

**A Dictionary of Choral Music - compiled by John Bawden**

Chichester: Cathedral Music pp 175, (2010) £20  
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There cannot be a single choral director in recent years who has not felt the lack of a good reference book when planning concert programmes. As a conducting student in Liverpool, I sometimes had the chance to work with Sir Charles Groves, and was amazed to find that the RLPO – like most orchestras of the time – did not have access to an authoritative catalogue of repertoire works. It seemed that the only existing solution to the problem was a venerable card index in the librarian's office which was sporadically updated to give details of scores, duration, instrumentation, publishers, etc. This, I was assured, remained the best way they had found to store such essential information.

Happily, the situation changed dramatically with the arrival of computer programming, and the appearance in 1972 of the first edition of *Orchestral Music – A Handbook*, edited by David Daniels. Published by the Scarecrow Press, USA, its usefulness can be judged by news that the third edition is now in preparation. My personal copies of the first two editions are certainly two of the most dog-eared books on my shelves - a clear testament to their continuing usefulness.

Having discovered David Daniel's volume about orchestral music, I and a number of colleagues planned to compile a similar handbook for choral music. We approached one or two British publishers during the 1970s, but they were not encouraging. They had several legitimate reservations. With such an immense number of works, from Renaissance times to the present-day, which could quite legitimately be cited, they felt the list would be enormous and never comprehensive. Furthermore, to find the details of all the publishers involved, both great and small, would be another big task. So the project lapsed.

Now, some 30 years later, our idea has become a reality with the appearance of John Bawden's *A Directory of Choral Music*. In a handy ring-bound format, his excellent publication goes a long way to filling this conspicuous gap in the current choral literature. As well as a preface and a principal section which lists details of each composer's works alphabetically, there are three appendices. Appendix 1 gives information on the Bach cantatas, most of which can be found elsewhere. Happily, Appendix 2 is more useful. Entitled 'Selected

Works listed by Accompaniment', it is specifically designed to assist programme planning for choral concerts. The material is divided into six sections - from scores needing 'small orchestra', through 'orchestra without wind' and 'strings only' to different kinds of mixed ensembles. Appendix 3 is a handy, wide-ranging list of Christmas music.

In the preface, the author sets out his editorial policy. He states that the purpose of his book is to focus primarily on the accompanied choral concert repertoire and to exclude a *cappella* music. To impose a further restriction on the amount of available material which might be included, he omits all unaccompanied music before 1700 and most single works lasting less than ten minutes. Below is a part of a sample page from the directory which gives some indication of the general layout.

This shows that the choral information is laid out horizontally across the page as:

Title – soloists(caps) – choir(lower case) – accompaniment – duration – publisher(s)

The orchestration details follow the usual conventions and are printed in italics below the title of each work:

woodwind : brass : percussion harp  
 keyboard : strings

The final section discusses publishers and distribution and this goes some way to explain why it has taken so long for a reference tool of this kind to appear in print. As the author wryly observes, 'publishing accurate information about music publishers is, frankly, a nightmare!' Because of the vast number of businesses involved, and their frequent takeovers, the scene is constantly changing. Add to this the new contributions made by desktop publishing and the online choral domain [www.cpd.org](http://www.cpd.org), and it is easy to understand why the author asks that the information in this section should be treated with a degree of caution.

It is perhaps a happy coincidence that this excellent Directory has appeared around the same time as members will be planning their programmes to celebrate *abcd's* 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2011. John Bawden deserves our gratitude for producing such a useful and informative publication, and I feel sure that I am only one of many who look forward to using this fine reference book a great deal in the future.

Denis McCaldin

*A Directory of Choral Music is priced at £23 including p&p and is available by sending a cheque to John Bowden (and made payable to him) at 37 Crownpits Lane, Godalming, Surrey GU7 1PB, or online from [www.chameleon-arts.co.uk/choraldirectory](http://www.chameleon-arts.co.uk/choraldirectory).*

|   |           |      |      |      |                |
|---|-----------|------|------|------|----------------|
| <b>BACH, Johann (Germany, 1685 - 1760)</b>                  |           |      |      |      |                |
| Child In the Rehearsal                                      | cap : str | SATB | coll | orch | 10 BA-de; e EK |
| Juchuet dem Herrn   | coll      | coll | coll | coll | 10 BA          |
| Magnificat  | coll      | coll | coll | coll | 10 BA PE       |
| Wass Gott tut, das ist wohlgehan                            | coll      | coll | coll | coll | 15 BA EK HU    |
| <b>BACH, Anna Magdalena (Poland / England, 1704 - 1761)</b> |           |      |      |      |                |
| Song to the Virgin Mary 1684 (1687) - 12                    | coll      | coll | coll | coll | 15 BH          |
| Universal prayer 1688 (Pope)                                | coll      | coll | coll | coll | 30             |
| Winter solstice 1672 (Jesse)                                | coll      | coll | coll | coll | 20             |
| <b>BACH, Rebecca (England, 1702)</b>                        |           |      |      |      |                |
| A kind of kindness 2005 (P. 10)                             | coll      | coll | coll | coll | 15 WE          |
| Angels sing 1988 (Paul Potts)                               | coll      | coll | coll | coll | 10             |
| David's lullaby 2001 - 12                                   | coll      | coll | coll | coll | 15             |
| Love alone 2006   | coll      | coll | coll | coll | 20             |
| So strong is his love 2007 (P. 10)                          | coll      | coll | coll | coll | 10             |
| Spring 1987 (P. 10)   | coll      | coll | coll | coll | 10             |
| Stay with me 2007 (P. 10)                                   | coll      | coll | coll | coll | 10             |
| Unaccompanied country 2000 (Shakespeare)                    | coll      | coll | coll | coll | 10             |
| Westminster mass 1987                                       | coll      | coll | coll | coll | 30             |
| <b>BACH, Nicola William (USA, 1953 - 1993)</b>              |           |      |      |      |                |
| op. 54 A star song (Copland)                                | coll      | coll | coll | coll | 30 John Church |
| 50 A wanderer's psalm (Carthusian)                          | coll      | coll | coll | coll | 45 H           |
| 30 Hymn to the Virgin (P. 10)                               | coll      | coll | coll | coll | 60 EK H        |