



# CROSSING THE BAR

poem by  
Alfred, Lord Tennyson

set to music by  
Alan Gray

VOCAL SCORE





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Cover Image: "Lunar Night" by Ivan Aivazovsky, 1857



# ENGLISH HERITAGE

## MUSIC SERIES

The “renaissance” in English music is generally agreed to have started in the late Victorian period, beginning roughly in 1880. Public demand for major works in support of the annual choral festivals held throughout England at that time was considerable which led to the creation of many large scale works for orchestra with soloists and chorus.

Although a number of those works were engraved, printed and are regularly performed today, performance scores for a considerable number of compositions, both large-scale and more intimate works, are not available. These works were either never engraved or were engraved and printed but are no longer available in the publishers’ catalogues. While the existence of these works is documented in biographies of the composers, the ability to study and, most importantly, to perform these compositions is not possible.

Changes in the International copyright laws, coupled with changing musical tastes, played a pivotal role in creating this void. As a result, music publishers lost the ability to generate revenue from the sale/rental of such music. In 1964, holograph and copyist scores from both Novello and from publishers it represented were offered to the British Library and the Royal College of Music Library (see The RCM Novello Library – The Musical Times, Feb. 1983 by Jeremy Dibble ).

These autograph full score manuscripts along with copies of engraved vocal scores, widely available through various online library sources, are now the only resources available for studying and performing these works.

The English Heritage Music Series has been created to ensure that these compositions are preserved, are accessible for scholarly research and, most importantly, are available for performance by future generations. Its mission is to:

- Source non-engraved/out-of-print English composer compositions that are in the U.S. public domain
- Preserve these compositions through the preparation of performance scores using notation software
- Provide open Internet access to the scores to facilitate study, performance and sharing of performance material (program notes, audio, reviews, etc.)

In preparing the English Heritage Music Series editions, every effort has been made to adhere strictly to the notation contained in the manuscripts. Because of the passage of time and its effect on the condition of the manuscript, the absence of clear information often times by the composer in notating divided instruments, and with emendations in the composer and other hands resulting from use of the manuscript in performance, there were numerous circumstances which required interpretation and decisions for notes, accidentals, dynamics, articulations and tempi. Should questions arise in the use of these editions, the composers’ autograph manuscripts and the Novello vocal scores should be consulted for clarification.

**Matthew W. Mehaffey**  
Editor

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### Source Information

*Autograph Manuscript:*

Given by composer to the Master of Trinity College, Cambridge in August 3, 1931. Copy of manuscript used for this engraving provided by Philip Brunelle from his private library

*Vocal Score:*

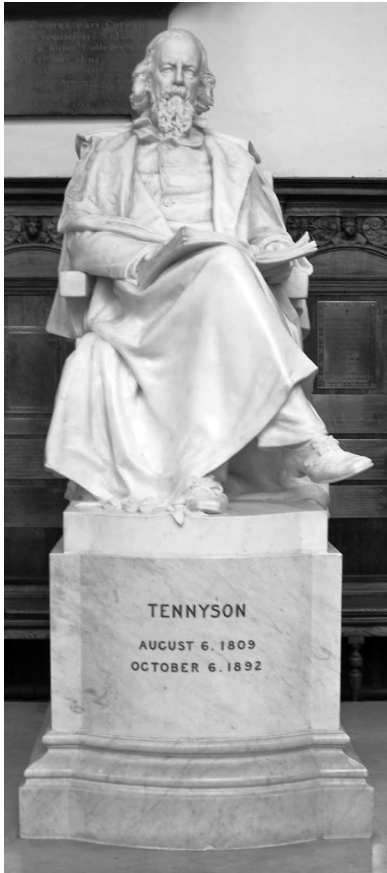
No known engraving

*Manuscript Transcription & Score Preparation*

David Fielding - dhcfielding@charter.net

### Reference Material and Software

*Notation Software:* Finale v. 26   *Audio Software:* Garritan Personal Orchestra 5   *Graphic Software:* Adobe Photoshop CS5  
*Document Software:* Adobe In Design CS5   *Music Notation Reference:* [Behind Bars](#) by Elaine Gould, Faber Music © 2011



Tennyson Statue  
Trinity Chapel, Cambridge

Sunset and evening star,  
And one clear call for me!  
And may there be no moaning of the bar,  
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,  
Too full for sound and foam,  
When that which drew from out the boundless deep  
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,  
And after that the dark!  
And may there be no sadness of farewell,  
When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place  
The flood may bear me far,  
I hope to see my Pilot face to face  
When I have crost the bar.



Alfred, Lord Tennyson  
1809-1892

“Crossing the Bar” is an 1889 poem by Alfred, Lord Tennyson. It is considered that Tennyson wrote it in elegy; the narrator uses an extended metaphor to compare death with crossing the “sandbar” between the river of life, with its outgoing “flood”, and the ocean that lies beyond [death], the “boundless deep”, to which we return.

Tennyson is believed to have written the poem (after suffering a serious illness) while on the sea, crossing the Solent from Aldworth to Farringford on the Isle of Wight. Separately, it has been suggested he may have written it on a yacht anchored in Salcombe, where there is a moaning sandbar. “The words”, he said, “came in a moment”. Shortly before he died, Tennyson told his son Hallam to “put ‘Crossing the Bar’ at the end of all editions of my poems”.

The poem contains four stanzas that generally alternate between long and short lines. Tennyson employs a traditional ABAB rhyme scheme. Scholars have noted that the form of the poem follows the content: the wavelike quality of the long-then-short lines parallels the narrative thread of the poem.

The extended metaphor of “crossing the bar” represents travelling serenely and securely from life through death. The Pilot is a metaphor for God, whom the speaker hopes to meet face to face. Tennyson explained, “The Pilot has been on board all the while, but in the dark I have not seen him... [He is] that Divine and Unseen Who is always guiding us.”

# CROSSING THE BAR

Composed for the unveiling of the statue of Tennyson in Trinity Chapel, Cambridge - October 19, 1909

Alfred, Lord Tennyson  
1889

Alan Gray  
1908

**Andante**

Soprano *p*  
Sun - set and eve - ning star, And one clear call for me! — And

Alto *p*  
Sun - set and eve - ning star, And one clear call, and one clear call for me! — And

Tenor *p*  
Sun - set and eve - ning star, And one clear call, one clear call for me! And

Bass *p*  
Sun - set and eve - ning star And one clear call for me

For Rehearsal Only

7 *p*  
may there be no moan - ing of the bar, When I put out — to —

7 *p*  
may there be no moan - ing of the bar, When I put out to

8  
may there be no moan - ing of the bar, When I put out — to

no moan - ing of the bar, When I, — when I put out to

7 *p*

12 *cresc.* *p*  
 sea, \_\_\_\_\_ But such a tide \_\_\_\_\_ as mov - ing seems a - sleep, Too

8 *cresc.* *p*  
 sea, \_\_\_\_\_ But \_\_\_\_\_ such a tide as mov - ing seems a - sleep, Too

8 *cresc.* *p*  
 sea, \_\_\_\_\_ But \_\_\_\_\_ such a tide as mov - ing seems a - sleep, Too

*cresc.* *p*  
 sea, \_\_\_\_\_ But such \_\_\_\_\_ a tide \_\_\_\_\_ as mov - ing seems a - sleep, Too

12 *p*

12 *p*

18 *cresc.* *poco sonore*  
 full for sound and foam, When that \_\_\_\_\_ which drew from out the

*cresc.*  
 full for sound and foam, When that which drew from out the

8 *cresc.*  
 full for sound and foam, When that from out the

*cresc.* *poco sonore*  
 full for sound and foam, \_\_\_\_\_ When that \_\_\_\_\_ which drew from

18

18

24 *pp*  
 bound - less deep, Turns, turns a - gain home.  
 bound - less deep, Turns, turns a - gain home.  
 8 bound - less deep, Turns, turns a - gain home.  
 out the bound - less deep, Turns, turns a - gain home.

24 *pp*  
 24 *pp*

30 *p*  
 Twi - light and eve - ning bell, And af - ter that the dark! And  
 Twi - light and eve - ning bell, And af - ter that the dark! And  
 8 Twi - light and eve - ning bell, And af - ter that the dark! And  
 Twi - light and eve - ning bell, the dark! no

30  
 30

36

may there be no sad - ness of fare - well, When I, when I em -

may there be no sad - ness of fare - well, When I, when I em -

may there be no sad - ness of fare - well, When I, when I em -

may there be no sad - ness of fare - well, When I, when I em -

36

**Poco più animato**

bark; For tho' from out our bourne of

bark; For tho' from out our bourne of Time, of

bark; For tho' from out our bourne of Time, of Time and

For tho' from out our bourne of

41



47 Time and Place *f* Time and Place The flood may bear me far

Time and Place The flood may bear me far

Place The flood may bear me

Time and Place The flood, the flood may bear me, bear me

52 *ff* I hope to see my Pi - lot face to

I hope to see my Pi - lot face to

8 far, I hope to see my Pi - lot face to

far, I hope to see my Pi - lot face to

52

52

57 *p* face \_\_\_\_\_ When I have

57 *p* face \_\_\_\_\_ When I have

8 *p* face \_\_\_\_\_ *p* When I have

face \_\_\_\_\_ When I have

57 *p*

57

62 *pp* crost \_\_\_\_\_ the bar.

62 *pp* crost, have crost \_\_\_\_\_ the bar.

8 *pp* crost \_\_\_\_\_ the bar.

62 *pp* crost, have crost \_\_\_\_\_ the bar.

62 *pp*





**ENGLISH HERITAGE**

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PUBLISHING

[ehms.lib.umn.edu](http://ehms.lib.umn.edu)

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