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**CHORAL MUSIC IN CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL 1873-1988:  
THE ROLE OF SERVICE SETTINGS AND ANTHEMS IN THE  
REGENERATION, PRESERVATION AND SUSTENANCE  
OF CATHEDRAL WORSHIP**

by

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**Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**2011**

## **Acknowledgements**

This study is dedicated to my late husband, David, who died during my research, but, without whose encouragement, I would not have begun.

Profound thanks are due to my research panel, Professor Grenville Hancox, Dr David Flood and Professor Roderick Watkins, for their patience and sound guidance at all times.

Thanks are also due to the staff of the Canterbury Cathedral Archives and Library for access to documents and the welcome and support they have provided, and also to Canon Christopher Irvine for his guidance in my liturgical studies.

Time spent with Dr Allan Wicks provided me with a recorded interview and many happy memories.

Past assistant Organists, Lay Clerks and choristers have given their memories in person, by letter and email; I am profoundly grateful for the rounded picture they have helped to create.

I am also appreciative of the thoroughness of my reader, Dr Cheryl Dolder, particularly for her questions; also to the many friends and associates who have taken an interest in my studies and thereby encouraged me to continue.

## ABSTRACT

Choral music in Cathedrals was in an impoverished state nationally by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and Tractarians and Ecclesiologists, who valued antiquity in music and words, challenged ecclesiastical authorities to improve their worship and musical repertoire.

The practice of worship at Canterbury Cathedral was not in the dire state found in many Cathedrals. Nonetheless, the frequency of sung Communion services was increased, and, as encouraged by S. S. Wesley, the compositional quality of their existing repertoire, including additional early music, was improved. During 1873-1988 the Matins and Evensong repertoire was enlarged to include the best of existing, rediscovered and newly composed music. Communion services gradually included new settings, together with those originally set in Latin, but sung in English, and eventually in their original Latin. Much of the liturgy contained in the First Edward VI prayer book was to be reinstated, as the Alternative Ordinary of the Service, in the 1960s, permitting the inclusion and therefore the singing, of parts of the service formerly excluded in the Book of Common Prayer.

The anthem repertoire expanded from four, to over seven, centuries, including music from other nations, eventually sung in the original languages. This change of practice was not without its opponents with a challenge articulated to remain faithful to the more popular English text and Victorian music.

Two World Wars, financial difficulties and changing attitudes towards choral music have not hindered progress in Canterbury Cathedral in its continuance as a place of worship. The revival of early music, the maintenance of the central heart of Anglican Church music and the innovation of contemporary compositions has been pursued courageously and the worship in Canterbury Cathedral has been regenerated, preserved and sustained by the daily offerings of words and music to God.

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Canterbury Cathedral is one of the oldest Christian churches in England and it continues to play a central role in English Christianity. Originally founded in 602 AD by St. Augustine, it still functions as the cathedral of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the leader of the worldwide Anglican Communion. The archbishop became a martyr and a saint and his life story is told in a medieval stained glass window in the cathedral. Another disastrous fire broke out in 1067, the year after the Norman Conquest, destroying what was left of the Saxon cathedral. When the Norman Lanfranc was consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury in 1070, the ceremony had to be held in a temporary shelter. But Archbishop Lanfranc was a motivated and highly capable leader. Canterbury Cathedral is situated in the County of Kent in England, in what has become a World Heritage Site. It is located within walled grounds together with ruins and medieval buildings. The Cathedral is located within walled grounds together with ruins and medieval buildings. Of note is the Romanesque water tower, which was at one time the main water supply for the monastery. Parts of the bakery, brewery and granary are presently in use by the King's school. The Quire, Trinity Chapel and Corona. The original Quire was so badly burned in 1174 that it had to be rebuilt. St Augustine built a cathedral church within the old Roman city walls of Canterbury, and he became the first Archbishop of Canterbury. A Christian community grew up around the cathedral, managing the building and its environs. In the 10th century this community formally became a Benedictine monastery. The Martyrdom. Becket's shrine in the Trinity Chapel was finished in 1220, and for another 300 years it was the most popular place of pilgrimage in England (see Chaucer's Canterbury Tales). The Corona was built at the eastern end of the quire as a separate chapel to house a piece of Becket's skull. The Gatehouse. In the 14th century Archbishop Lanfranc's nave was rebuilt by Henry Yevele, called the greatest architect of late medieval England.