

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Faculty Publications: School of Music

Music, School of

1998

Angelas ad virginem

Peter M. Lefferts

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, plefferts1@unl.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/musicfacpub>



Part of the [Music Commons](#)

Lefferts, Peter M., "*Angelas ad virginem*" (1998). *Faculty Publications: School of Music*. 32.
<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/musicfacpub/32>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Music, School of at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Publications: School of Music by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

Angelas ad virginem

A devotional Latin strophic song of the first half of the 13th century in five stanzas on the Annunciation of Mary. There is memorable testimony to its widespread popularity and longevity in England in a passage from the *Miller's Tale* introducing Chaucer's poor Oxford scholar "hende Nicholas," who sings *Angelus* in his lodging to the accompaniment of his psaltery:

And al above ther lay a gay sautrie,
On which he made a-nyghtes melodie
So swetely that all the chambre rong;
And *Angelas ad virginem* he song. (*MilT* 3213-16)

Most sources and references to *Angelus ad virginem* are insular (complete report in Stevens). One tuneful melody is transmitted in four English sources, twice monophonically and twice in polyphonic settings of the later 13th and mid-14th centuries; an entirely different melody survives uniquely in a 15th-century German source. *Angelus* was twice translated into English, once anonymously in the later 13th century ("Gabriel fram evene king," underlaid beneath the standard melody and Latin text in BL Arundel 248) and again in the early 15th century by John Audelay ("The angel to the vergyn said," without music, in Bodl. Douce 302). In a reference recently discovered by Page in the anonymous 13th-century English *Speculum laicorum* Odo of Cheriton is said to attribute the authorship of *Angelus* to Philip, the chancellor of the University of Paris (ca. 1160–1236). If this is to be credited, then perhaps it was brought to England in the first half of the century by the mendicant friars. Much later in its career *Angelus* was "taken over by liturgical officialdom" (Stevens), appearing, for example, in the ordinal of St. Mary's, York, of ca. 1400 and in 16th-century missals of Cluny and Senlis as an Advent sequence for masses of the Virgin.

Peter M. Lefferts

Bibliography

Primary

Dobson, Eric J., and Frank Ll. Harrison, eds. and trans. *Medieval English Songs*. London: Faber & Faber, 1979

Harrison, Frank Ll., Ernest H. Sanders, and Peter M. Lefferts, eds. *English Music for Mass and Offices (II) and Music for Other Ceremonies*. Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century 17. Paris: L'Oiseau-Lyre, 1986

Secondary

- Page, Christopher. "Angelus ad virginem: A New Work by Philippe the Chancellor?" *Early Music* 11 (1983): 69—70
- Stevens, John. "Angelus ad virginem: The History of a Medieval Song." In *Medieval Studies for J.A.W. Bennett*, ed. P.L. Heyworth. Oxford: Clarendon, 1981, pp.297–328

o o o o o o

Published in *Medieval England: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Paul Szarmach, M. Teresa Tavormina, Joel T. Rosenthal, Catherine E. Karkov, Peter M. Lefferts, & Elizabeth Parker McLachlan (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998), p. 35. Copyright © 1998 Paul Szarmach, M. Teresa Tavormina, & Joel T. Rosenthal.

o o o o o o

An online version is @ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ith5FF-PgU&feature=player_detailpage