

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

---

Student Research, Creative Activity, and  
Performance - School of Music

Music, School of

---

5-2010

## The Sacred Choral Music of Seth Daniels Bingham (1882-1972), with special focus on "The Canticle of the Sun" Op. 52

James E. Wilson

University of Nebraska at Lincoln, jameswils@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/musicstudent>



Part of the [Music Commons](#)

---

Wilson, James E., "The Sacred Choral Music of Seth Daniels Bingham (1882-1972), with special focus on "The Canticle of the Sun" Op. 52" (2010). *Student Research, Creative Activity, and Performance - School of Music*. 26.  
<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/musicstudent/26>

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 Student Research, Creative Activity, and Performance - School of Music by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

THE SACRED CHORAL MUSIC OF  
SETH DANIELS BINGHAM (1882-1972),  
WITH SPECIAL FOCUS ON *THE CANTICLE OF THE SUN*, Op. 52

by

James E. Wilson

A Doctoral Document

Presented to the Faculty of  
The Graduate College at the University of Nebraska  
In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements  
For the Degree of Doctor of Musical Arts

Major: Music

Under the Supervision of Professor Peter A. Eklund

Lincoln, Nebraska

May, 2010

THE SACRED CHORAL MUSIC OF  
SETH DANIELS BINGHAM (1882-1972),  
WITH SPECIAL FOCUS ON *THE CANTICLE OF THE SUN*, Op. 52

James E. Wilson, DMA  
University of Nebraska, 2010

Adviser: Peter A. Eklund

Seth Daniels Bingham (1882-1972) holds a unique place within the pantheon of American composers. He was one of many composers to travel to France for lessons in composition during the first decades of the Twentieth Century. From 1906 until 1907 he studied organ with Alexander Guilmant and composition with Charles Marie Widor and Vincent d'Indy. Through his absorption of the French musical aesthetic, Bingham learned to improvise and compose in the French style, to voice textures according to a French system of registration, and to combine modernity with tradition. It is true that Bingham was not the only American composer to study with Widor, Guilmant, and/or d'Indy; in fact approximately twenty-five Americans of his generation studied with some combination of these teachers. What makes Bingham unique is the combination of his compositional pedigree and his vast output of sacred choral music. He was one of only two French-educated American composers of his generation to write and publish a large number of sacred choral works—the other being Clarence Dickinson. The focus of this study is to demonstrate the influences, style, and artistic merit of Seth Bingham's sacred choral music, particularly through discussion and analysis of his *The Canticle of the Sun*, published in 1949. As part of its conclusion, the study attempts to identify the current state of Bingham's status and recognition as a choral composer, and to reaffirm the qualities that make his music worthy of revival.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express sincere and heartfelt thanks to the following people:

Patricia Bingham Dale, for taking the time to share your stories and documents, and for the permission to take home and study copies of your grandfather's manuscripts.

Dr. Andrew Henderson at Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, for generously supplying a large number of scores.

Dr. Christopher Marks and Chris Lyons, both at the University of Nebraska - Lincoln, for sharing research material.

The helpful staff at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center, for assisting with my numerous requests.

Dr. Therees Hibbard, Dr. Christopher Marks, Dr. Kurt Knecht, and the UNL Chamber Singers, for making possible a new performance of Bingham's *The Canticle of the Sun* at First Presbyterian Church on April 11, 2010.

My committee members, for setting aside time from busy schedules to assist in my degree progress. Especially Dr. Pete Eklund for serving as my advisor, teacher, and mentor for the past three years.

Mom, Dad, Grandma, and Britania, for your never ending love and support. I could not have done this without you.

## CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
INTRODUCTION	v
CHAPTER	
1. Biography	1
2. The Style of Seth Bingham's Choral Music	10
3. Background of Bingham's <i>The Canticle of the Sun</i>	17
4. Conductor's Analysis of <i>The Canticle of the Sun</i>	22
5. Synthesis and Conclusion	52
APPENDICES	
A. Annotated Listing of the Sacred Choral Works	55
B. Complete Listing of the Sacred Choral Works	60
C. Movement 11 of <i>The Canticle of the Sun</i>	63
BIBLIOGRAPHY	80

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to synthesize and expound on the pre-existing body of articles and reviews that pertain to the sacred choral works of Seth Bingham, and to offer a more detailed discussion of Bingham's life and background as a composer. Although a small number of articles and reviews have made mention of the quality, depth, and stylistic tendencies of Bingham's choral music, there is no study on this topic to date. In an attempt to identify the influences and artistic merit of Bingham's sacred choral music, I have combined a discussion of his life and background with an in-depth conductor's analysis of his most significant sacred choral work, *The Canticle of the Sun*, Op. 52, published in 1949. As part of its conclusion, the study attempts to identify the current state of Bingham's status and recognition as a choral composer, and to reaffirm the qualities that make his music worthy of revival.

For consistency, certain titles of works and spellings of names have been adjusted in order to suit the accepted standards. In his *Memoirs* and other writings, Bingham would sometimes drop insignificant words in the titles of his pieces even if they were included in the published versions, and there are a few instances of name misspellings. Efforts have been taken to adhere to the published titles and accepted spellings. Notes and bibliography conform to the Chicago Manual of Style.

## CHAPTER 1

### BIOGRAPHY

#### *Childhood*

Seth Daniels Bingham was born on April 16, 1882, in Bloomfield, New Jersey. The youngest of four siblings, Seth (whose family nickname was Jinks) grew up in a farming household. He remembered his childhood as relatively happy and comfortable years, but when the crops failed to yield a sustainable income the Bingham family chose to relocate to Naugatuck, Connecticut, in the spring of 1889. In Seth Bingham's words, "Naugatuck was a tough rubber-manufacturing town in the picturesque valley."<sup>1</sup> Most of his schoolmates were of "rough Irish stock," and it is significant to think of Dr. Seth Bingham, the polite and cordial organist, composer, and choirmaster who cherished all things French, as one who grew up in a poor American factory town, fighting (literally) for respect from boys who thought that "anyone attending school after the age of 14 was a sissy."<sup>2</sup> It was probably during these years that Seth acquired his "rawboned toughness"—a trait Searle Wright, fellow organist and friend, would later connect to Bingham's music.<sup>3</sup>

Bingham's first instrument was the piano. He recalls in his memoirs:

Often when I should have been doing something useful I could be found at the piano picking out tunes with one or more fingers. I had a good ear and the family tolerated these keyboard ventures. Don't get me wrong: I was no child prodigy or budding genius. Thousands of other kids with an ear for music used to do the same in that pre-phonograph pre-radio age.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Seth Bingham, *Memoirs* (1957-1965): 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 8.

<sup>3</sup> Searle Wright, "Seth Daniels Bingham: 100th Anniversary," *The American Organist* 16, no. 6 (June 1982): 41.

<sup>4</sup> Seth Bingham, *Memoirs* (1957-1965): 8.

His interest in music led him to join the newly formed boy choir of St. Michael's Church in Naugatuck when he was just nine years old. The following year he transferred to the larger choir at St. John's in Waterbury where he remained as a soloist for six years. In his words, "My voice was a true alto—extremely rare in a young boy, and of excellent quality. I achieved considerable fame as a soloist; result, quite a case of swelled head. Anyway this early choir experience proved to be one of the deciding factors in my choice of a career."<sup>5</sup>

Though not a prodigy, Bingham encountered the natural urge to compose at age fourteen. The occasion: William Jennings Bryan's campaign of 1896, which included a stop at Naugatuck. Seth wrote a piano march entitled *Campaign of Ninety-Six*, which he preserved as a precious "pearl of doubtful price, positively funny in its ineptitude and lack of original ideas."<sup>6</sup> From the start he was self-critical, and this lasted into adulthood. In his Bingham tribute, Searle Wright recalls seeing a marking in one of Bingham's own pieces that read, "No good—should never have been published," followed by an exclamation point.<sup>7</sup>

Bingham's initiation at the organ console was a "trial by fire" sort of situation—one he most certainly passed with ease, but the story is nevertheless quite amusing in his own words, "On a few occasions when the regular organist Lester Adams had not sufficiently recovered from a Saturday night binge, I was hastily sworn in to replace him on Sunday morning. Whether Lester with a hang-over would not have served better than myself sober is a worthwhile [*sic*] question."<sup>8</sup> In the words of Bingham's granddaughter, Patricia, "He had a sense of humor."<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 9.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. 10.

<sup>7</sup> Searle Wright, "Seth Daniels Bingham: 100th Anniversary," *The American Organist* 16, no. 6 (June 1982): 41.

<sup>8</sup> Seth Bingham, *Memoirs* (1957-1965): 15.

<sup>9</sup> Patricia Dale (Seth Bingham's granddaughter), in discussion with the author, February 2010.



### *Formative Years*

During his senior year in high school, Seth obtained his first job as organist and choirmaster at the Episcopal Church in Seymour, Connecticut. It was a part-time position with a small salary but it helped him to enroll at Yale University the following year.

Yale was a turning point in Bingham's musical career—in most part due to the influences of Harry Jepson, his organ teacher.<sup>10</sup> Jepson was to become a lifelong friend and mentor, one who opened many doors to the budding young organist and composer, the first of which was a new church job at St. Paul's Church in New Haven, Connecticut. In his memoirs he looks back on the St. Paul's Choir as "easily the best small mixed chorus in New Haven at that time. For me the practical experience was most valuable."<sup>11</sup> It was also Jepson who encouraged plans for Bingham to travel to France for lessons in organ and composition (as Jepson had done a decade earlier as a student of Vierne and Widor). After considerable fundraising, Bingham set sail for Paris in 1906.

"I lost no time in contacting Charles-Marie Widor and arranging for organ lessons. My first Sunday at St. Sulpice was on Corpus Christi day, and the impression remains graven on my memory... never had I seen or heard, much less imagined the spectacle and music which overwhelmed me that day."<sup>12</sup> In France, Bingham was suddenly thrust into a new world of music, art, language, food, and custom. He not only learned to speak French in less than a month, he also fell in love with the language, and the French aesthetic in general. In the spring of 1907 he fell in love again, this time with the young Mademoiselle Blanche Guy-Claparede (whose preferred nickname was Chouquette). She was a singer, whose mother was also a talented singer and pianist who had studied with César Franck. They met one another

---

<sup>10</sup> Bingham also studied composition at Yale under Horatio Parker.

<sup>11</sup> Seth Bingham, *Memoirs* (1957-1965): 17.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* 20.

on March 17 and were engaged by March 27. Chouquette's conservative family was a bit slow in accepting a foreigner's proposal (from a musician, no less), but they eventually came around. In the fall of that year, the newlywed Mr. and Mrs. Bingham returned to America. Friends and relatives were thrown an extra surprise when the two arrived with their own Swiss maid. The Bingham's cosmopolitan reputation in America was thus born.

The French experience, having exposed him to the sounds and techniques of "Mary Garden, Caruso, Nadia Boulanger, Kreisler, Guilmant, Risler, Bonnet and Calvé,"<sup>13</sup> left Bingham forever changed as a musician, organist, and composer. He spent a year studying with Widor, Guilmant, and the renowned composer and teacher Vincent d'Indy. From these monumental figures Bingham directly inherited aspects of the French style, and with these tools he returned home ready to offer a new voice to the American music scene. In the words of Searle Wright, "Now that he was armed with professional composition equipment and a knowledge and feeling for traditional organ technique as exemplified by the French school of playing, he was prepared to bring to American organ music an idiomatic style and clarity which it had heretofore only occasionally attained."<sup>14</sup> I would add that he was also prepared to bring these innovations to American choral music, and he did so with great success.

### *Professional Career*

Upon returning to the U.S., Bingham promptly completed a B. Mus. at Yale in 1908, adding to his previously earned B.A. from 1904. With degree in-hand he immediately

---

<sup>13</sup> List of names, provided by Bingham in his *Memoirs*, refers to Scottish soprano Mary Garden, Italian operatic tenor Enrico Caruso, French composer and teacher Nadia Boulanger, Viennese violinist Fritz Kreisler, French organist Alexandre Guilmant, French pianist Édouard Risler, French organist Joseph Bonnet, and French operatic soprano Emma Calvé.

<sup>14</sup> Searle Wright, "Seth Daniels Bingham: 100th Anniversary," *The American Organist* 16, no. 6 (June 1982): 40.

received two new job offers: part-time instructor at Yale (assistant to Jepson) and Music Director at Rye Presbyterian Church in Rye, New York.

A career-spurring job offer emerged in the spring of 1913. With Harry Jepson's influential backing, Bingham secured the position of organist and choirmaster at Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church (MAPC) at 73rd Street, New York, where he would remain for the next thirty-eight years. From 1913 until about 1920 (when he began teaching theory and composition at Columbia University), Bingham focused his compositional efforts on symphonic works and with a moderate degree of success. His first orchestral piece, *Wall Street Fantasy*, was premiered by the New York Philharmonic in 1916. Pierre Monteux, then director of the Metropolitan Opera, encouraged Bingham to write an opera for their annual composers' competition, but he lost in two consecutive years. With two young children at home and a modest church salary, Bingham was forced to consider his financial reality:

With a small family growing up I realized my orchestral ambitions could mean near-starvation for all of us! I therefore ceased trying to storm symphonic heights, confining myself chiefly to organ and choral composition as more fitting, if less exciting, for my career as a church musician; once having made this decision I felt happier.<sup>15</sup>

This adjustment, however, did not prevent further orchestral endeavors. Works such as *Memories of France*, *Concerto for Organ and Orchestra*, *The Breton Cadence*, *Connecticut Suite*, and the secular folk cantata *Wilderness Stone* were performed by some of the leading American orchestras including the Boston Symphony, the Cleveland and Chicago Orchestras, and the NBC Symphony Orchestra.

---

<sup>15</sup> Seth Bingham, *Memoirs* (1957-1965): 66.

In the spring of 1918 Bingham negotiated an agreement with MAPC that would allow him to accept a one-year interim appointment as music director and organist at St. Bartholomew's Church in Manhattan. During this year he put on what he believed to be the first American church performance of J.S. Bach's *St. John Passion*.<sup>16</sup> The appointment at St. Bartholomew's must have been an overall success, for the giant church would later become an important venue for Bingham's church music.<sup>17</sup>

In 1920 Bingham secured a second long-running position. In his memoirs he relates the circumstances leading up to his appointment as professor of composition and theory at Columbia University:

Although I had already made the casual acquaintance of Daniel Gregory Mason, it was our close friend Charles Rabold that really brought us together. Shortly afterward, during an evening at the Mason's they asked to hear something of mine; so Chouquette and I played the 4-hand version of my Carillon de Chateau-Thierry, which they liked. Columbia's music department was being reorganized with Mason at its head. They needed a teacher of theory and composition; he offered me the job... The new position, which began in the autumn of 1922, made it possible to terminate my weekly commuting assignment at Yale.<sup>18</sup>

The inter-war years fostered a number of new compositions. The early 1930s included publications of *The Strife is O'er* (J. Fischer, 1932) and *Come Thou Almighty King* (Carl Fischer, 1932). His *Wilderness Stone*, a secular folk cantata based on portions of Stephen Vincent Benet's "John Brown's Body," was premiered under the direction of Hugh Ross at the Manhattan Theatre on May 24, 1936. The following year it received a national broadcast by the Schola Cantorum (the New York chorus, not to be confused with the French

---

<sup>16</sup> Bingham makes this claim in his *Memoirs*, but it is difficult to prove.

<sup>17</sup> St. Bartholomew's hosted performances of Bingham's *Te Deum*, *Magnificat* and the debut of *The Canticle of the Sun*.

<sup>18</sup> Seth Bingham, *Memoirs* (1957-1965): 47.

school founded by d'Indy and Guilmant) and the NBC Symphony Orchestra. Detailed information on most of these pieces is available in appendix A.

### *Post World War II*

Shortly after the war ended, Bingham accepted an offer to temporarily teach at the newly established American University at Biarritz (AUB), France, while maintaining a hold on his positions at MAPC and Columbia University. He was grateful for the opportunity because it gave him a chance to “do something useful for the army even at the tail end of the war, during which I had merely sat on the sidelines and bought a few war bonds.”<sup>19</sup> So for one academic year (1945-1946) Bingham taught at the AUB. Designed for G.I.s who had fought during their college years, the American University offered free classes for soldiers who wished to earn a college degree. In Bingham’s words, “There was a tremendous rush of students to the fine arts, and particularly to music. The reason may have been psychological: men who had frozen and starved in foxholes and experienced the grim horrors of war wished to escape into a spiritual world of ordered beauty and human values.”<sup>20</sup> Bingham taught with 300 other faculty members, most of whom were university professors drawn from roughly 150 American institutions. Some of his colleagues included Rexford Keller, head of the music department at Ohio Wesleyan University, Mack Evans from the University of Chicago and director of the men’s chorus, and Cecil Effinger who served as the band director. In Bingham’s estimation, the program cost American taxpayers as much as fifty million dollars,

---

<sup>19</sup> Seth Bingham, “Account of Biarritz University's Unique Work by an Organist,” *The Diapason* 45, no. 6 (April 1946): 14.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

but at one-third the cost of one day of war he wondered if there was ever a better investment.<sup>21</sup>

In 1952 Bingham was awarded an honorary doctorate from Ohio Wesleyan University. With Rex Keller serving as the music school's director, it seems obvious that Bingham's work with the AUB helped lead to the award. By this time in his career, Bingham was nearing retirement. MAPC set an age limit at 68 for its ministers and organists. Bingham may have challenged the reasoning behind the policy, or his skills simply warranted an extension. In either case the church let him stay on an extra year. To help fill his time and love for teaching post-retirement, Dr. Bingham accepted an offer to teach classes in advanced composition to the doctoral candidates at the Union Theological Seminary School of Sacred Music in New York City (now a part of Yale University's Institute of Sacred Music). In his old age he related his teaching to his composing:

If I have continued to compose, it is largely because students in composition are more convinced—and I hope inspired—by one who has wrestled with the same problems that confront them: the technical details of notation, canon, fugue, rhythm, the ostinato, passacaglia and variation forms; questions of style, color, mood; larger form: rondo, sonata, fantasy; writing for chorus accompanied or a cappella.<sup>22</sup>

Seth Bingham died on June 21, 1972, at the age of 90. Just two months earlier he had attended a special performance at Columbia to celebrate his ninetieth birthday. Throughout his career he placed a very high importance on cultivating and maintaining a large social circle that included extended family, friends, and musical colleagues. Near the end of his memoirs he “toots his own horn for posterity” with a listing of the prominent musicians who

---

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Seth Bingham, *Memoirs* (1957-1965): 177.

had played or directed his musical works. The following list represents Bingham's vast association with many of the prominent musicians of his century:

Marie-Claire Alain	Lynnwood Farnam	Donald McDonald
Robert Anderson	Virgil Fox	Flor Peeters
Robert Baker	Eugene Hancock	Hugh Porter
George Thalben-Ball	Harry Jepson	Leonard Raver
E. Power Biggs	Wilma Jensen	Hugh Ross
John Dykes Bower	Joyce Jones	Leslie Spelman
Joseph Bonnet	Piet Kee	Frederick Swann
Walter Blodgett	Jean Langlais	William Teague
Claire Coci	André Marchal	Fred Tulan
Catharine Crozier	George Markey	Alec Wyton
Vernon De Tar	Marilyn Mason	Searle Wright
Robert Elmore	Pierre Monteux	

## CHAPTER 2

### THE STYLE OF SETH BINGHAM'S SACRED CHORAL MUSIC

#### *Bingham's Choral Style*

Bingham's compositional style largely stems from the influences of his teachers Harry Jepson, Vincent d'Indy, Alexandre Guilmant, and Charles-Marie Widor. Characterized by an emphasis on counterpoint, chant-like melodies, mixtures of modality, and an "imaginative yet disciplined" use of registral color, Bingham's style was representative of the musical philosophies propagated by d'Indy, Guilmant, and the Schola Cantorum.<sup>23</sup>

Formed in 1894 by d'Indy, Guilmant, and Charles Bordes, the Schola Cantorum was a musical academy which initially set out to promote reforms to the music of the Catholic liturgy, with special emphasis on Gregorian chant and Palestrinan polyphony.<sup>24</sup> As a student and disciple of César Franck, d'Indy's compositional and educational philosophy came to embody the "fundamental importance of tonal architecture and the clear deployment of themes, as exemplified in the works of Bach and Beethoven."<sup>25</sup> D'Indy's motivations were also influenced by Franz Liszt, who taught him the approach of "an historically based pedagogy, by following which students could discover for themselves the evolution of their art through its successive stages."<sup>26</sup> These ideals became the tenets of the Schola Cantorum. As a student of this school, Bingham undoubtedly absorbed notions of an historically-informed model of composition, with emphasis on counterpoint and other traditional

---

<sup>23</sup> Andrew Thomson. "Guilmant, Alexandre." In *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, <http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/11996> (accessed April 4, 2010).

<sup>24</sup> Andrew Thomson and Robert Orledge. "Indy, Vincent d'." In *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, <http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/13787> (accessed April 4, 2010).

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.



techniques such as chant, modality, polyphony, and fugue. Examples of certain uses may be found in the Annotated Listing of the Sacred Choral Works (appendix A).

Bingham received a similar style of training from the famed organist Charles-Marie Widor, whose “solid expertise in counterpoint, fugue and orchestration, together with his profound knowledge of the Austro-German tradition, proved valuable [to his students].”<sup>27</sup> Though several of his organ symphonies are “uncompromising in their demands on both the player and listener,” Widor’s last two organ symphonies are based on “cyclically treated Gregorian themes, reflecting the Catholic ethos of the Schola Cantorum.”<sup>28</sup> This technique of using chant-based melodies as unifying motives is applied directly to *The Canticle of the Sun*, and is discussed further in chapter 4.

In speaking of Bingham’s choral works in general, Walter Blodgett observes a “Handelian spirit of false simplicity which overlies impeccable, sophisticated technique... The unconventional phrase-lengths or shifting rhythmical patterns, derived from the thought span or rhythms of the texts, often trouble singers unacquainted with the magnificent freedoms of early choral composers.”<sup>29</sup>

Blodgett is referring to the many instances of Renaissance and Baroque compositional techniques found in Bingham’s music. Following his studies in France, Bingham was inspired by the practices of his teachers to become a music professor and scholar of music history. Like his French teachers, many of Bingham’s published writings and editions focus on the works of great (and sometimes forgotten) composers throughout

---

<sup>27</sup> Félix Raugel and Andrew Thomson. "Widor, Charles-Marie." In *Grove Music Online*. Oxford Music Online, <http://0www.oxfordmusiconline.com.library.unl.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/30261> (accessed April 4, 2010).

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Walter Blodgett, “Bingham Organ and Choral Music Wins Notable Distinction” *The Diapason* 42, no. 3 (February 1951): 10.

history. In the words of Brian Doherty, “He was particularly interested in French music of his time, but he wrote on German, Dutch, Italian, English, and American works helping to indoctrinate Americans into repertoire from the great composers of the past and present.”<sup>30</sup>

As an advocate and performer of the great masterworks, Bingham maintained a first-hand understanding of traditional forms and techniques, and his sacred choral works demonstrate frequent use of imitative polyphony, fugue, and chant-like melodies. Examples may be found in *The Strife Is O'er*, *The Canticle of the Sun*, *Missa Salvatoris*, *Four Marian Litanies*, *O Man Rejoice*, *Worship the Lord*, and *Perfect Through Suffering* (see appendix A).

As a counterbalance to his mastery of historical techniques, Bingham applied a creative yet refined use of modern tonality. The juxtaposition of modern tonality and traditional techniques was striking enough at times to relate Bingham’s music to neo-classicism. In their articles on Bingham, both Searle Wright and Peter J. Basch use the term neo-classicism in describing his music. In the words of Wright:

Bingham’s musical inclinations tended toward neo-classicism with an emphasis on a linear, contrapuntal style of writing, and he was given to weeding out any unnecessary elements in his textures. As time went on, his works became less chromatic and more strongly modal in flavor. His avoidance of lush harmony for its own sake suggested a sort of puritanical streak which seemed to belie his truly warm nature; however, this eschewal of “over-ripeness” was undoubtedly a reaction to the banal harmonic clichés so prevalent in church and organ music during the preceding fifty years or so.”<sup>31</sup>

Wright’s inference is that Bingham was not an ordinary church music composer. Though his music demonstrates influences of Widor’s sense of registration, orchestration, and thematic unity, Bingham’s overall focus on what is truly necessary and meaningful in

---

<sup>30</sup> Brian J. Doherty, *The French Training of American Composers, 1890-1914* (University of Kansas, 2004): 354.

<sup>31</sup> Searle Wright, “Seth Daniels Bingham: 100th Anniversary,” *The American Organist* 16, no. 6 (June 1982): 41.

music goes against the effects of grandeur and “over-ripeness”—effects that were practiced by some of his teachers and colleagues. Though his music contains the aforementioned “Handelian simplicity,” a closer examination will always reveal a hidden layer of depth, detail, and thematic cohesion.

Walter Blodgett holds a similar view. He observes, “a conspicuous lack of opportunity in Bingham’s music for virtuosic fuss or effect-making simply for the sake of effects. The music has a first-hearing attraction, but under the surface there is a rewarding amount of substance which, upon study, stimulates increasing appreciation. Craftsmanship is logical and economical, particularly in the choral music. His facility in both harmonic and contrapuntal writing is full of invention and fancy.”<sup>32</sup>

Beyond style and influence, there is another important factor relating to the character and quality of Bingham’s sacred choral music: He was writing choral music for his choir at Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church. Like J.S. Bach, Mozart, M. Haydn, Franck, and Fauré, Bingham was a church musician who worked with the same singers each week, and he was limited to the musical abilities and the rehearsal time he had available. Like Bach, Bingham probably wrote a few things that went over the heads of his singers, but for the most part he kept within the size and scope of his own ensemble. This leads to the question: What was Bingham’s church choir like? How many singers did it comprise?

During Bingham’s years in New York City there were three types of church choirs: fully paid, partially paid, and all amateur. In his memoirs he writes, “I began at Madison Ave. still cherishing the idea of a paid professional choir, and with disdain for amateurs. Experience eventually taught me that there are very real rewards, even advantages, for a

---

<sup>32</sup> Walter Blodgett, “Bingham Organ and Choral Music Wins Notable Distinction” *The Diapason* 42, no. 3 (1951): 10.

choirmaster willing to develop the talents of a volunteer organization.”<sup>33</sup> It seems that Bingham worked with a partially paid but mostly volunteer choir. His wife was a paid alto soloist and section leader and there were probably others. His choral roster varied from year to year but mostly hovered between forty and fifty adult members.

In considering the body of Bingham’s sacred choral works, it is clear that the previously mentioned criteria dictated his compositional parameters. Generally, there is nothing that goes beyond four parts with occasional *divisi*, nothing in a foreign language (besides common liturgical Latin), and nothing inordinately large or lengthy. *The Canticle of the Sun* was his largest sacred choral work, but this too was performed by the choir at Madison Avenue.<sup>34</sup>

As Bach’s *St. John Passion* was never meant for 200 singers, neither were any of Bingham’s sacred choral compositions. Moreover, a mostly amateur church choir of thirty singers might easily lack the necessary dynamic power for competing with Bingham’s carefully specified organ registrations. In doing Bingham’s sacred choral music, it is best to approach the size and ability of his forces at Madison Avenue: approximately fifty singers with some professional-level support.

Bingham’s own experience as a trained singer also informed his choral writing. He was always in search of new ways of teaching the tenets of tone production to his choristers, and it is clear from his choral writing that these tenets were always under careful consideration with the creation of each vocal line. Blodgett observes that in Bingham’s choral writing, “whether harmonic or contrapuntal (the two styles are generously mixed), voices are called upon to do what voices may do best. There is a merciful management of

---

<sup>33</sup> Seth Bingham, *Memoirs* (1957-1965): 61.

<sup>34</sup> Three movements from *Canticle* were done at Madison Avenue on November 12, 1950, in addition to his complete *Te Deum Laudamus*.

tessitura. Often there is sensitive awareness of vocal timbre, the writing of a person much experienced in the possibility of choral color.”<sup>35</sup>

During the summer of 1930 Bingham enrolled in a six-week workshop held by John Finley Williamson at Ithaca, New York. Three daily sessions, each led by Dr. Williamson, included vocal training, conducting, and group singing. Following the workshop, Bingham recalls how “Williamson took a shine to my bass voice and very kindly offered me private lessons. These proved to be most helpful in my own subsequent choir work. I can honestly assert that my choir at Madison Ave. showed a 50% improvement in tone and execution during the following season.”<sup>36</sup> In light of this, we may understand something more about Bingham as a choral conductor and composer. He ascribed to the Williamson school of thought, which Howard Swan defines as:

... a choral tone which is alive, vital, and responsive; one that is secured by emphasizing and encouraging the physical and emotional development of each singer in the choir. To a considerable degree, the director is concerned with the growth of the individual—personally, intellectually, and musically—and gives somewhat less attention to the needs of the group. The success of a chorus has an immediate relationship to the achievement of each individual in it.<sup>37</sup>

With these choral attributes, “phrasing is conceived as a result of mood or emotion. The interpretive process takes place when the conductor learns for himself the mood expressed in a composition and then by intensity from within gives to his group that same

---

<sup>35</sup> Walter Blodgett, “Bingham Organ and Choral Music Wins Notable Distinction,” *The Diapason* 42, no. 3 (February 1951):10

<sup>36</sup> Seth Bingham, *Memoirs* (1957-1965): 71.

<sup>37</sup> Howard Swan, “Schools of Choral Singing in America,” in *Choral Conducting: A Symposium* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1973): 8-9. The principles of John Finley Williamson, the founder and first conductor of the Westminster Choir, are grouped into School A. Swan’s information is taken directly from materials relating to the annual summer classes at Ithaca.

mood.”<sup>38</sup> As a choral composer, Bingham not only understood the moods expressed in his own compositions, he composed on a basis of specific moods and/or emotions rather than effects.

Bingham’s style of sacred choral writing resulted from a variety of influences: his association with the French idiom (particularly through the influence of his teachers), his deep knowledge of traditional church composers and their techniques, his own personal touch of atmosphere, color and tonality/modality, and his knowledge of vocal mechanics all meshed into one unique and personal style. His sacred choral music is accessible to most choirs, but it also presents its share of difficulty and surprise. It is colorful, comfortable for the voice, and impressive to the listener. Although he experimented through the use of a modern tonal language, he keeps his respect for the masters close at heart. In the words of Peter Basch, “Although he pushed forward into new musical frontiers, he always retained a respect and admiration for tradition.”<sup>39</sup> One could call Bingham’s music conservative for his time, but his economy of style, which never strays far from a “classical” idiom, has provided his music with a quality that is time enduring. This is not to say, however, that it has helped his music stay in print.

---

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. 15.

<sup>39</sup> Peter J. Basch, “Seth Bingham; a tribute,” *Music: the AGO and RCCO Magazine* 6, no. 4 (1972): 32.

## CHAPTER 3

BACKGROUND OF BINGHAM'S *THE CANTICLE OF THE SUN*, OP. 52

*The Canticle of the Sun*, a cantata for chorus with soli *ad lib.* and accompaniment for organ or orchestra, sets the ancient text of St. Francis of Assisi (1182-1225). The original hymn, one of the earliest of its kind, was written in the Umbrian dialect, a sort of medieval Italian. It proclaims devotion for the “Most high, omnipotent, good Lord,” and offers, “Praise to Thee, with all Thy creatures.” Separate venerations are given to the sun, moon, stars, wind, air, and fire. In place of the original text, Bingham set a translation of the text by Father Paschal Robinson (1870-1948), an Irish priest who served a number of years in Italy before he was appointed the Papal Nuncio to the Irish Free State. Though Robinson’s translation was one of many from which to choose, Bingham felt it was the best embodiment of the spirit of the text. In contrast, Amy Beach and Leo Sowerby both used Matthew Arnold’s translation in their settings of the canticle.

It is unknown when Bingham began work on his setting of Assisi’s canticle, or what prompted him to take up the task;<sup>40</sup> however, it is apparent from reading his memoirs that Bingham maintained a deep respect and love for nature. His favorite summers were those spent in the countryside, and the picturesque canticle of St. Francis must have offered the composer a compelling opportunity for putting his unique musical affects to use.

Unfortunately, Bingham was not one to write much about his own music. His memoirs include lengthy descriptions of European vacations, his family, his servants, his

---

<sup>40</sup> He claims to have finished it three years before Leo Sowerby’s version appeared, which would place its completion around 1941 or 1942. Based on later correspondence, however, it seems that Bingham may have been aware of Sowerby’s setting sometime during the compositional process.

dogs, his favorite meals, and so on. His many articles, most of which were printed in *The Diapason* and *The American Organist*, tend to focus on the music of other composers and performers, or “big picture” topics such as the state of church music in America.<sup>41</sup> But he speaks very little of his own music beyond the mere mentioning’s of performances in his memoirs, or the short blurbs he would place in program notes. Fortunately, I have received a copy of one such program containing the *Canticle* that was part of a spring festival concert celebrating his music. It was held at St. Paul’s Chapel at Columbia University on May 9, 1965. Of the *Canticle* Bingham writes the following:

There exist numerous settings of St. Francis’ *Canticle*; they vary from the grandiose symphonic to simple chant-like treatment. The present version lies somewhere between these. A brief introduction contains the principal motives which recur during the ten verses of the *Canticle*. The accompanying instrumental groups are varied in size and color following the mood of each verse.<sup>42</sup>

In a 1949 letter to Richard Weagly at Riverside Church in New York City, he offers a few more insights on his conception of the work:

One might suppose that with Mrs. Beach, [Charles Martin] Loeffler, and Leo Sowerby and others already in the field, another setting was hardly necessary. I doubt if mine could compete with Mrs. Beach’s in popularity. I finished it three years before Leo’s cataclysmic version appeared, but let it lie until I could make some revisions. Whether it is better or worse than these others is not for me to judge; my conception of St. Francis was different and naturally the style and treatment are [*sic*] different.<sup>43</sup>

---

<sup>41</sup> All of Bingham’s publications that pertain to choral music are listed in the bibliography.

<sup>42</sup> *Thirteenth Annual Spring Festival Concert: Music of Seth Bingham*, directed by Searle Wright, performed by St. Paul's Chapel Choir, organists Marilyn Mason and Eugene Hancock and members of the Orchestras of Manhattan and Julliard schools of music, St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University, New York, May 9, 1965.

<sup>43</sup> From a letter to Richard Weagly dated June 27, 1949. Source: Seth Bingham Archives: New York Public Library at Lincoln Center.



The letter demonstrates Bingham's sense of pride in the new work. He was a modest man who would never publicly criticize the work of another living composer, but he did maintain an accurate sense of his work's standing in the arena of other "numerous settings." In his one-hundredth-anniversary tribute to Seth Bingham, Searle Wright recalls a conversation he once had with the composer regarding the *Canticle*:

He felt that Mrs. H.H.A. Beach's *Canticle*, while very well made, was a bit too "juicy" for his taste. The enormous and gorgeous setting by Sowerby he felt to be a strong and quite stunning work but thought its very grandeur did not serve well the spirit of the words of the humane and humble little Francis.<sup>44</sup>

Part of the connection Bingham felt to the words of St. Francis of Assisi stemmed from the man's character and spirituality. St. Francis, by all historical accounts, was gentle, pious, and humble. As founder of the Franciscan Order, he rejected personal wealth and material goods, and chose to pursue a life of charity, simplicity, and oneness with God's creation. In saying that his conception of St. Francis was "different" than those of Beach and Sowerby, there is a temptation to read between the lines and to suggest that Bingham felt he had approached the heart of St. Francis (as opposed to Beach and Sowerby), and that his setting succeeded in the avoidance of anything beyond a pure focus of praise, thanks, and humility.

*The Canticle of the Sun* was premiered on Ascension Day, May 26, 1949 at St. Bartholomew's Church in New York City, with Harold Friedell conducting and Searle Wright at the organ.<sup>45</sup> Participating New York choirs included All Saints, Great Neck, Long Island; Emmanuel Baptist; Incarnation; Madison Ave. Presbyterian; St. Stephen's, and St.

---

<sup>44</sup> Searle Wright, "Seth Daniels Bingham: 100th Anniversary," *American Organist* 16, no. 6 (June 1982): 40-44.

<sup>45</sup> Incidentally, Amy Beach's version premiered at the same location in 1928.

Bartholomew's. It seems that it was the organ version and not the orchestrated version that was premiered on this occasion, as no mention of an orchestra is made on the program.<sup>46</sup>

Table 1 provides a list of known performances of the *Canticle*.

TABLE 1: List of Known Performances

Date (if known)	Location	Conductor
May 26, 1949	St. Bartholomew's, New York	Harold Friedell
July, 1949	Radio Broadcast	Unknown
February 26, 1950	Church of the Holy Trinity, Philadelphia	Robert Elmore
November 12, 1950	Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church	Seth Bingham
February 13, 1951	Central Presbyterian Church, New York	Unknown
November 18, 1951	Church of the Holy Trinity, Philadelphia	Robert Elmore
May 9, 1965	St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University	Searle Wright
April 11, 2010	First Presbyterian Church, Lincoln, NE	James Wilson

The 1949 premiere was well received. Two weeks later, Harold Friedell wrote a congratulatory letter:

June 6, 1949

Dear Seth –

I will always be grateful of the privilege of giving the first performance of the *Canticle* on Ascension Day. It took a lot of work and I was pleased that you liked it. Everyone seems to be very pleased with the music and feel that it is a real contribution to our American music. Many thanks for your letter, and we will do it again and have Searle [Wright] play it.

Will you please express to your choir my real appreciation for their splendid contribution, and tell them how fortunate they are to be working with a man like you.

---

<sup>46</sup> The only primary record from this performance I could find came from the Seth Bingham Collection at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center, in the Seth Bingham archives collection. It is an invitation addressed to Mr. and Mrs. Ellsworth Harrison of Lakeside, Connecticut. Other works on the program included *Magnificat* by Searle Wright, *King of Glory* by Harold Friedell, *Victory Te Deum* by Everett Titcomb and *Prelude and Fugue in D* by Marcel Dupré.

Best to you –  
Harold Friedell<sup>47</sup>

*The Canticle of the Sun*, originally published in 1949 by the H.W. Gray Company, is currently out of print. The original orchestral parts, in manuscript, are kept in the Seth Bingham Collection at the New York Public Library of the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center.

---

<sup>47</sup> Letter from Harold Friedell to Seth Bingham, dated June 6, 1949. Source: Seth Bingham Archives: New York Public Library for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center.

## CHAPTER 4

CONDUCTOR'S ANALYSIS *THE CANTICLE OF THE SUN*, OP. 52

In his writings, Bingham spends little time discussing his own music. All we know from the composer's perspective on the *Canticle* is that it sits somewhere in between the grandiose symphonic and chant-like extremes of pre-existing settings, that motives introduced in the first movement recur throughout the ten verses, and that his perception of St. Francis was somehow "different" from those of Leo Sowerby and Amy Beach. Using this as a starting point, my analysis will take the following approach:

1. Identify the motives introduced in the Introduction
2. Identify the motives as they recur throughout the *Canticle*
3. Look for clues that may help explain Bingham's perceptions of the text of St. Francis

Such clues may take the form of key relationships, chord progressions, text painting, uses of form, and compositional techniques. In relating these clues back to Bingham's perceptions of the text, a certain amount of knowledge-based inference is inevitable. Although the true intentions of the composer are difficult to prove, it is nevertheless a worthy exercise to explore the possible motives behind the choices found in this work.

*1. Introduction*

The introduction, for organ solo, introduces six motives that recur throughout the *Canticle*. They are identified and presented in example 1.

EXAMPLE 1. Motives 1-6 are notated in the keys they are originally stated in the introduction.

Example 1 displays six musical motives, numbered 1 through 6, arranged vertically. Motive 1 is written in treble clef with a common time signature, showing a sequence of notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5. Motive 2 is in bass clef, common time, with notes: G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4. Motive 3 is in bass clef, common time, with notes: G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4. Motive 4 is in bass clef, common time, with notes: G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4. Motive 5 is in treble clef, common time, with notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5. Motive 6 is in bass clef, common time, with notes: G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4.

EXAMPLE 2. *The Canticle of the Sun*, Introduction. Motivic statements are numbered and beamed.

Andante mistico  $\text{♩} = 72$

Organ

1

*p*

2

7

13

3

19

24

27

4

4

5

*p*

This musical score consists of three systems of piano music, numbered 19, 24, and 27. Each system is written for piano and includes a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a separate bass line. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The first system (measures 19-23) features a melodic line in the right hand with a circled '4' above it, and a bass line with a circled '4' below it. The second system (measures 24-26) includes a circled '4' above the right hand and a circled '3' below the left hand. The third system (measures 27-31) features a circled '5' above the right hand and a circled '5' below the left hand. The piece concludes with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking.

The image shows two systems of musical notation for piano. The first system covers measures 32 to 35. Measure 32 is marked with a circled '6' and a slur. Measure 33 has a 'rit.' marking. The second system covers measures 36 to 39. Measure 36 is marked 'a tempo'. Measure 37 has a circled '6' and a slur. The score is in G major and 3/4 time.

The initial statement of Motive 3 is peculiar in that it appears incomplete in relation to its recurrences in movements 9 and 11. It is possible to construct a complete statement of Motive 3 in the introduction by linking the final two pitches across two measures of motiveless pitches (ex. 2, mm. 17-21). Another anomaly appears in Motive 6 where two statements are presented that comprise of different intervals. Recurrences in the final movement will reveal the intended intervallic flexibility of this motive, such that both versions may be identified as Motive 6. The final movement also explains two seemingly motiveless sections, the first between mm. 31 and 32, and the second between mm. 34-35. Appendix C (p. 73) shows the recurrence of this harmonic material on the text “and be subject unto Him,” complete with both statements of Motive 6 as found in the introduction



(transposed). Aside from these four measures that are parodied in the final movement, every measure of the introduction contains either direct or variant statements of the six motives.

In addition to Bingham's display of motivic cohesion, the introduction takes a step further in establishing a set of key relationships that will function as a secondary unifying force within the *Canticle*. Four keys are represented: G, B, D and E. The mediant B and submediant E serve as counterweights to the tonic G major, and D serving as its dominant. Table 2 shows how Bingham utilizes these relationships to traverse movements 2 through 11 in the *Canticle*.

TABLE 2. Key Relationships Per Movement of *The Canticle of the Sun*

<u>Movement</u>	<u>Beginning Key</u>	<u>Ending Key</u>
1. Introduction	B major	E (open)
		↙
		Mediant
2. Most High, Omnipotent	G major	B major
	↙	↙
		Parallel
3. Brother Sun	B minor	G major
	↙	↙
		Mediant
4. Moon and Stars	B $\flat$ major	B $\flat$ major
	↙	↙
		Mediant
5. Brother Wind	D minor	D minor
	↙	↙
		Parallel
6. Sister Water	D major	G major
	↙	↙
		Dominant

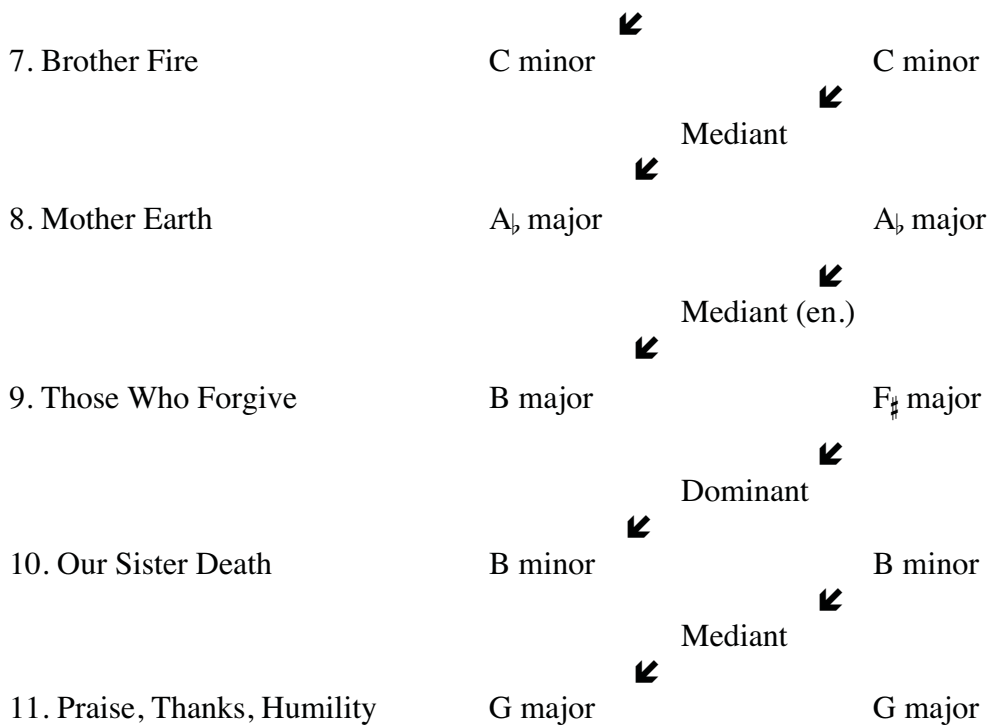
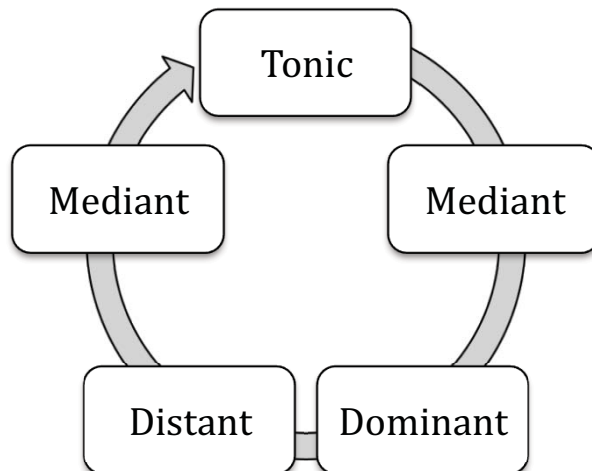


Table 2 also demonstrates the overall tonal architecture of the *Canticle*, with movements 1, 2, and 3 situated in the tonic region, movement 4 in the mediant region, movements 5 and 6 in the dominant region, movements 7 and 8 in a relatively distant region, a return to the mediant region in movements 9 and 10, and finally a return to the tonic in the final movement. All together, we observe a classical sense of tonal architecture, with a carefully balanced and symmetrical departure and return.



### *2. Most High, Omnipotent*

The twelve-bar introduction of the second movement begins with two statements of Motive 2 in the upper-most voice (ex. 3). Though both statements of Motive 2 are identical, they are accompanied by very different harmonies. With these twelve measures we find some harmonic treatments favored by Bingham: passing inner voices (counterpoint), and progressions led by a mixture of functioning bass line (mm. 1 through 6) and stepwise chromatic motion (mm. 6 through 12).

EXAMPLE 3. *The Canticle of the Sun, Most High Omnipotent*, organ introductionAllegro risoluto  $\text{♩} = 104$ 

The musical score is presented in two systems. Each system consists of three staves: a treble clef staff, a bass clef staff, and a grand staff (two bass clef staves). The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 2/2. The tempo is marked 'Allegro risoluto' with a quarter note equal to 104 beats per minute. The first system covers measures 1 through 6, and the second system covers measures 7 through 12. A circled '2' above the first measure of each system indicates a second ending. The music is marked with a forte 'f' dynamic. The organ part is characterized by rich, chromatic harmonic textures.

The entrance of the voices displays Bingham’s practical approach to choral writing. None of the richly chromatic harmonic writing from the previous twelve measures (or from the introduction for that matter) is found in the choral parts. Bingham understood the benefit of using clear homophonic declamation in instances where he wanted to convey extra energy or feeling in the text. Another reason behind simpler choral writing had to do with the practicality of working with amateur church singers, as discussed in the previous chapter. As a virtuosic organist himself, Bingham was a master of delegating the flash and flare of a choral piece to his fingers, so as to allow for a more homophonic texture from his singers. As Walter Blodgett observed, Bingham’s organ parts “generally extend rather than double choral

harmonies.”<sup>48</sup> To complement the generally simple choral writing (in this instance), the complexity of the accompaniment functions as a balancing tool. In a 1951 review of Bingham’s choral works, Blodgett observed the following:

For a composition of this magnitude the choral part is gratefully easy. The accompaniment presents the main problem, for on it and its extension of vocal ideas much of the expression depends.<sup>49</sup>

In an earlier article Blodgett discusses Bingham’s contrasting choral and organ treatments:

There is a happy melding of his talents in choral works accompanied by organ. The organ part usually is independent, and the two forces complete each other. Although organ parts support voices by subtle means, they do not obscure, and actually project them by a canny openness, rhythmical vigor and forward movement.<sup>50</sup>

The principal motives recur throughout the second movement, but this is relegated to the organ part. At m. 20 the organ pedal presents a statement of Motive 2 in half note values. This six-measure segment is repeated three times, creating an eighteen-measure section reminiscent of a passacaglia. As the bass ostinato concludes at m. 38, a final statement of Motive 2 is transferred to the organ left hand, now in whole note values (ex. 4). Calling for “Solo Tuba,” this augmented statement of Motive 2 is meant to be heard, and in context it sounds more like a *cantus firmus* than a simple recurring motive. Its placement in the “tenor” part of the organ also seems to pay homage to past traditions.

---

<sup>48</sup> Walter Blodgett, “Critic Evaluates Bingham’s Gifts As a Choral Composer,” *The Diapason* 42, no. 4 (March 1951): 22.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Walter Blodgett, “Bingham Organ and Choral Music Wins Notable Distinction,” *The Diapason* 42, no. 3 (February 1951): 10.

EXAMPLE 4. *The Canticle of the Sun*, Brother Sun, rhythmic augmentation of Motive 2

3. *Brother Sun*

Brother Sun begins with four successive statements of Motive 6 (ex. 5). The pitch levels to which Motive 6 is transposed—B, D, and G, represent the mediant key relationships. Although B minor is indicated in these opening measures, the tonal center remains ambiguous until the tonic G major is firmly established in m. 5. This tonal arrival, strengthened by a crescendo to *forte*, also marks the entrance of the chorus on the text “Praise be to Thee, my Lord,” again with chordal declamation and mostly triadic harmonies. There are several other key points of arrival that are mostly governed by the text. For instance, the words “sun,” “great” and “high” are consistently set to bright major triads in high tessitura. It is also significant that these signpost chords reflect the G major triad outlined in the opening five measures: G major at m. 7, D major at m. 22, B major at m. 50, and G major at m. 85.

Structurally, the movement is made-up of three sections, with a developmental section beginning at m. 34, and a reprise of the opening choral section beginning at letter J (m. 59).

EXAMPLE 5. *The Canticle of the Sun*, Brother Sun, mm. 1-5

Fast and bright ♩ = 116

Motive 6 recurs in mm. 50-51 with a *fortissimo* statement in the accompaniment that is doubled at the octave. Beginning at m. 56 the chorus initiates a volley of motivic material against the organ accompaniment. In m. 59 the organ pedal presents a true statement of Motive 6 that is answered by the chorus in measure 67. The final statement of “Praise to Thee, praise my Lord, for brother sun” is set to a derivation of Motive 2 in octave unison (mm. 77-84).

EXAMPLE 6. *The Canticle of the Sun*, Brother Sun, mm. 59-70, motives between the chorus and organ accompaniment

59

S  
A  
T  
B

Praise be to Thee, my Lord, Praise be to Thee, Most  
Praise be to Thee, my Lord, Praise be to Thee, Most -  
Praise be to Thee, my Lord, Praise be to Thee, Most  
Praise be to Thee, my Lord, Praise be to Thee, Most

Org.

59 (derivation) 2 3 6

65

S  
A  
T  
B

High, om - ni - po tent, to Thee with all Thy crea - tures, Lord, Praise be  
High, om - ni - po tent, to Thee with all Thy crea - tures, Lord, Praise be  
High, - om - ni - po tent, to Thee with all Thy crea - tures, Lord, Praise be  
High, om - ni - po tent, to Thee with all Thy crea - tures Lord, Praise be

Org.

65 6

#### 4. Moon and Stars

The fourth movement begins with a layering of Motive 2 using three different rhythmic values. Whole note values are assigned to the organ right hand and pedal, and are



presented in canon; eighth-note values (rhythmic diminution of Motive 2) are assigned to the organist's left hand, and half-note and quarter-note values are assigned to the soprano and alto voices. The treble parts sing derivations of Motive 2, also in canon (ex. 7). Here we find some of the contrapuntal influences of J.S. Bach, whom Bingham greatly admired.<sup>51</sup>

EXAMPLE 7. *The Canticle of the Sun, Moon and Stars*, mm. 1-9

**Andante tranquillo** ♩ = 84

The musical score is arranged in three systems. The first system shows the Soprano and Organ parts. The Soprano part begins with a whole note rest, followed by a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note Bb4. The Organ part features a right-hand treble staff with a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and a left-hand bass staff with a simple accompaniment. The second system includes Soprano (S) and Alto (A) voices and the Organ. The Soprano part has a whole note G4, a quarter rest, and a whole note rest. The Alto part has a half note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note Bb4, and a quarter note G4. The Organ part continues with its rhythmic pattern. The third system shows the Alto voice and Organ. The Alto part has a half note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note Bb4, and a quarter note G4. The Organ part continues with its rhythmic pattern.

<sup>51</sup> Bingham's reverence for the music of Bach is made clear in his article "Bach: Most Played and Likewise Most Abused Composer" *The Diapason* 45, no. 3 (February 1954): 14.

Motive 2 is transferred to the tenors and basses beginning in m. 8. Still imitative, these motives are now doubled by the organ. What was originally a succession of Motive 2s in the organ's inner voice has morphed into an unbroken thread of staccato eighth notes. This string of eighth notes, which continues until the end of the movement, represents another use of text painting. The flickering eighth note pattern depicts the night stars while the sustained voice parts portray the rising and falling of the moon. One final canonic statement of Motive 2 occurs in the final eight measures. The first sopranos sing a true statement of Motive 2 followed by an organ inner-voice solo in measure 24 that is taken up by the altos in m 27.

EXAMPLE 8. *The Canticle of the Sun, Moon and Stars*, mm. 21-30

21 G

S formed them clear and pre - - - cious and  
formed clear and pre - cious, hast formed them clear and

A formed them clear, formed them pre - cious,

T

B *p* Thou hast formed them clear,

Org.

Solo

## EXAMPLE 8. (continued)

The musical score for Example 8 (continued) features four vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and an Organ accompaniment. The Soprano part begins with the word "fair." and has a fermata over the final note. The Alto part also has "fair." with a fermata. The Tenor part has "clear and fair." with a fermata. The Bass part has "pre-cious and fair." with a fermata. The Organ part features a complex rhythmic pattern of sixteenth and eighth notes, with a dynamic marking of *pp* and a *8va-1* instruction. The score is in a key with two flats and a common time signature.

5. *Brother Wind*

As with the preceding movement, text painting by means of rhythmic ostinato serves as the dominant compositional technique. From beginning to end, Bingham depicts a whirling wind by means of rapid sixteenth-notes coupled by eighth-note groupings. In similar fashion to the “star” motive in the previous movement, these patterns frequently cross from one hand to the other in the organ accompaniment, thus creating a need for considerable skill on part of the organist.

The choral parts are again much less difficult than anything found in the accompaniment. The “wind” motive is quite chromatic whereas the vocal writing is tonally simplistic. Singers will find some of the rhythms in this movement a challenge, for instance the dotted eighths against straight eighths in m. 40, or the straight quarter notes against compound eighths in the following measure, but these are nevertheless melodic figures that are easily absorbed upon one or two hearings.

Chromaticism is a key harmonic feature of the fifth movement. Coupled with regularly occurring triads, this chromatic wandering shows influence of his French teachers, but despite these wild flying harmonies the choral writing remains relatively grounded in D minor.

### 6. *Sister Water*

It is common to find sung neutral syllables in many of Bingham's choral works. Here the soft murmuring of flowing water is depicted by a steady stream of "Ah"s in the treble voices.

EXAMPLE 9. *The Canticle of the Sun*, *Sister Water*, mm. 1-5

a. treble voices depict a flowing stream

Musical notation for Soprano and Alto voices. The Soprano part is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The Alto part is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The Soprano part has a melodic line with eighth and quarter notes, starting on G4 and moving generally upwards. The Alto part has a steady stream of eighth notes, starting on E4 and moving downwards. Both parts are marked with "Ah" to indicate neutral syllables.

b. men's voices, on text, sing in canon at the fifth

Musical notation for Tenor and Bass voices. The Tenor part is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The Bass part is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The Tenor part starts at measure 8 with the text "Prais - ed be my Lord - - - for sis-ter wa-ter". The Bass part starts at measure 8 with the text "Prais ed be my Lord - - - for sis-ter wa-ter".

The two-part flowing water texture weaves in and out of the tenor, alto, and soprano voices, and remains continuous through much of the movement. At letter E (m. 15) the bass and soprano voices join in a new portion of the melody, again in canon, followed by the tenor at m. 18. Letter F (m. 21) marks the end of the water motive, where the treble voices join in

parallel triadic motion on the words “water humble and pure.” These triads, mostly in second inversion, offer an interesting harmonic color to the end of the movement. The final G major triad, set *a cappella*, is fittingly pure.

### 7. *Brother Fire*

The accompaniment of “Brother Fire” flies at such a speed that Bingham offers an easier version within the score. While the original accompaniment contains relentless sixteenth-note passages, the easier version sticks to eighth-notes (the same harmonies are maintained). Skill and practicality are necessary factors in choosing which version to perform.

Musically, “Brother Fire” presents little difficulty for the chorus. Voices tend to sing in either duet-pairings or octaves. Vocal harmonies are used quite sparingly; in fact, they are only found in three passages—mm. 11-13, mm. 21-23 and mm. 36-39—generally where the text requires dramatic emphasis. One issue in the choral writing that deserves special mention is Bingham’s characteristic use of tied notes at the ends of phrases. A popular feature found in British and American choral music of the period, these extra tied notes cause a great deal of confusion on part of both conductors and singers. The inevitable question is, “Does the final consonant come on the beat or after the beat?” Fortunately, in the case of Bingham’s music we have an explanation from the man himself:

It should be borne in mind that most though not all final notes (or chords) are written so that they fill out the measure and presumably cease sounding at the double bar. The actual cut-off, however, comes on the further side of the double-bar, on a new accent. It is practically impossible to do otherwise except in slow tempo, where the final beat can be divided or sub-divided. “Therefore,” says Channing Lafebvre, an experienced choral conductor, “composers should tie such final notes or chords over to a short note-value—

the real release-point, in an additional measure, e.g. a whole note (or chord) tied to a quarter note.<sup>52</sup>

Clearly, Bingham does not intend for an extra eighth-note of vowel sound on such releases; rather, he means to show the exact point at which the final consonant occurs, whether voiced or unvoiced. A few other American composers, most notably Randall Thompson, adopted this manner of notation. In the present movement there are numerous examples of tied eighth-notes which, at a fast tempo, must be ignored by modern singers. These occur on the words “Lord,” mm. 6 and 8, “fire,” mm. 12, 14, 25, and 37, “dark,” 29, and “strong,” mm. 23, 35, and 40.

Like the third movement, “Brother Fire” bears structural resemblance to ABA form. Following a developmental section that is outlined by the key change (mm. 19-25), a recurrence of the movement’s opening material appears at letter H, m. 26.

EXAMPLE 10. *The Cantic of the Sun*, Brother Fire, mm. 12-15

The musical score for Example 10, "Brother Fire" (mm. 12-15), is presented for Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), Bass (B), and Organ (Org.). The lyrics are: "fire, brother fire, By the which Thou". The Tenor and Bass parts have a dynamic marking of *f* and the lyrics "Prais-ed be my Lord for broth-er fire, By the which Thou". The Organ part features a complex accompaniment with various chords and melodic lines.

<sup>52</sup> Seth Bingham, "Choral Conducting is Vital, Essential for Choirmasters," pt. 1, *The Diapason* 47, no. 13 (December 1956): 18.

Considering example 10, the final syllable of the word “fire” should go on the downbeat of measure 14. In other words, it is best simply to ignore the extra tied notes in all of Bingham’s choral writing.<sup>53</sup>

### 8. *Mother Earth*

The eighth movement begins with an inter-voice melodic statement of Motive 2. The motive travels from the organ pedal to the organ left hand to the organ right hand (ex. 11).

EXAMPLE 11. *The Canticle of the Sun*, *Mother Earth*, mm. 1-5

Allegretto pastorale ♩. = 96

②

As with the fourth movement, the vocal parts in “Mother Earth” call for optional solo quartet. The inherent difficulty with this movement stems from the time signature. Bingham notates 6/8 alongside 9/8 without marking changes of meter. Other twentieth-century composers have used this technique, to be sure, but it may cause undue confusion on part of the chorus/soloists. A new edition could easily clarify divisions of the tactus, which changes between half notes and dotted half notes, according to the word stress.

<sup>53</sup> For a peculiar example of final tied notes, observe the first page of appendix C (p. 65). Both phrases should be identical in length, but Bingham (or the editor) made a consistency error in this instance.

In similar fashion to previous movements, “Mother Earth” is unified by a rhythmic ostinato, in this case a dotted figure which travels between hands in the organ accompaniment.

EXAMPLE 12. *The Canticle of the Sun*, Mother Earth, mm. 23-26, meter changes not present in the original publication have been added

The musical score for Example 12 consists of three staves. The top staff is in treble clef, and the two bottom staves are in bass clef. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The score begins at measure 23. The meter changes from 3/8 to 6/8, then to 9/8, and finally to 12/8. A dotted rhythmic ostinato is present in the organ accompaniment, moving between the two bass staves.

Generally, Bingham is careful in his setting of syllabic stress. In a 1949 review of the premiere of this work, Paul Hume opined, “Misplaced accents in many cases spoil the good translation of Father Paschal Robinson.”<sup>54</sup> Hume was probably referring to rare moments such as the soprano line in m. 29, where the unaccented syllable of “flowers” is accented.

EXAMPLE 13. *The Canticle of the Sun*, Mother Earth, mm. 28-31

The musical score for Example 13 shows a single staff in treble clef with a key signature of three flats. The score begins at measure 28. The lyrics are: "With grass - and flow ers, - flow - ers bright." The melody is accented on the syllable "flow" in the second measure.

In Bingham’s defense, these moments are rare, and Hume’s comments seem unjustified to the work as a whole.

<sup>54</sup> Paul Hume, review, “The Canticle of the Sun: Cantata for Mixed Chorus, with soli ad lib and accompaniment for Organ or Orchestra” *Notes* 6, no. 4 (September 1949): 639.



It seems that Bingham imagined a pastoral scene in his depiction of Mother Earth. The tempo marking is “Allegretto pastorale,” and the rhythmic notation draws parallels to Handel’s “He shall feed his flock” and the “Pastoral Symphony” from *Messiah*. One might also hear a Scottish/Irish affect from the jagged melodic contour, the pedal drones (which often sustain perfect fifths), and the woodwind colors called for in the organ accompaniment.

Structurally, the eighth movement bears resemblance to ABA form with a return to the initial melody and tonality at letter K, m. 38. The common-tone diminished triad leading into this return seems to warrant a slight *rallentando* in m. 37.

### 9. *Those Who Forgive*

Bingham challenges the tenors to begin the ninth movement *a cappella*, and in a new key. B major serves as the enharmonic mediant to the previous A-flat major; therefore, the final fifth in “Mother Earth” becomes the third in B major; but this won’t necessarily help the tenors. Either the first tenors will think down a half step from C to B, or a pitch should be given by the organ. Ideally, the conductor should work this transition so as to teach the tenors how to hear the key change on their own.

The ninth movement is entirely based on motives 3 and 4. Motive 3 is initially stated by the tenors, followed by a response from the basses on Motive 4.

EXAMPLE 14. *The Canticle of the Sun*, *Those Who Forgive*, opening motivic statements

Quasi recit  $\text{♩} = 72$

The image shows a musical score for Tenor and Bass parts. The Tenor part is in the upper staff, and the Bass part is in the lower staff. Both parts are in B major (two sharps). The Tenor part begins with a melodic line: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (half). There is a triplet of G4, A4, B4 under the first three notes. The Bass part begins with a melodic line: G3 (quarter), F#3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), D3 (quarter), C3 (quarter), B2 (quarter), A2 (quarter), G2 (quarter), F#2 (quarter), E2 (half). There is a triplet of G2, F#2, E2 under the first three notes. The lyrics are: Tenor: "Praise - ed be - my Lord, \_\_\_\_\_"; Bass: "for those - who for Thy love - for - give. \_\_\_\_\_".

As with the previous movement, meter changes and the need to count numerous rests during long measures of ambiguous meter may prove difficult for the singers. The music is meant to sound chant-like, therefore the avoidance of any sense of meter is the goal. However, Bingham provides fewer signposts than the average singer or conductor would likely prefer. For instance, the first several measures establish a half-note tactus of either six, seven or eight beats per measure. Then at letter C, where the basses enter on the text “and weakness bear,” Bingham groups an odd number of quarter notes in one measure, thus causing the need for a triple grouping on the word “weakness”—this is inferred by the phrase structure, although no indication is provided on where to assign a triple grouping.

EXAMPLE 15. *The Canticle of the Sun*, Those Who Forgive, suggested division of beats

The image shows a musical score for Example 15. It features a bass line (B) and an organ part (Org.). The bass line starts with a 12-measure rest, followed by a melodic line with lyrics: "And weak - ness bear and trib - u - la - tion, and \_\_\_\_\_". The organ part also starts with a 12-measure rest, followed by a complex accompaniment. Vertical dashed lines indicate a 3/2 meter grouping for the first three measures of the organ part.

In place of one continuous measure consisting of fifteen quarter notes (mm.12-14 lack courtesy bars in the original), it would aid modern singers to have a triple-note-grouping designated on the word “weakness,” thus creating a 3/2 meter to the left and a 3/2 meter to the right (see ex. 15).

In “Those Who Forgive” the organist gets a well-earned break while the chorus takes on a more demanding role. Interjections from the organ help to keep the singers’ intonation accurate, and if any section loses or jumps a beat the organ will eventually reaffirm stability.

In general, the ninth movement contains some of the most beautiful choral writing found in the *Canticle*, but it is also musically challenging and deserving of a good deal of rehearsal time.

### 10. Our Sister Death

Containing the richest harmonies of the work, the tenth movement supplies profound imagery of life's cycle with a sprinkling of motivic references. The opening eight measures display a glimpse of Motive 2, though its presence is cloaked by dense harmony. Proceeding through various keys—F#, D, E, A and C#—all over a B pedal, the gradual rise and fall symbolizes the course of human life. Careful listening will reveal pieces of Motive 2 laid within (connectors are provided in ex. 16).

EXAMPLE 16. *The Canticle of the Sun*, Our Sister Death, fragments of Motive 2, mm. 1-7

Slow and sustained ♩ = 80

*p* (2) (inferred)

B F# D

E C# D F# E C# F#

Again, the voices are assigned relatively tame harmonic material as opposed to the organ accompaniment. The head motive appears again in the top voice of the optional accompaniment in mm. 8-9.

EXAMPLE 17. *The Canticle of the Sun, Our Sister Death*, mm. 8-13

The musical score for Example 17 consists of three staves. The top staff is in treble clef, the middle staff is in bass clef, and the bottom staff is also in bass clef. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). A bracket labeled '(head motive)' spans the first two staves from measure 8 to measure 9. In measure 8, the top staff has a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. The middle staff has a half note G3. In measure 9, the top staff has a quarter note C5, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note A4. The middle staff has a half note G3. The bottom staff has a whole note G2 in measure 8 and a whole note G2 in measure 9. A 'B' is written below the middle staff in measure 8.

Here the theology of the text turns briefly from the pleasantries of nature: “Woe unto them who die in mortal sin.” But the gravitas of the harmony supports the weight of this text, which further serves as a counterweight to the otherwise lightheartedness of St. Francis’s canticle at large.

Clearly stated motives occur in mm. 27-33. Motive 1 is heard in the soprano part, followed by a canonic exchange of Motive 2, which travels through the soprano, alto, and tenor parts respectively (ex. 18).

In similar fashion to movements 3 and 5, the tenth movement bears a semblance of ABA structure with a motivically unified B section that is followed by a return to the original harmonic and melodic material in m. 40.

EXAMPLE 18. *The Canticle of the Sun*, Our Sister Death, mm. 30-33

30  
S (2) bless - ed those - who shall find them selves in Thy most ho - ly  
A (2) who - shall find them - selves  
T (2) who - shall find them - selves,  
B (2) who - shall find them - selves,  
Org. 30

## 11. Praise, Thanks, Humility

The original orchestral parts show a different title for this movement—"Praise Ye and Bless Ye"—which quotes the opening line. For whatever reason Bingham later chose to use the present title. By far the longest movement of the *Canticle*, the final movement contains a large quantity of motives. As Walter Blodgett once observed of Bingham's choral style, "Many of the choral settings attain unity through use of one or two motives which increase in significance."<sup>55</sup> In the case of the *Canticle*, Bingham's largest sacred choral work, he infuses most movements with some combination or subset of six main motives, and their prominence culminates in the final movement. Table 3 presents a catalog of motivic usage in Movement 11.

<sup>55</sup> Walter Blodgett, "Critic Evaluates Bingham's Gifts as a Choral Composer," *The Diapason* 42, no. 4 (March 1951): 22.

TABLE 3. Motivic Occurrences in “Praise, Thanks, Humility” (S) - Soprano, (A) - Alto, (T) - Tenor, (B) - Bass, (Org) - Organ, \* - Complete or partial/derivative

Motive No.	# of Statements* in Movement 11	Starting Measure
1	3	3 (Org), 170 (S), 187 (Org)
2	10	17 (T), 25 (A), 35 (S), 43 (B), 86 (B), 88 (T), 92 (B), 113 (SATB), 130 (Org), 172 (Org)
3	7	56 (AB), 63 (ST), 66 (B), 67 (A), 70 (S), 148 (Org), 168 (Org)
4	7	123 (Org), 141 (Org), 159 (T), 161 (A), 163 (S), 165 (B), 187 (Org)
5	4	70 (T), 72 (A), 75 (SATB), 79 (A)
6	5	100 (Org), 105 (Org), 109 (Org), 182 (Org), 191 (Org)

In an attempt to include as thorough a discussion as possible on the final movement, I have supplied an appendix consisting of the movement in its entirety with analytic overlay. For the following references, please refer to appendix C, p. 65.

The beginning sixteen measures function as a prelude to the march-like fugue that commences at letter D (m. 17). The fugue subject (with tonal answers) is based on Motive 2. Instead of doubling the voices the organ accompaniment supports the harmony with short and steady chords.

As the fugue subsides the affect becomes broader and more lyrical. Following a key change to B major (highlighting again the tonic-median relationship), three statements of Motive 3 transpire in broadly arched phrases, which in turn are followed by several statements of Motive 5. The fugue returns at letter N (m. 86) at the return of the text “Praise ye and bless ye my Lord,” this time beginning in the submediant E minor. The head of Motive 2 is used to transfer the harmony to C major, then to B minor.

Finally, through a sojourn to B flat minor and C major, the harmony reaches the dominant in m. 111, culminating in a tonic arrival and a statement of Motive 2 in octave unison (mm. 113-121). This marks the beginning of a difficult section for the chorus. Challenging intervals occur at letter R (although singers are allowed to support one another in octave unison). The *a cappella* section at letter T is designed around a complete statement of Motive 3 in the soprano part. This section, though difficult for the chorus, must be sung *sempre forte* and with confidence as it leads to the organ climax at letter U (m. 140), which is also the climax of the entire work.

The thunderous progression of chords between mm. 140 and 148 is set to a statement of Motive 4, heard in the upper-most voice. The chorus joins in m. 149 on “Most High, Omnipotent,” which harkens back to the very beginning of the *Canticle*. From this moment onward motivic involvement is omnipresent. As shown in table 3, the final 30 measures (beginning at m. 168) contain statements of every motive.

Attention should be drawn to the extensive number of times Bingham repeats the two relatively short phrases of text that make up the final movement. The phrase “Praise Ye and Bless Ye my Lord” is repeated twenty-six times, and the counter phrase “and be subject unto Him” is repeated twelve times. Bingham’s choice to return to the opening line “Most High Omnipotent” at the climax of the last movement relates to the cyclical construction of the work as a whole (as discussed previously in terms of key relationships). From the B major organ climax in m. 147 (relating back to “splendor great,” m. 50 in the third movement), Bingham reprises “Most High” in the following measures before returning to the introduction with the “and be subject unto him” theme (first used in mm. 31-32 of the introduction). In

essence, Bingham works backward from m. 148 to the end in order to compliment his work's overall cyclic structure. Examples such as these allude to the great care Bingham took in crafting his *Canticle* from beginning to end.

### *Summary*

Several of the compositional features discussed in this chapter are clearly evident and intentional on part of the composer. These include Bingham's use of motives as unifying elements, text painting as demonstrated in most of the individual movements, and use of homophony to highlight particular words and phrases. Other features discussed are less transparent. Key relationships by movement may have resulted from a number of factors including vocal range, timbre, color, etc., but considering that mediant-tonic (whether major or minor) and dominant-tonic relationships exclude six of the eleven possible keys, it seems significant that Bingham chose mediant or dominant key relationships between each of the eleven movements, as demonstrated in table 2.

Bingham once stated that he held perceptions of St. Francis of Assisi's "Canticle of the Sun" in contrast to those of other composers, namely Leo Sowerby and Amy Beach. He set out to avoid anything too "grandiose" in favor of a more personal and spiritual reflection of the text. Though certain perceptions are obviously audible through devices such as word painting, there is reason to suggest that deeper perceptions were also implemented. He made use of a cyclic structure, symbolic perhaps of nature. He unified his work through the workings of a set of recurring motives, many of which go unnoticed to the listener. Perhaps Bingham set out to portray the divine workings beneath mankind's limited perceptions. These points are hypothetical, but the music does show that Bingham infused a great amount



of care and skill into his *Canticle*, and through his music the words of St. Francis come forth in a very unique way.

## CHAPTER 6

## SYNTHESIS AND CONCLUSION

Seth Bingham published approximately thirty-five sacred choral works during his lifetime. Only *Perfect Through Suffering*, published in 1971, remains in print today. What caused this gradual disappearance of Bingham's choral music? In a review of the May 9, 1965 all-Bingham festival performance held at Columbia University, Robert Arnold and James Johnson made a sobering yet somewhat accurate prediction:

.... in the same way that even moderately enlightened musicians tend to look down upon 19<sup>th</sup> century religious music of the Dubois and Guilmant variety, it is a safe bet that future generations of even moderately enlightened individuals will regard Dr. Bingham's, and most other contemporary church music, in the same light.<sup>56</sup>

I would argue that musicians do not look down on Bingham's choral music; they simply don't know about it. Most church musicians working in the 1960s may have perceived works such as Dubois's *Seven Last Words of Christ* as stale and old-fashioned church music. I don't mean to offer any validity to these perceptions, but I know they exist because Dubois's *Seven Last Words* is a popular piece to find collecting dust on the shelves of old church choral libraries. To be fair, Madison Avenue Presbyterian's own copies of Bingham's *The Canticle of the Sun* appear not to have been opened since 1950. Why then do choirs and directors neglect the *Canticle* (and other works by Bingham) as they would a work such as Dubois's *Seven Last Words*? I would posit two main reasons:

---

<sup>56</sup> Robert Arnold and James Johnson, review of the Thirteenth Annual Spring Festival Concert, St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University, *The American Organist* 48, no. 7 (July 1965): 7.

1) Bingham's music is unknown, therefore unappreciated. When it comes to church music, it often takes time to "sort the diamonds from the rough." Church music tends to have a shelf life. Even J.S. Bach's choral music was neglected for several decades before the larger musical community noticed its true worth.

2) There is validity to the claim that Bingham was a somewhat conservative composer for his time. He certainly wasn't avant-garde, so it is natural to expect a period of disinterest while American church music was about to endure the most change it has seen in centuries.

Today there is less appeal among church music programs for Bingham's sacred choral works. Since Bingham's death in 1972, church involvement in the U.S. has been in steady decline, with the sharpest losses affecting mainline Protestant denominations.<sup>57</sup> Moreover, two-thirds of all American churches that have experienced growth in the past eight years are those that have embraced contemporary styles of worship.<sup>58</sup> These trends are reflected in the catalogues of the country's highest-earning publishers of sacred music (Alfred, Hal Leonard, and Lorenz, to name a few). It would therefore seem unlikely for the current copyright holders of Bingham's sacred choral works to be interested in reintroducing any of his pieces to the market of contemporary church music. However, colleges, universities, choral societies, and semi-professional groups tend to have the right size ensemble and skill-set necessary for Bingham works. It would be a worthwhile investment

---

<sup>57</sup> David A. Roozen, "American Congregations 2008" *Faith Communities Today* <http://faithcommunitiestoday.org> (accessed March 27, 2010).

Published as part of an ongoing series of research reports entitled "Faith Communities Today" (FACT), conducted by the Cooperative Congregations Studies Partnership (CCSP) in conjunction with the Hartford Institute for Religion Research.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

for a university publishing house to purchase the rights for new performance editions sometime in the future. Based on the artistic quality of Bingham's music, there is reason to believe that the American choral community would take notice if his pieces were made available.

In his memoirs, Bingham describes his relationship with "modernists" in this way:

On the 15<sup>th</sup> [February, 1927] the Philadelphia Orchestra under Stokowsky played two works by Edgar Varèse. Marguerite Heaton, a rabid modernist, was outraged when I burst out laughing at the effect of three Chinese blocks at different pitch levels - I couldn't help it... Some time before, we had spent an evening with Varèse, who assured me that his music bore no resemblance to mine!<sup>59</sup>

Bingham was the first to admit that he held traditional views on music. He was a man of great artistic integrity, and he held firm to his ideals despite the enormous popularity of avant-garde techniques. But now, nearly a half century later, and with the mid-century avant-garde movement having largely run its course, we may look back on Bingham's music through a new lens. Based on objective study, Bingham's sacred choral music demonstrates artistic merit. A careful look beyond the "Handelian simplicity" will always reveal a hidden layer of depth, detail, and thematic cohesion. His music is well written for the voice, it displays high technical skill and motivic cohesion, it is accessible to many amateur ensembles, and it exhibits sophistication and emotional sincerity on part of the composer. Bingham's music is worthy of revival, and hopefully conductors and publishers will some day take note.

---

<sup>59</sup>Seth Bingham, *Memoirs* (1957-1965): 59.

## APPENDIX A

## ANNOTATED LISTING OF THE SACRED CHORAL WORKS

N.B.: all but one of Bingham's sacred choral works, *Perfect Through Suffering*, published by Edition Peters, have gone out of print. The following list includes the works I have been able to obtain for study. They are arranged in chronological order. A complete listing of Bingham's sacred choral music may be found in appendix B.

*The Strife Is O'er*

Description: motet (Easter anthem) for SATB chorus *a cappella*

Length: 184 measures; divides into three movements

Duration: 6 minutes (2.5 min./1.5 min./ 1.5 min.)

Publisher: J. Fischer & Bros.

Copyright: 1932

## Remarks:

- dedicated to the Westminster Choir
- Bingham mentions in the score that any of the three movements may be sung separately if desired.
- mixture of homophony and contrapuntal writing
- firm tonalities: F minor → D minor → F major
- mixture of English and Latin texts (Rex Christe, Alleluia)
- second movement makes use of choral "hums," similar in effect to the Sister Water movement in the *Canticle*; parallelism in the humming parts
- third movement—fugue *alla breve*

*Come Thou Almighty King*

Description: motet for SATB chorus *a cappella*

Length: 130 measures

Duration: 4 to 5 minutes

Publisher: Carl Fischer Inc.

Copyright: 1932

## Remarks:

- dedicated to the Chapel Choir at Columbia University
- anthem for Advent; anonymous text
- divides into three sections
- eight-part *divisi* in first section
- mixture of imitative counterpoint and chordal declamation; reminiscent of Mendelssohn's choral writing—builds from unison to grand eight-voice textures
- tonality/modality is more progressive than anything found in the earlier works

- second section is comprised of an exceedingly difficult fugue; harmonically ambitious and far-reaching in its subject development
- third section returns to a more chordal texture
- requires a highly-skilled chorus

*O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go*

Description: anthem for SATB Chorus and soprano solo, *a cappella*

Length: 42 measures

Duration: 2 to 3 minutes

Publisher: H.W. Gray

Copyright: 1936

Remarks:

- dedicated to Rev. George A. Buttrick
- text by George Matheson
- much simpler and accessible to the average church choir than *Come Thou Almighty King*
- three statements of the same harmonic and melodic sequence; each altered to suit the text
- two interjections of a beautifully sustained soprano solo; which occurs on top of the choral texture

*Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis*

Description: sacred anthem for SATB chorus, sop, alt & bass solos and organ

Length: 160 measures total (84/76)

Duration: 7 minutes (4 min./3 min.)

Publisher: H.W. Gray

Copyright: 1943

Remarks:

- choral writing is almost fully homophonic
- first decisive use of modal harmony (to suit chant-like melodies)
- melodic interludes handled by choral sections, or soloists
- includes chant-like, unmetred speech rhythms
- mostly unmarked meter; *Nunc Dimittis*, by contrast, contains a clear sense of triple meter
- accessible to most church choirs

*Jubilate Deo in B flat*

“O be joyful in the Lord”

Description: sacred anthem for SATB chorus and organ

Length: 153 measures

Duration: 5 minutes

Publisher: Boston Music Company

Copyright: 1946

Remarks:

- dedicated to Harold Friedell and the Choir of Calvary Church, New York
- English text
- motivic construction
- frequent key changes (5 total), but nothing inordinately surprising
- marked registrations, use of pedal and swell
- frequent unison and duet textures, occasional *a cappella* sections
- moderate difficulty—comparable to the *Magnificat*

*The Christmas Man*

Description: carol for soprano solo and SATB chorus *a cappella*

Length: 71 measures

Duration: 2 to 3 minutes

Publisher: J. Fischer & Bros.

Copyright: 1949

Remarks:

- dedicated to June Gardner
- text by John Underwood Stephens
- folk-like melody
- choral writing is entirely homophonic
- frequent meter changes; dictated by the text
- Texturally, the soprano soloist carries the melody and the chorus carries the accompaniment.
- A published copy of this score, found at Madison Avenue Pres. contains an altered title in Bingham's hand, "May the Christmas Man Guide You," and Blanche Bingham is listed beside her husband's name in the upper right.

*Four Marian Litanies, Op. 57*

Description: four motets for SATB chorus *a cappella*

Length: 31 pages

Duration: 8 to 10 minutes

Publisher: Saint Mary's Press

Copyright: 1955

Remarks:

- texts by C. C. Gould
- "The musical settings aim to reflect the emotion of these verses as though uttered by a celebrant with the people's answering plea for mercy and intercession." (Bingham, Columbia University Performance, 1965)

- “There is no intention to reproduce the subtle undulations of Gregorian chant or the imitative patterns of 16<sup>th</sup> century polyphony. Rather the melodic line stems from the obvious scansion of the words.” (Bingham)
- “The harmonic texture is predominately modal in keeping with the devotional character of the litany.” (Bingham)
- “A good choir is needed here, although 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> settings are within the compass of lesser groups.”
- “4 totally different settings of the same poem.”
- St. Mary’s edition was reproduced directly from the composer’s manuscript

### *Missa Salvatoris*

Description: Mass for SATB chorus and organ

Length: 35 pages

Duration: 14 minutes

Publisher: Gregorian Institute of America (Toledo, OH)

Copyright: 1955

#### Remarks:

- dedicated to Rev. Joseph R. Foley and the Paulist Choristers
- omits the Credo
- organ part is consistently independent of the vocal writing
- mixture of Renaissance and nineteenth century French Mass-setting style
- chant-based melodic writing
- occasional *divisi* in the choral parts, especially where homophonic textures are used
- Compared to Bingham’s style of organ writing, this organ part is quite reserved in keeping with the sanctity and atmosphere of Renaissance polyphony.
- harmonically influenced by the masses of Vierne and Fauré (particularly the *Messe Basse*)

### *Worship the Lord*

Description: work for SATB chorus and orchestra

Length: 11 pages of manuscript

Duration: c. 8 minutes

Publisher: Unknown

Copyright: would have been 1960

#### Remarks:

- scored for trumpet, horn, trombone, strings and organ
- commissioned by the Moravian Church, Bethlehem, PA
- based on a hymn tune
- organ version exists in manuscript (possibly never published)



*Perfect Through Suffering*

Description: penitential anthem for chorus and organ

Length: 13 pages, 120 measures

Duration: 10 to 11 minutes

Publisher: Edition Peters

Copyright: 1971

Remarks:

- written in memory of Bingham's mother (author of the text)
- the only Bingham choral work that remains in print
- "This penitential anthem for Lent or Holy Week is written in a neo-romantic style, quite free of pretentiousness, and exquisitely singable." (Review, *The Diapason* Jan., 1972)

## APPENDIX B

## COMPLETE LISTING OF SETH BINGHAM'S SACRED CHORAL WORKS

N.B.: Name of publisher is provided when known. Some of the voicing cannot be verified, in which cases it may read "Chorus," or nothing at all. All of the information listed is taken from one of two sources, 1.) Octavos sent to me from Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, NYC, and 2.) Listings of published sacred works found in the Seth Bingham Collection housed at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center. The following list is in chronological order:

- 1916 *Let God Arise* (SATB and TTBB)  
Pub. Arthur P. Schmidt Co.
- 1932 *The Strife is O'er* (Easter Anthem, SATB *a cappella*)  
Pub. J. Fischer and Bro.
- 1932 *Come Thou Almighty King* (SATB and 8-part *divisi, a cappella*)  
Pub. Carl Fischer
- 1936 *O Love that wilt not let me go* (SATB *a cappella*)  
Pub. H.W. Gray Co.
- 1938 *Benedictus es* in F minor  
Pub. H.W. Gray Co.
- 1940 *Te Deum* in B flat  
Pub. H.W. Gray Co.
- 1941 *The Lord's Prayer* (SATB and Organ)  
Pub. Carl Fischer
- 1942 *Thou Father of us all* (Congregational Hymn)  
Pub. The Hymn Society of America
- 1943 *Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis* (SATB Alt, Sop and Bass Solo and Organ)  
Pub. H.W. Gray Co.
- Immortal Love (a cappella)*  
Pub. J. Fischer & Bro

- Personent Hodie* (Christmas Anthem, SATB and Organ)  
 Pub. H.W. Gray Co.
- 1944 *Puer Natus in Bethlehem* (Christmas Anthem, SATB *a cappella*)  
 Pub. Hall & McCreary
- 1945 *O Come and Mourn* (Anthem for Lent/Holy Week, SATB *a cappella*)  
 Pub. Galaxy Music Co.
- Gabriel from the Heaven* (Carol for SATB and Descant, piano/organ)  
 Pub. Hall & McCreary
- The Christmas Child* (Carol for SSA or SAT, *a cappella*)  
 Pub. Galaxy
- 1946 *Jubilate Deo*, B-flat (SATB and Organ)  
 Pub. Boston Music Co.
- Puer nobis nascitur* (Carol for SATB and Organ)  
 Pub. G. Schirmer, Inc.
- 1948 *O Man Rejoice* (Christmas Anthem for SATB *a cappella*)  
 Pub. Edwin H. Morris & Co.
- Away in a Manger* (Carol for SATB and Youth Choir *ad lib*)  
 Pub. H.W. Gray
- 1949 *The Christmas Man* (Carol for Soprano Solo and SATB *a cappella*)  
 Pub. J. Fischer & Bros.
- The Canticle of the Sun* Op. 52  
 (SATB, optional solo quartet and Orchestra or Organ)  
 Pub. H.W. Gray Co.
- 1950 *Christ of the upward way* (SAB)
- 1952 Twelve Choral Prayers (only 2 published)  
 Pub. H.W. Gray
- 1955 *Four Marian Litanies* Op. 58 (SATB *a cappella*)  
 Pub. St. Mary's Press
- 1955 *Missa Salvatoris* (SATB and Organ)  
 Pub. Gregorian Institute of America
- 1956 *Missa St. Michelis* (*a cappella*)

- Credo* (Chorus, Organ and optional Brass)
- 1958 *Communion Service*
- 1959 *Sing to the Lord* Op. 59 #1 (Chorus, Baritone Solo, and Organ  
- Brass and Timpani optional)
- 1960 *Love came down at Christmas* (SATB and Organ)  
Pub. H.W. Gray
- 1960 *Worship the Lord* Op. 59 #2 (SATB, Brass, Strings and Organ)
- 1962 *As Men of Old* (Thanksgiving Anthem, SATB and Organ)  
Pub. H.W. Gray Co.
- 1963 *The Presentation*  
Pub. World Library of Sacred Music
- 1967 *Hail to the Lord's Anointed* (Chorus, Organ and Trumpet *ad lib.*)  
Pub. Harold Flamer Inc.
- 1971 *Perfect Through Suffering* (SATB and Organ)  
Pub. Edition Peters

## APPENDIX C

## 11. Praise, Thanks, Humility

Sw. and Ch. full except reeds and 16'  
 Gt. 16', 8', 4', 2'  
 Ped. 16', 8'  
 Sw. and Ch. to Gt. and Ped.  
 Sw. to Ch.

**A**

Soprano *ff* Praise ye and bless ye my Lord,

Alto *ff* Praise ye and bless ye my Lord,

Tenor *ff* Praise ye and bless ye my Lord,

Bass *ff* Praise ye and bless ye my Lord,

Organ *ff*

5

S Praise ye and bless - ye my Lord,

A Praise ye and bless - ye my Lord,

T Praise ye and bless - ye my Lord,

B Praise ye and bless - ye my Lord,

Org.

## Praise, Thanks, Humility

**B**

9

S and give Him thanks, and give Him thanks.

A and give Him thanks, and give Him thanks.

T and give Him thanks, and give Him thanks.

B and give Him thanks, and give Him thanks.

Org.

**C**

13

S Praise ye and bless ye. *rit.* praise and bless ye.

A Praise ye and bless ye my Lord, and give Him thanks.

T Praise ye and bless ye my Lord, give thanks.

B Praise ye and bless ye my Lord, praise ye and bless ye my

Org.

## Praise, Thanks, Humility

17 D

S

A

T 2

B

Org.

*f* Praise ye and bless ye my Lord; and give Him thanks. Praise and

Lord

In march time

In march time *mf*

22 E

S

A

T

B

Org.

*f* Praise ye and bless ye my Lord,

8 bless ye my Lord, praise and bless ye my Lord, — *mf* and





## Praise, Thanks, Humility

40 G *mf*

S: bless ye my Lord, praise and bless ye my Lord, \_\_\_ Praise ye, \_\_\_

A: *f* Praise ye, *f* bless ye my Lord,

T: *f* Praise ye, bless - - - ye,

B: *f* Praise ye and bless ye my Lord,

Org. (T & B):

46 H *f*

S: O praise ye, give Him thanks and bless my Lord.

A: *mf* and give thanks, \_\_\_ O *f* bless ye - - - my - Lord.

T: *mf* Praise ye, \_\_\_ O *f* praise and bless my Lord.

B: and give Him thanks. Praise and bless ye my Lord, praise and bless ye my Lord. \_\_\_

Org. (T & B):

## Praise, Thanks, Humility

52

S

A

T

B

Org.

*poco rall.*

reduce

56

S

A

T

B

Org.

*mf*

*Meno mosso*

*Meno mosso*

And - - - be sub - ject un - to Him, \_\_\_\_\_

And - - - be sub - ject un - to Him, \_\_\_\_\_

3

## Praise, Thanks, Humility

63 J

S And - - - be sub - ject un - - - to Him, \_\_\_\_\_

A \_\_\_\_\_ And - - - be sub - ject

T And - - - be sub - ject un - - - to Him, \_\_\_\_\_

B \_\_\_\_\_ And - - - be sub - ject - un - to

Org. 63

---

70 K L 5

S \_\_\_\_\_ And - - - be sub - ject un - to Him, \_\_\_\_\_ *f* And be ye sub-ject un - to

A un - to Him, \_\_\_\_\_ be sub-ject un - to Him, \_\_\_\_\_ *f* And be ye sub-ject un - to

T \_\_\_\_\_ be sub-ject un - to Him, \_\_\_\_\_ *f* And be ye sub-ject un - to

B \_\_\_\_\_ Him, \_\_\_\_\_ *f* And be ye sub-ject un - to

Org. 70

## Praise, Thanks, Humility

77 *Poco piu mosso* M *poco accel. ff*

S Him, \_\_\_\_\_ And be ye sub-ject un - to Him. *poco accel. ff* Praise - -

A Him, \_\_\_\_\_ (5) And be ye sub-ject un - to Him. *poco accel.* Praise - -

T Him, \_\_\_\_\_ And be ye sub-ject un - to Him. *poco accel.*

B Him, \_\_\_\_\_ And be ye sub-ject un - to Him. *poco accel.*

Org. *Poco piu mosso* *poco accel.*

84 N *Tempo I*

S - - - - ye my Lord.

A - - - - ye my (2) Lord. *f* Praise ye and

T *f* Praise ye and bless ye my Lord, \_\_\_\_\_

B *f* Praise ye and bless ye my Lord, \_\_\_\_\_

Org. *Tempo I* *f* *8va*

## Praise, Thanks, Humility

89 2

S *f* Praise ye and bless ye my Lord, and give Him

A bless ye my Lord, and give Him thanks

T and give Him thanks, and give Him thanks,

B 2 Praise ye and bless ye my

Org.

94 O *subito p*

S thanks, *ff* and give Him thanks. And be sub - ject

A *ff* and give Him thanks, give him thanks. *subito p* And be sub - ject

T *ff* and bless and give Him thanks. *subito p* And be sub - ject

B Lord, *ff* and give Him thanks. *subito p* And be sub - ject

Org.

## Praise, Thanks, Humility

99 *subito p*

S un - to Him, *subito p* And \_\_\_\_\_ be sub - ject un - to

A un - to Him, *subito p* And \_\_\_\_\_ be sub - ject un - to

T un - to Him, *subito p* And \_\_\_\_\_ be sub - ject un - to

B un - to Him, *subito p* And \_\_\_\_\_ be sub - ject un - to

Org.

105 *pp*

S Him *pp* with great hu - mil - i - ty, \_\_\_\_\_

A Him *pp* with great hu - mil - i - ty, \_\_\_\_\_

T Him *pp* with great hu - mil - i - ty, \_\_\_\_\_

B Him *pp* with great hu - mil - i - ty, \_\_\_\_\_

Org.

## Praise, Thanks, Humility

110 *hold back slightly* *cresc. e rit.* Q Tempo I 2

S *mf* with great hu - mil - i - ty. *ff* Praise ye and

A *mf* with great hu - mil - i - ty. *ff* Praise ye and

T *mf* with great hu - mil - i - ty. *ff* Praise ye and

B *mf* with great hu - mil - i - ty. *ff* Praise ye and

Org. *mf* with great hu - mil - i - ty. *ff* Praise ye and

*hold back slightly*

115 R

S bless ye my Lord, and

A bless ye my Lord, and

T bless ye my Lord, and

B bless ye my Lord, and

Org.

## Praise, Thanks, Humility

120

S  
A  
T  
B

Org.

give Him thanks Praise and bless ye my

give Him thanks Praise and bless ye my

give Him thanks Praise and bless ye my

give Him thanks Praise and bless ye my

4

125

S  
A  
T  
B

Org.

Lord, and give thanks, and give

Lord, and give thanks, and give

8

Lord, and give thanks, and give

Lord, and give thanks, and give



## Praise, Thanks, Humility

129 S T

S thanks un - - - to Him.

A thanks un - - - - Him.

T thanks un - - - to Him.

B thanks un - - - to Him.

Org.

129

2

3

133 U

S *ff* Praise ye and bless my Lord, —

A *ff* Praise ye and bless ye my Lord, — and bless ye my Lord, —

T *ff* Praise ye and bless ye, — bless my Lord, —

B *ff* Praise ye and — bless — my Lord, —

Org.

133

## Praise, Thanks, Humility

140

S

A

T

B

Org.

full strength (4)

149

S

A

T

B

Org.

Most High, Om - - - ni - po - tent! — *mf* and

Most High, Om - - - ni - po - tent! — *mf* and

Most High, Om - - - ni - po - tent! — *mf* and

Most High, Om - - - ni - po - tent! — *mf* and

Most High, Om - - - ni - po - tent! — *f* *dim. mp*

3

## Praise, Thanks, Humility

157 *dim.* V

S give Him *dim.* thanks.

A give Him *dim.* thanks. 4 4 Praise ye and

T give Him *dim.* thanks. Praise ye and bless ye, bless

B

Org. *dim.* *p*

163 4 *rit.* W *a tempo*

S Praise ye and bless ye my Lord, *a tempo*

A bless ye my Lord, *rit.* my Lord, *a tempo*

T ye my Lord, *rit.* my Lord, *a tempo*

B *rit.* *a tempo*

Org. 4 Praise ye and bless ye my Lord, 3 *rit.* *a tempo* *mp* *a tempo*

## Praise, Thanks, Humility

167 W *a tempo* ①

S Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ *a tempo* **mp** And \_\_\_\_\_ be sub - ject un - to Him, \_\_\_\_\_

A Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ *a tempo*

T Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ *a tempo*

B Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ *a tempo*  
bless - ye my \_\_\_\_\_ Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ *a tempo* ③

Org. *a tempo* **mp** *a tempo* *a tempo*

---

175 X

S \_\_\_\_\_

A \_\_\_\_\_ *p* And \_\_\_\_\_ be sub - ject un - to

T \_\_\_\_\_ *p* And \_\_\_\_\_ be sub - ject un - to

B \_\_\_\_\_ *p* And \_\_\_\_\_ be sub - ject un - to

Org. ② *molto dim.* *rit.* *p* ④

## Praise, Thanks, Humility

182 Y

S *p* And be sub ject un - to Him\_ with great *dim.* hu - mil - i - ty, \_\_\_\_\_

A *p* And be sub ject un - to Him\_ with great *dim.* hu - mil - i - ty, \_\_\_\_\_

T Him. \_\_\_\_\_ hu -

B *dim.* hu -

Org. *p* *p* *p*

182 6 1

190 Z

S *pp* hu - mil - i - ty, \_\_\_\_\_

A *pp* hu - mil - i - ty, \_\_\_\_\_

T mil - i - ty, \_\_\_\_\_ *pp* hu - mil - i - ty, \_\_\_\_\_

B mil - i - ty, \_\_\_\_\_ *pp* hu - mil - i - ty, \_\_\_\_\_

Org. 5 4

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Arnold, Robert and James Johnson. Review of the Thirteenth Annual Spring Festival Concert, St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University. *The American Organist* 48, no. 7 (July 1965): 7.
- Basch, Peter. "Seth Bingham: a tribute." *Music: the A.G.O. and R.C.C.O. Magazine* 6, no. 4 (June 1972): 32-33, 58-59.
- Beach, Amy. *Canticle of the Sun*, ed. Betty Buchanan. *Recent Researches in American Music* 57 (Middleton: A-R Editions, 2006).
- Bingham, Seth. "Account of Biarritz University's Unique Work by an Organist." *The Diapason* 37, no. 5 (April 1946): 14.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Bach: Most Played and Likewise Most Abused Composer." *The Diapason* 45, no. 3 (February 1954): 14.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Choral Conducting is Vital, Essential for Choirmasters." Pt. 1, *The Diapason* 47, no. 13 (December 1956): 18.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Choral Conducting is Vital, Essential for Choirmasters." Pt. 2, *The Diapason* 48, no. 2 (January 1957): 23.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Important Question: What Choir is Best for Your Church?" *The Diapason* 47, no. 8 (July 1956): 8, 28.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Memoirs (1957-1965)* New York Public Library for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Organist Recounts Details of Forming Big Choral Library." *The Diapason* 45, no. 6 (May 1954): 28.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Program notes on the Thirteenth Annual Spring Festival Concert, St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University (May 9, 1965).
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Vocal Exercises for Chorister can Pay Rich Dividends." *The Diapason* 47, no. 9 (August 1956): 12.
- Blodgett, Walter. "Bingham Organ and Choral Music Wins Notable Distinction." *The Diapason* 42, no. 3 (February 1951): 10.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Critic Evaluates Bingham's Gifts As a Choral Composer." *The Diapason* 42, no. 4 (March 1951): 22.

- Decker, Harold A. and Julius Herford. *Choral Conducting: A Symposium* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1973).
- Doherty, Brian J. "The French Training of American Composers, 1890-1914." PhD diss., University of Kansas, 2004.
- Hitchcock, H. Wiley and Michael Meckna. "Bingham, Seth Daniels." *Grove Music Online* ed. L. Macy, <http://www.grovemusic.com> (Accessed 18 November, 2009).
- Harrison, Lou. Review of Leo Sowerby's *Canticle of the Sun*. *Notes* 2, no. 3 (June 1945): 178-179.
- Hume, Paul. Review of "The Canticle of the Sun; Cantata for Mixed Chorus, with soli ad lib and accompaniment for Organ or Orchestra." *Notes*, Second Series, 6, no. 4 (Sept. 1949): 639.
- Roozen, David A. "American Congregations 2008." *Faith Communities Today* <http://faithcommunitiestoday.org> (accessed March 27, 2010).
- Thomson, Andrew and Robert Orledge. "Indy, Vincent d'." In *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*, <http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com> (accessed April 4, 2010).
- Thomson, Andrew. "Guilmant, Alexandre." In *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*, <http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com> (accessed April 4, 2010).
- Wright, M.S. "Seth Daniels Bingham: 100th Anniversary." *The American Organist* 16, no. 6 (1982): 40-44.