

# WHAT ARE THESE THAT GLOW FROM AFAR

From the poem "Martyrs' Song" by Christina Rossetti  $$^{\rm Music\;By}$$   $Alan\;Gray$ 

**VOCAL / ORGAN SCORE** 



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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

on August 3, 1931. Copy of manuscript used for this engraving provided by Philip Brunelle from his private library

Stainer & Bell Ltd., S&B 1874

David Fielding - dhcfielding@charter.net

Vocal Score:

Manuscript Transcription & Score Preparation

#### 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



Alan Gray (23 December 1855 – 27 September 1935) was an English organist and composer.

Born in York, Gray attended St Peter's School and initially trained as a solicitor, qualifying in 1881. But after musical studies with Edwin G Monk at York Minster he turned to music, studying as an undergraduate at Trinity College, Cambridge, where Charles Villiers Stanford came across him. From 1883 until 1893 he was Director of Music at Wellington College. Other staff members in the music department at the same time were A H Fox Strangways and Hugh Allen. In 1893 he returned to Cambridge to be organist at Trinity College, succeeding Stanford. One of his organ pupils was Ralph Vaughan Williams. He remained there until 1930. During the war Gray was badly affected, losing two of his three sons towards the end of the conflict. He died in Cambridge, aged 79.

Among his compositions are liturgical music for Morning and Evening Prayer and the Office of Holy Communion for use in the Church of England according to the Book of Common Prayer: the *Magnificat and Nunc dimittis in F minor* for double choir (1912); a setting of Holy Communion in G;

and several anthems, including perhaps his best known piece, *What are these that glow from afar* (1915), words from Christina Rossetti's poem *Martyrs' Song*), and dedicated "To the Memory of the Brave." There is also a collection of descants to various hymn tunes.

During the war Gray composed a cycle of partsongs entitled 1914 which set three of the five poems in Rupert Brooke's collection 1914 and Other Poems; an Elegy (1915) for organ and strings (or solo organ) in memory of the composer W C Denis Browne, who had been the organ scholar at Clare College, Cambridge and who died in action in 1915. There are a number of other works for organ, for violin solo and for voice and orchestra, set to religious and secular texts.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alan\_Gray



The English poet Christina Georgina Rossetti (1830-1894) wrote poems of love, fantasy, and nature, verses for children, and devotional poetry and prose. She was born on December 5, 1830, in London, the youngest of the four remarkable Rossetti children. Educated entirely at home, she spoke English and Italian with ease and read French, Latin, and German. Her first verses were written to her mother on April 27, 1842. Her first published poems were the seven she contributed in 1850 to the Pre-Raphaelite magazine, the Germ, under the pseudonym Ellen Alleyne.

When her father died in 1854, Christina became the close companion of her mother and followed her older sister's example in becoming a devout Anglican. Though mild and virtuous, she was frequently anxious about her self-presumed sinfulness. She is said to have pasted strips of paper over the more blasphemous passages in Swinburne's poetry. Yet she remained devoted to her brother, Dante Gabriel,

whose life was far from a model of conventional virtue. At 18 she fell in love with James Collinson, a minor Pre-Raphaelite painter, but broke off her engagement to him 2 years later, when he became a Roman Catholic. In 1862 she fell deeply in love with Charles Bagot Cayley. But she again refused to marry, this time because Cayley had no firm religious faith. These two broken love affairs are reflected in many of her poems, especially the sonnet sequence Monna Innominata. In other poems a melancholy regret for lost love is mixed with a disturbing obsession with death. Because she suffered long and frequent periods of poor health, Rossetti came to regard life as physically and emotionally painful and to look forward to death both as a release and as the possible moment of joyful union with God and with those she had loved and lost.

Rossetti's three major volumes of poetry were Goblin Market and Other Poems (1862), The Prince's Progress and Other Poems (1866), and A Pageant and Other Poems (1881). She also published Commonplace (1870), a book of short stories; Sing-song: A Nursery Rhyme Book (1872), beautifully illustrated by Arthur Hughes and a favorite of Victorian children; and Speaking Likenesses (1874), a book of tales for children. But her poetry alone has secured her fame. Her poems, like those of the later Victorian poet Gerard Manley Hopkins, reveal a dual, self-contradictory sensibility. They express a sensuous attraction to physical beauty fused with a mystical and saintly religious faith.

From 1871 through 1873 Rossetti was stricken by Graves' disease, which ruined her beauty and brought her close to death. When she recovered, she turned almost exclusively to religious writing, publishing a number of devotional books: Annus Domini (1874), Seek and Find (1879), Called to Be Saints: The Minor Festivals (1881), Letter and Spirit (1882), Time Flies: A Reading Diary (1885), The Face of the Deep: A Commentary on the Revelation (1892), and Verses (1893). In 1891 she began to suffer from cancer and died, after a long and painful illness, on December 29, 1894, in London.

### MARTYRS' SONG

Christina G. Rossetti

from The Poems of Christina G. Rossetti (1876) University Press: John Wilson & Son, Cambridge, U.S.A.

We meet in joy, tho' we part in sorrow; We part tonight, but we meet tomorrow. Be it flood or blood the path that's trod, All the same it leads home to God: Be it furnace-fire voluminous, One like God's Son will walk with us.

What are these that glow from afar,
These that lean over the golden bar,
Strong as the lion, pure as the dove,
With open arms and hearts of love?
They the blessed ones gone before,
They the blessed for evermore.
Out of great tribulation they went
Home to their home of Heaven-content;
Thro' flood, or blood, or furnace-fire,
To the rest that fulfils desire.

What are these that fly as a cloud,
With flashing heads and faces bowed,
In their mouths a victorious psalm,
In their hands a robe and a palm?
Welcoming angels these that shine,
Your own angel, and yours, and mine;
Who have hedged us both day and night
On the left hand and on the right,
Who have watched us both night and day
Because the devil keeps watch to slay.

Light above light, and Bliss beyond bliss, Whom words cannot utter, lo, Who is This? As a King with many crowns He stands, And our names are graven upon His hands; As a Priest, with God-uplifted eyes, He offers for us His Sacrifice; As the Lamb of God for sinners slain, That we too may live He lives again; As our Champion behold Him stand, Strong to save us, at God's Right Hand.

God the Father give us grace
To walk in the light of Jesus' Face.
God the Son give us a part
In the hiding-place of Jesus' Heart:
God the Spirit so hold us up
That we may drink of Jesus' cup.

Death is short and life is long; Satan is strong, but Christ more strong. At His Word, Who hath led us hither, The Red Sea must part hither and thither. At His Word, Who goes before us too, Jordan must cleave to let us thro'.

Yet one pang searching and sore, And then Heaven for evermore; Yet one moment awful and dark, Then safety within the Veil and the Ark; Yet one effort by Christ His grace, Then Christ for ever face to face.

God the Father we will adore,
In Jesus' Name, now and evermore:
God the Son we will love and thank
In this flood and on the farther bank:
God the Holy Ghost we will praise,
In Jesus' Name, thro' endless days:
God Almighty, God Three in One,
God Almighty, God alone.

Bold text set by Composer

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