins imitatively on a short motive ascending scale-wise in sixteenth-notes. The first section is eleven measures long and in its repetition is identical except for the first measure. The contrasting section is ten measures long and consists of material of a quiet character which is less active rhythmically than the outer sections.

The "Scherzo" is marked *allegretto*; it is piquant and quite possibly the most attractive movement of the *Suite*. The right hand has the principal motive which is imitated intermittently in the left hand over *staccato* pedals in eighth-notes (Fig. 58, page 115).

---

4Stafford, *op. cit.*
The form of the "Scherzo" is ternary; the outer sections have twenty-three measures (a twenty-fourth measure in the repetition is for the final chord), and the middle section has twenty measures. It is quiet and sustained, is marked poco meno mosso, and indicates registration for the celeste stops.

The movements "Communion" and "Intermezzo" are simple but beautiful harmonized melodies. The former, marked adagio, is in binary form with a coda, totalling thirty-nine measures. The latter, marked andante con moto, is in ternary form with a coda and takes only twenty-three measures.

The movement "Trio" is a separate entity, and its order in the Suite is between the two movements above. It is a
sophisticated little piece, marked \textit{andante moderato}, forty-six measures long and in \textit{fugato} style. The subject is stated five times in four different tonalities, and there are numerous imitations made, several inverted, on its opening measures.

The "Finale" is a vigorous little recessional, marked \textit{allegro con brio}; it is fifty-four measures long and in three-four meter. The outer sections are identical (except for one minor deviation), the opening measures of which set the character for the piece (Fig. 59).

![Allegro con brio](image)

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure.png}
\caption{Fig. 59--Willan, \textit{Miniature Suite}, "Finale," measures 1-3}
\end{figure}

The middle section combines short imitative passages on a new motive with chordal material of the same character as that of the first section. The last two measures of the "Finale" are marked \textit{adagio}, and it ends quite grandly at triple forte.
The Later Works

**Elegy**

This *Elegy* is inscribed: "In memory of a great artist, a valued friend and fellow-student." It is marked nobilmente, which is undoubtedly indicative of the tribute it is intended to express. It is frankly sentimental music, but it is dignified and as rich-hued as the late afternoon colors of light streaming through stained glass windows in a church.

This work will be found useful for All Saints' Day, or a memorial service, or perhaps even for recital if the occasion and setting appear to be quite right. There are not very many good elegies for the organ--many are transcriptions of melodies too well-known--and thus, this *Elegy* serves a definite purpose. It appeared in 1949 in *The Modern Anthology*, a collection of works by twenty-four outstanding contemporary composers, edited by David McK. Williams and published by the H. W. Gray Company of New York. The *Elegy* was the first organ composition to be published by Willan after a lapse of twenty-one years, during which time he published many works in other compositional fields of music.

The form of this *Elegy* is simple--double binary with an introduction and a coda. The introduction is seven measures long and begins on the pedal, which anticipates the first notes of the melody to follow. This melody is
twenty-one measures long in its first appearance and di-
vides into two phrases of irregular length, each of which
has a point of semi-division. The melody is scored for the
left hand in the middle register of the keyboard, which so
strongly suggests the cello in meditative melodies of this
type. The right hand plays chords of a semi-obligato na-
ture which have some independent contrapuntal movement.
When the left hand melody appears to reach a cadence the
right hand accompaniment carries on in such a manner as to
avoid a definite break.

The melody is repeated in the right hand, but while
the melody itself remains the same, except for a five meas-
ure extension which is interpolated, it is considerably
enhanced with the addition of more elaborate underlying
chords in both the right hand and the left hand; in the
latter some semi-obligato melodies are sometimes reminis-
cent of the former right hand figures. The pedal is
essentially the same as in the original statement of the
melody.

In its repetition the melody is lengthened to twenty-
six measures in order to achieve a forceful but somber
climax, which is marked **triple forte**. The climax quickly
subsides and the quiet, meditative mood is resumed. The
eight-measure coda employs the same manual motive--
descending seventh chords in which the interval of the
fourth is prominent—as that of the introduction. The composition ends triple piano with a thirty-two-foot pedal, like the falling of dusk.

**Barcarolle**

This composition bears a publication date of 1950 but may be an earlier work. The style of the barcarolle is not one which would be ordinarily associated with serious organ composition. In fact, Offenbach achieved such a success with his barcarolle that it is difficult to think of one outside the *Tales of Hoffmann*.

Be these facts as they may, Willan has produced a Barcarolle for organ of astounding grace, inventiveness, and sophistication. Its form is compound ternary, and the outer sections are identical, although the repetition has added to it a fairly long extension and coda.

The first section is in irregular ternary. After a two-measure introduction there are two phrases, seven measures and eight measures long respectively, which form part A. The contrasting part, B, consists of two phrases of four measures each and one of seven measures. Part A is abbreviated upon its return and consists of a phrase of eight measures followed by a bridge of two measures which serves to connect to the section to follow.

---

5 Letter, Ferguson.
The charm of this first section lies in its irregular phrase lengths, in the salon character of its melody, which is in the left hand throughout, and in the effective accompaniment in the right hand which serves to mark the rhythm piquantly.

The middle section of the whole composition is also in ternary form. Its most outstanding feature besides the very fine writing exemplified is its meter of five-eight. It is marked *allegretto e molto sostenuto* and indicates the flute or string stops. For a total of twenty-eight measures of the fifty-one measures of this section the pedal has a point on C, D, or A, a number of measures of rests, and, for several measures, a rather active part similar to that of the manuals.

The outer parts of the middle section are identical, accounting for nineteen measures each. While the outer parts are in F major, the contrasting section is in D major and actually is identical to them, except for the transposition, for the first ten measures. The remaining three measures modulate and lead to the return of the first section. The contrast of tonality has been sufficient, however, to effect the tripartite impression for this middle section of the composition.

For the final section the first section is repeated in its entirety (forty measures) and is followed by an extension of twelve measures and then a coda of ten measures.
This mellifluous composition requires an organ of considerable registrational variety to do it justice. While this Barcarolle supposedly cannot be considered seriously in the same manner as the cantus firmus settings, or certainly the Introduction, Passacaglia, and Fugue, it is very original and cleverly devised and represents the composer in quite a genial mood. It is not easy--registrational changes, nuances in the melody, and the rhythm of the right hand present problems in the first section. In the middle section the manual legato which is required almost without break for fifty-one measures requires careful work. Since this Barcarolle is almost for the theater organ--and this is stated without any inference of discredit--it should be programmed in recital with care. As a contrast in a program of very serious works, the Barcarolle could prove very welcome.

**Prelude and Fugue in G minor**

In 1954 Willan published the Prelude and Fugue in G minor, Tema Ostinato, and Festival together under the same cover labeled Three Pieces. This appeared only on the front of the cover and apparently is the publisher's descriptive heading rather than the composer's indication that the pieces have any essential relationship. It would be possible to perform the pieces as a suite, since there is sufficient contrast among them and an appropriate
tonality relationship. However, they are doubtless separate entities which simply share the same binding and will be so considered here.

The Prelude is marked andante moderato, is in four-four meter, and is for four voices. It is rather short (thirty-one measures) and is somewhat in the style of a dance movement, perhaps an allemande, from a suite of Bach. It begins imitatively on a simple motive in eighth-notes which sets the quiet, flowing character for the piece. The first section is thirteen measures long and ends on the dominant with a repeat sign. The second section is eighteen measures long and begins imitatively using the motive inverted. It begins on the dominant rather than in the dominant, a distinction to be found in Baroque dance movements. A cadence in G major is made at measure twenty-two, but no break occurs since imitation is immediately begun, employing first the inverted motive and next the motive in its original form. The final cadence of the Prelude, in G minor, is in elision with the first note of the Fugue, in which the subject begins on the pedal (Fig. 60).

Fig. 60--Willan, Fugue in G minor, measures 1-4
The Fugue is thirty-six measures in length and is cast in the usual pattern of exposition, development, in which there are entries of the subject in more distant tonalities, and return to the original tonality. It is for four voices and has thirteen entries of the subject, of which one entry is inverted. The exposition takes the first eleven measures, the development is from measures eleven through twenty-nine, and the return is from measure thirty to the end. There are four episodes varying from one to three measures and a fifth episode which is six measures long.

Willan wrote this fugue originally for his setting of E. J. Pratt's epic poem, Brébeuf and his Brethren. As here set for organ its idiom is entirely appropriate for the instrument, but the contrapuntal lines and the ranges employed reveal the original vocal conception. Along with its Prelude this little Fugue is an admirable piece.

Tema Ostinato

This ingenious little work in D minor (Aeolian mode) is built on an ostinato of six quarter-notes in a meter of five-four (Fig. 61).

![Fig. 61--Willan, Tema Ostinato, measures 1-4](image)

6Ibid.
Since the ostinato is composed of six quarter-notes, but each measure has only five quarter-notes, it takes five entries, in its continuous repetitions, before the theme is back to begin on the first beat of the measure, a result which tends to disguise the ostinato although its omnipresence is sensed if not always heard in clear definition. There are thirty-two continuous entries of the ostinato not counting the original statement. It appears first in the bass (pedals) but in the course of the piece is transferred among several other voices. Entries one through five are in the pedals; entries six through ten are in the tenor; entries eleven through fifteen are in the pedals. At the sixteenth entry, which is in the soprano, a change of key signature is made, but the ostinato remains on the same notes. The seventeenth entry is in the tenor and is inverted, and the eighteenth entry is in the soprano and is also inverted. Entries nineteen through twenty-eight are in the bass (pedals) and are in the original form (not inverted). Entries twenty-nine and thirty are in the soprano. Entries thirty-one and thirty-two are both in diminution; the former is in the bass and the latter, the final entry, is in the tenor.

The counterpoint is in four voices with occasional additions of one or two voices. There are forty measures; the first twenty measures are in the tonalities of D minor
and F major. At measure twenty-one there is a change of key signature, and the tonalities used are B-flat major and G minor. At measure thirty-one there is another change of key signature, and the piece is in D major from there to the end. The character of this contrapuntal essay is very quiet, and it never goes beyond mezzo forte; the final cadence in D major is pianissimo.

Festival

This composition is marked allegro con spirito maestoso and is a vigorous postlude in three-two meter in G major. It is in ternary form and of moderate length. The first section consists of two seven-measure phrases which have the effect of length on the account of the elongated meter employed. The energetic first measure serves somewhat as a motive but more as the basis from which the first section unfolds (Fig. 62).

Fig. 62--Willan, Festival, measure 1
The middle section is twenty-one measures long and utilizes considerable imitation upon a new motive which is combined with chordal ideas from the first section (Fig. 63).

![Fig. 63--Willan, Festival, measures 15-16](image)

After the rich harmony and texture of the middle section the repetition of the first section is made. There is a coda of six measures which brings the piece to a brilliant and affirmative conclusion. *Festival* has the sound of ceremony about it, and while it is not recital music per se, it should certainly be found useful in the church and for secular occasions when music with such richness and color as this is needed.

**Soliloquy**

This little composition appeared in 1956 in a volume called *An Easy Album for Organ*, containing six pieces by contemporary composers, published by the Oxford University
Press, London. It is in B-flat major, in three-four meter, is marked *andante moderato*, and its ideas are interesting although simple. Its form is irregular and somewhat like a through-composed song, although the effect is more or less that of ternary. Two phrases of six measures each make up the first section, the first phrase being in B-flat and the second an exact sequence in G minor. The middle section is made up of two phrases; the first is nine measures and the second is four measures and of sequential and modulatory character. The return to B-flat in measure twenty-six marks the third section which consists of two phrases; the first is five measures and the second, a repetition of the first phrase of the piece, is of six measures. The entire piece has only thirty-six measures. It begins quietly, reaches a moderate climax of *mezzo forte*, and ends softly. It is intended to be nothing more than an easy piece of quality for an amateur organist, and as such it is very pleasant.

**Rondino, Elegy, and Chaconne**

This group of three compositions appeared in 1957 as number seven in a continuing series of contemporary organ compositions from the Novello Company of London. Among the numerous composers now represented in this series are Alec Rowley and Eric Thiman, both well-known English composers for the church, and Flor Peeters, the Belgian organist and composer.
The Rondino is marked allegretto grazioso and has a suave charm about it. It is a piece of moderate length, is in four-four meter with intermittent use of measures in three-two, and is in B-flat major. It is in the first or simple rondo form, consisting of a first subject group which is given three times, each time separated by an episode of some length. The first subject group of twelve measures unfolds from the idea presented in the first two measures (Fig. 64), which are used sequentially and alternate with a measure in three-two meter.

![Allegretto grazioso](image)

Fig. 64--Willan, Rondino, measures 1-2

The first episode of sixteen measures employs some imitation and sequences on new although similar material. The return of the first subject group begins in the sub-dominant but by the seventh measure has returned to the tonic; from here on it is identical to its first appearance.
A second episode of fourteen measures follows and presents new material, not related to that of the first episode, which is non-thematic and mostly transitional in character. After a poco rallentando the first subject group returns as at first. A four-measure coda brings the Rondino to a quiet and unpretentious conclusion.

The Elegy is in E-flat major, three-four meter, and is marked andante moderato. It is inscribed "In memoriam H. L. B.," and it is very similar to the Elegy of 1949, considered earlier, which also is in E-flat major. The essential element in the present work, as in the earlier elegy, is the cello-like melody set for the middle register of the keyboard and the avoidance of definite cadences.

The over-all form is ternary with the outer sections in irregular binary. After an introduction of eight measures the principal melody enters and consists of four phrases and a coda which run to twenty-six measures. The right hand part, along with the pedals, provides a harmonic setting and some counter-melodic interest.

The middle or contrasting section of twenty-six measures begins softly on the celeste stops and increases in intensity to a forceful climax at double forte. The climax tapers for the reappearance of the principal melody which this time is given to the soprano. It is altered somewhat from its first appearance and lasts for only
sixteen measures. A coda of seven measures, using some rather chromatic progressions, brings the composition to a quiet conclusion.

The Chaconne in B-flat major, marked andante serioso, is unusual in that it is written in duple meter (four-four) instead of the triple meter which is almost invariably associated with the passacaglia and the chaconne. The proportions of this Chaconne are comparatively modest and correspond appropriately with the other pieces of this unpretentious but pleasing set.

There are twelve variations and a coda upon a theme of four measures which combines both a downward motion and an ascending sweep (Fig. 65).

Fig. 65--Willan, Chaconne, measures 1-4

To be noted is the use of a chromatic note in the initial descent and the use of syncopation, which occurs three times.

Comparison of the Chaconne theme with that of the Passacaglia theme (Fig. 7, page 27) reveals the basis for an essential difference between the two works. The Passacaglia is conceived in massive outlines while the Chaconne
is of an intimate nature and can be played effectively on a small organ. Also, the Passacaglia employs the minor mode, which is inherently more dramatic than the major in which the Chaconne is written.

Variation I is in counterpoint of two voices, the bass (pedals) and alto. Variation II adds the soprano to the first two voices, and Variation III adds the tenor, the fourth voice. The counterpoint here is non-imitative.

Variations III, IV, and V form a continuous strand of thought which goes for twelve measures without a cadence, the only break occurring in the theme itself.

Variations VI, VII, and VIII are also continuous and are unique in that the theme is carried in the tenor in inverted form while the pedals are silent for twelve measures.

In Variations IX and X, which are continuous, the theme resumes its original form although it is still retained in the tenor. The pedals enter again and provide descending chromatic lines while the intensity gradually increases.

In Variation XI the theme is placed in the soprano while all the parts, which now assume a chordal character, move quite chromatically. A rallentando is marked to prepare for the climactic entrance of the final variation.
Variation XII, marked *maestoso*, is supported by the theme in augmentation in the pedals, and the hands double each other in ascending, sustained chordal structures.

The *Chaconne* is concluded with a coda of seven measures over a tonic point in the pedals with two inner voices on the manuals implying the first descending notes of the theme. While the left foot retains the tonic point, the right foot enters to give the first half of the theme in augmentation, and the manuals supply brilliant but sustained chordal movements (Fig. 66).

![Musical notation]

Fig. 66—Willan, *Chaconne*, measures 59-63

The intensity of the climax which is reached at the beginning of Variation XII is maintained and increased to the final chord fifteen measures later. These concluding measures, marked *largo*, are broad and climactic and proceed to a solid and affirmative cadence.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Willan displays a propensity for warmth and grandeur in his organ works which can be observed repeatedly. These admirable qualities are natural in a composer who is accustomed to the breadth and majesty of the organ in the lofty spaces of a church. In all of his organ works, whether large or small, Willan brings into evidence the consummate skills and force of thought of a composer acknowledged decades ago to be a master of counterpoint, harmony, form, and musical idea.

It is fortunate that Willan resumed in 1949 his contributions to organ literature, and particularly organ literature for the church, and that he has published such a large body of organ music during the past several years. These works will undoubtedly enjoy a wide use among organists and an appreciation among laymen. They add considerably to Willan's stature, which was already secure, as an organ composer.

The general outlines of Willan's musical craft are more traditional than futuristic. When asked whether "modern music interested him, he replied that all music should have shape, design, and melodic content. If these are not to be found in any music, whether it is ancient or modern,
Dr. Willan has no interest in it."¹ Whereas some contemporary music is experimental, Willan has stayed on the solid ground of established procedures and, adding his own individuality, has produced music of unquestioned value and distinction.

Willan arrived in Canada at a time when both Canada and the United States were seeking to establish their own national qualities and traditions in music. He brought the stabilizing factor of thorough English musical scholarship but admitted to full cognizance the fact that he was in the midst of the establishment of a native musical culture. His place at the forefront of Canadian musicians has long been recognized, and his position as one of the most eminent of church musicians anywhere in the world is unassailable. Willan's importance at the foundations of Canadian music will be acknowledged a century from now as it is today. No Canadian musician is more honored today than Willan, and he has lived to enjoy the esteem, officially expressed, of both Canada and England, as well as an enviable reputation in music in the United States.

¹McCready, *Famous Musicians*, p. 133.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


Musical Dictionaries


Hymnals and Related Works

*The Hymnal (1940) of the Protestant Episcopal Church* (Prepared by the Joint Commission on the Revision of the Hymnal of the Protestant Episcopal Church), New York, The Church Pension Fund, 1940, 1943.
The Hymnal (1940) Companion (Prepared by the Joint Commission on the Revision of the Hymnal of the Protestant Episcopal Church), New York, The Church Pension Fund, 1949.


Music Reviews and Articles

"All Canada Honors Willan on Birthday," Diapason, XLI (November 1, 1950), 1.


"Down from Canada," Newsweek, XLII (October 26, 1953), 70.


Library Notes, XIII (March, 1956), 345.


Sabin, Robert, Musical America, LXXVI (November 15, 1956), 22.


Newspaper


Letter and Interview

Letter and biographical information from Freda Ferguson, music librarian, Oxford University Press, Toronto, Canada, June 24, 1957.

Interview with Dr. Michael Winesanker, Professor of Musicology and Chairman of the Department of Music, School of Fine Arts, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas, July 9, 1957.
Organ Music by Healey Willan

Chapter II


Chapter III


Chorale Prelude No. 1 (Puer Nobis Nascitur), London, Oxford University Press, 1926.

Chorale Prelude No. 2 (Andernach), Winnipeg, Canada, Western Music Co.; (original copyright, London, Oxford University Press, 1928).


Six Chorale Preludes, Set II, St. Louis, Missouri, Concordia Publishing House, 1951.


Ten Hymn Preludes, Set II, New York, C. F. Peters Corporation, 1957.1


---

1 This listing of the organ music of Healey Willan is arranged according to its order of consideration within the body of the text. This order is chronological according to date of publication within each chapter except for Chapter III, in which the last four cantus firmus settings have been placed slightly out of order for convenience of classification.

2 Ten Hymn Preludes, Sets II and III, are mentioned within the text (see footnote, page 53) as available about January, 1958. However, since they are presently undergoing engraving, they will doubtlessly bear a copyright date of 1957.


Chapter IV


