

MARY BERRY

PLAINCHANT  
FOR  
EVERYONE

*An Introduction to Plainsong*

THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF CHURCH MUSIC

*The Royal School of Church Music wishes to express its gratitude to Dame Hildelith Cumming, OSB, for her help and advice on the production of this book.*

*The organ shown on the cover was built by P. D. Collins, Redbourn, and installed at Addington Palace in 1975.*

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## FOREWORD

AMONG the many exciting things taking place in the Church today is the renewed interest being shown in the study and use of plainsong. Well to the forefront of those responsible for this is Dr Mary Berry whose infectious enthusiasm for the subject has done much, both through her teaching and her television appearances, to make us aware of plainsong's intrinsic worth, its wealth of moods and its many emotions. Not least in this respect is its validity in terms of today for, as Dr Berry so rightly says, "It is our Western heritage – something which belongs to us. Everything else has flowered from it".

Even if plainsong does not always find a niche in our services, it is abundantly clear that plainsong psalmody, to take but one aspect of the subject, presents far fewer problems than Anglican chant which relies so heavily for its completeness on four independent vocal lines. The relative simplicity of plainchant, its single melodic line, a reciting note within the range of all voices, an independence of the organ, and an incomparable purity and beauty of utterance are, in the practical experience of so many, factors very much in its favour.

I eagerly commend this excellent little book, which might well be subtitled 'Plainsong made easy', as a thoroughly practical, comprehensive, and enjoyable introduction to the subject. I am sure it will be of value and inspiration to all concerned, not least to those for whom the subject, because it may be somewhat foreign, is therefore by implication slightly suspect.

LIONEL DAKERS  
*Director, RSCM*

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# 1 WHAT IS THE CHANT AND WHERE DID IT COME FROM?

WHAT is this thing called 'Plainsong'? One often also hears it called 'Plainchant', or 'Gregorian Chant', or simply 'The Chant'. To put it in a nutshell, the chant is the unique music of Western Christianity and our closest living link with the Church of the first centuries. It has also been said, with truth, to lie 'at the foundation of all our Western music.'

The chant grew originally out of the music of the Jewish ritual. The first Christians were themselves Jews and they brought into their worship the ancient Jewish custom of chanting aloud the books of the Bible. The melodies they used brought out the meaning of the words, made the text audible to a large gathering of people, and added beauty and dignity to the reading. In particular, the chanting of the psalms was to become the firm basis for all future Christian worship. Even today, the melodies used for chanting the psalms – the eight Gregorian Tones (or 'tunes') – have their recognisable counterparts in Jewish practice.

Most of the great masterpieces of the chant repertoire as we have it today were composed well before the ninth century, the period of richest creative activity being from about the fifth or sixth century to the eighth century. Compositions dating from this period are said to belong to the 'Golden Age' of the chant, because by this time the chant of the Western Church had developed into a highly elaborate and complete art in its own right.

But alongside the florid pieces that were originally intended to be sung by soloists, the fully-trained cantors, there was a steadily growing repertoire of simple chants for the ordinary people. And many of these simpler plainsong melodies are ideal for congregations: this music is straightforward unison music, and it doesn't need any harmony from the choir to bolster it up, nor does it need any organ accompaniment. In fact, it sounds far better and is much more authentic when sung on its own, unaccompanied. For the specialised and more ambitious choirs there is also an almost unlimited

choice of more elaborate chants of great beauty, and there are other, quite simple chants, that can be sung unaccompanied in alternation with polyphonic settings by sixteenth and seventeenth century composers – the Tallis hymn settings, for example.

## 2 WHERE CAN YOU HEAR THE CHANT?

IF YOU'VE never heard the chant and if you've never tried to sing it yourself, there is an exciting new experience awaiting you. There are many excellent recordings of famous monastic choirs on the market – in fact, it is said that a record of Gregorian Chant is being sold at present every five minutes! You can also hear it sung live in some churches and abbeys, both in Britain and on the Continent, and indeed all over the world. Here are the names of some of them: in **Britain** there are the abbeys of Ampleforth, Ealing, Farnborough, Pluscarden, Prinknash and Quarr, and St Cecilia's Abbey, Ryde; in Yorkshire the Community of the Resurrection, Mirfield, sings the chant in English; among the many Anglican sisterhoods that regularly sing the chant in English there are St Mary's, Wantage and St Peter's, Horbury. In London chant can be heard at Westminster Cathedral and at Brompton Oratory. On the Continent, in **France**, there are the two great abbeys of Solesmes and Argentan, and also Fontgombault, Randol and St-Wandrille; in **Switzerland** there is the Cistercian Abbey of Hauterive. In the **USA** there are the Benedictine Nuns of Regina Laudis in Connecticut and of Westfield in Vermont; there is also the ecumenical Community of Jesus in Orleans, Massachusetts, that sings the Day Hours of the Monastic Office at three-hourly intervals. In **Canada** there are two large abbeys in the Province of Quebec, St Benoit-de-Lac and Sainte-Marie-des-Deux-Montagnes. There is also the Anglican parish church of St Mary Magdalene in Toronto which has a long chant

tradition in English. This is only to mention a handful: there are many churches that sing chant regularly and well, and it is always worth asking . . .

### 3 LATIN OR ENGLISH?

THE CHANT can be sung in either Latin or English. The bulk of its enormous repertoire was composed for Latin texts, since Latin was for many centuries the liturgical language of Western Christianity. But it is quite possible to adapt much of it successfully to English, and we shall look at some examples of both in this handbook. As a matter of fact, you'll find it helpful and fascinating to experiment with both languages. If you plan to sing mainly in English, it is important to try singing sometimes in Latin as well: this will give you greater fluency when you return to the English adaptations, and also quite a lot of new insights into the rhythm of the chant. If you are used to singing in Latin, try the experiment of singing in English: this can give the sacred texts great immediacy and may also be a way of introducing the chant to a parish that is not accustomed to singing in Latin.

### 4 SOME HINTS ON PRONUNCIATION AND PHRASING

IF YOU sing in *Latin*, it is customary to aim at pure Italian vowel-sounds:

- a as in 'rather'
- e as in 'red', but approaching the sound of 'raid'
- i like the double 'ee' in 'reed'
- o half-way between the 'o' in 'rod' and the 'o' in 'rode'
- u as in 'rude'

Diphthongs are pronounced like the Italian 'e' above, whether written 'æ' or 'œ'.

The Latin consonants are similar to the English ones, with a few exceptions:

- c as in 'cat' before a, o, u
- c as in 'Chichester' before e, i and diphthongs
- xc (as in 'excelsis') is pronounced 'ksh', as in 'egg-shells'
- g as in 'gala' before a, o, u
- g as in 'gingerbread' before e, i and diphthongs
- gn (as in 'magnam') is pronounced 'nya', rather like the sound of 'funnier'
- h normally silent, as in 'honest', but hard, like a 'k', in these two words: 'mihi' (pronounced 'micky'), and 'nihil' (pronounced 'nickil')
- j like an 'i' (see above)
- ti before another vowel (as in 'ratio') is pronounced 'tsi' ('ratsio')

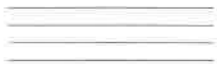
The *accent* in a Latin word comes on the last syllable but one, or the last syllable but two. It is normally light and resilient, and the following syllable, or syllables, tend to be soft and gentle. Modern editions often mark the place of the accent when there might be a doubt.

If you sing in *English*, do remember to follow the natural rhythm of the words themselves, and the *rhythm of the phrase as a whole*. English plainsong can become weirdly stilted and unnatural if too much attention is paid to the so-called principle of equal syllables – a doubtful principle that in the past has been elevated almost to the status of a cardinal virtue! The important thing is to sing English as naturally as you would speak it, not as if you were hitting nails on the head with equal force.



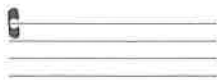
# 5 HOW DO YOU READ THE NOTATION?

THE CHANT uses a special sort of musical notation, called square notation, from which modern staff notation has developed. The range of the melodies is generally small, so you only need a four-lined staff:



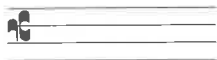
Two clefs are used,

the DOH clef



and

the FAH clef



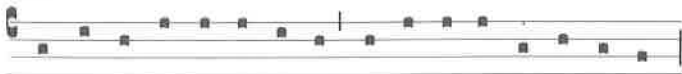
These clefs may be found on different lines:



They always indicate the position of Doh or Fah.

The chant is sung at whatever pitch suits the range of the melody and the singers' voices: the Doh is therefore 'movable' to any pitch (i.e. *relative* as opposed to *absolute* pitch is indicated by the DOH and FAH clefs).

To choose a suitable pitch for a given chant, look at the highest note and the lowest note of your piece and decide where these two notes can be sung most comfortably by your choir so that the piece is neither too high nor too low. Then see how the position of these notes is related to the position of the clef. For example, here is the opening of the Compline hymn, 'Te lucis' (To thee before the close of day):



The fourth note is the highest note and the last note is the

lowest. To accommodate both these notes comfortably you could take C for the high note and F for the low. The DOH clef is actually marking the same line as the highest note, so Doh is C, and your starting-note will be G. If, however, your choir found this too high, you might take B $\flat$  for the highest note and E $\flat$  for the lowest. The Doh would then be B $\flat$ , and your starting-note F.

*Remember:* there is always a semitone between the line with the DOH (or the FAH) clef and the space immediately beneath it (Doh-Te, or Fah-Me). It was, in fact, the need to remind singers of the exact place of the semitone that gave rise to these two clef signs. In modern staff notation they have been transformed into the viola clef and the bass clef, and they show absolute, not relative pitch.

## 6

## NOTE FORMS

THE DIFFERENT note forms used in chant notation are thought to originate from signs used by tenth-century scribes to sketch the movements of the choirmaster's hand, which was raised or lowered according to the direction of the melody. In earlier centuries the chant was entirely an oral art, sung from a carefully memorised repertoire.

### 6.1 Single Notes

The choirmaster raised his hand obliquely to show a high note – just as we would do instinctively – and he lowered it to show a low note. In the tenth century these movements were sketched on the parchment like this:

high      lōw      lōw

By the fourteenth century these signs had been thickened and stylized into the following shapes:

- |   |                        |                            |
|---|------------------------|----------------------------|
| ◩ | VIRGA                  | originally a high note     |
| ■ | SQUARE PUNCTUM         | originally a low note      |
| ◆ | LOZENGE-SHAPED PUNCTUM | also originally a low note |

To give you some practice in singing from the four-lined stave with single notes, here are a few examples in Latin and in English:

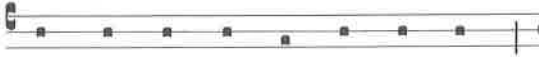
*Example 1*

HYMN FOR TERCE

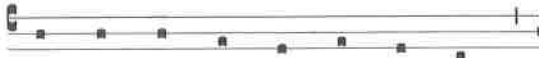
Take C for Doh, so that your starting-note will be A.



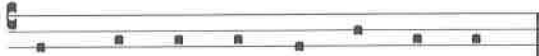
Nunc San-cte no - bis Spi - ri - tus.  
*Come Ho - ly Ghost, with God the Son,*



U - num Pa - tri cum Fi - li - o,  
*And God the Fa - ther, ev - er one;*



Di-gná - re promptus ín - ge - ri,  
*Shed forth thy grace with - in our breast,*



No - stro re - fú - sus pé - cto - ri.  
*And dwell with us a read - y guest.*



used to describe the tenth-century notation, shown by strokes, dots and wavy lines, which preceded the square notation of the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries, from which modern chant notation is derived. Each neum has a special name, but one doesn't have to know these names to be able to sing the chant. They are given because it is rather fun to know what they were called.

i) *Two-Note Neums*

 **PODATUS**      low-high

 **CLIVIS**      high-low

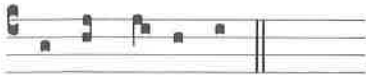
And now some short phrases for you to sing, using two-note neums. Take A for Doh in all three examples:



Al - le - lú - ia, al - le - lú - ia.



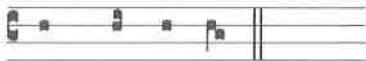
Al - le - lú - ia, al - le - lú - ia.



I - te, mis - sa est.  
De - o grá - ti - as.



I - te, mis - sa est.  
De - o grá - ti - as.




Praise ye the Lord.



Praise ye the Lord.

ii) *Three-Note Neums*

 TORCULUS      low-high-low

 PORRECTUS      high-low-high (note that the tip of the first note shows its position on the staff)

 SCANDICUS      low-high-higher

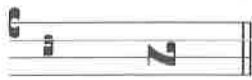
 SALICUS      low-high-higher

 CLIMACUS      high-low-lower

Now a few easy phrases to sing, using some of these groups; take C for Doh in these two examples:

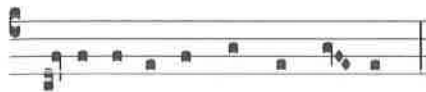
  
A - men.

  
A - men. \_\_\_\_\_


  
A - men.

  
A - men. \_\_\_\_\_

Take F for Doh in this example:



Gló-ri - a in ex-cél-sis De - o

  
Gló - ri - a in ex - cél - sis De - o

iii) *Four-Note Neums*



TORCULUS RESUPINUS

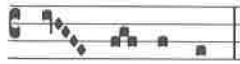
low-high-low-high



PORRECTUS FLEXUS

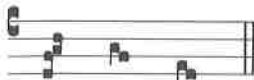
high-low-high-low

*Note:* All these basic forms may be modified and enlarged by the addition of extra notes. For example, the lozenge-shaped punctum is often used to add the notes of a descending scale:



e - lé - i - son.

Here are a few examples with extended groups. See if you can work them out, then look at the transcription into modern notation to check up.



Ky - ri - e



Ky - ri - e



Pa - scha



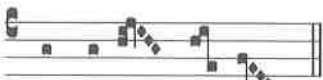
Pa - scha



Fa-ctus est re-pén-te de cae-lo so - nus



Fa - ctus est re - pén - te de cae - lo so - - nus





Ky-ri-e



Ky-ri-e

#### iv) *Special Forms*

 LIQUESCENT FORMS. The second note of each of these pairs is a *liquescent* note. Liquescents are used to indicate certain combinations of letters requiring special care in pronunciation, such as syllables ending in l, m, n, double letters, diphthongs, etc. The duration of a liquescent note is the same as for a non-liquescent note.

 QUILISMA. This tooth-edged note is usually found in combinations of ascending notes. It is usual to lengthen the note or notes immediately preceding it. The quilisma itself is sung lightly, leading to the following note.

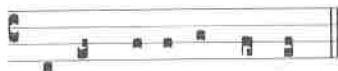
Some examples:



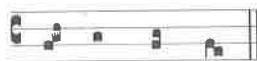
Lord have mer-cy up-on us.



Have mer-cy up-on me, O God, and hear-ken un-to my prayer.



Ho-sán-na in ex-cél-sis.



Sur-sum cor-da.



### v) *Accidental*

There is only one accidental in Gregorian Chant. This is the flattened seventh degree – Taw is sometimes sung instead of Te, usually though not always, when the melody is turning downwards, as in this example:



U-bi cá - ri - tas est ve - ra, De - us i - bi est.

The symbol for the flat is  $\flat$  and it applies throughout the *word* in which it occurs. It is cancelled by (a) the beginning of a new word in the text; (b) a natural sign  $\natural$ ; (c) an editorial division: the quarter-bar or half-bar signs.

### vi) *The Guide*

This little sign  $\downarrow$  placed at the end of the staff shows the singer the pitch of the first note on the next line. It is also sometimes placed before a change of clef, and again its meaning is to indicate the pitch of the next note.

## 7


## DURATION

THE VALUE of an individual note is roughly the duration of a single short syllable in normal speech, but there is room for some flexibility, as recent research into the rhythmic interpretation of the earliest sources has shown. And too rigid an application of the 'equal notes' principle can spoil the flow of the melody.

In some modern editions lengthening is shown in three ways:

- i)  $\bullet$  A dot placed after a note doubles its duration.
- ii)  $\blacksquare$  Doubling of duration may also be shown by the addition of a second note at the same pitch. Each

note, however, should be separately sounded, with gentle repercussion. The same is true if three notes are placed side by side at the same pitch ■■■

- iii)  A horizontal line (episema) placed above one or several notes shows a *slight lengthening*.

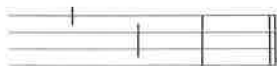
## 8

### PHRASING

THE BEST guide to good phrasing is the Latin or English text. Some modern editions of the chant have additional signs to show the singers the phrase units of the music: the quarter, half, whole and double bar.

QUARTER BAR: this shows the smallest phrase unit; avoid taking a breath at this point.

HALF BAR: this indicates a more important phrase unit; normally a breath may be taken here.



WHOLE BAR: the end of a period; this should be followed by *one or two rests*.

DOUBLE BAR: the end of a section.

## 9

### A WORD ABOUT MODALITY

MUCH of the attractiveness of the chant is due to its ancient modality. This early music does not follow the familiar patterns of major or minor melodic structure. Instead of having DOH or LAH as its two possible centres of gravity, this music evolves around four different centres: RAY, ME, FAH and SOH. Medieval musical theory recognised EIGHT MODES with each of these four notes as the tonic, or 'home' note of

two of them. In some modern editions of the chant the mode of each piece is indicated by a number to the left of the first staff of music. In theory, the odd numbers, Modes 1, 3, 5 and 7, were the *authentic* modes, and used a range rising one octave above the tonic, whereas the even numbers, Modes 2, 4, 6 and 8, were the *plagal* modes, with the range of one octave starting four notes below the tonic. In practice, however, the modes are characterised more by the way the melody is structured, the typical snatches of melody, the beginnings of phrases, the phrase endings, and so on, rather than by a mere question of range.

### The Eight Modes

- RAY (PROTUS)            Modes 1 and 2 have RAY as their tonic, ('home' note, or final).  
                                 Mode 1 uses LAH as its principal reciting note, or *dominant*.  
                                 Mode 2 uses FAH as its principal reciting note.
- ME (DEUTERUS)         Modes 3 and 4 have ME as their tonic.  
                                 Mode 3 uses DOH (occasionally TE) as its principal reciting note.  
                                 Mode 4 uses LAH as its principal reciting note.
- FAH (TRITUS)           Modes 5 and 6 have FAH as their tonic.  
                                 Mode 5 uses DOH as its principal reciting note.  
                                 Mode 6 uses LAH as its principal reciting note.
- SOH (TETRARDUS)      Modes 7 and 8 have SOH as their tonic.  
                                 Mode 7 uses RAY as its principal reciting note.  
                                 Mode 8 uses DOH as its principal reciting note.

# 10

## THE EIGHT MODAL SCALES

ALTHOUGH not every piece of chant conforms to the norms of these eight modal scales, they do give a fair idea of the theoretical range of each mode.

**AUTHENTIC**  
MODE 1

RAY  
(PROTUS)

tonic dominant

**PLAGAL**  
MODE 2

tonic dominant

MODE 3

ME  
(DEUTERUS)

tonic dominant

MODE 4

tonic dominant

MODE 5

FAH  
(TRITUS)

tonic dominant

MODE 6

tonic dominant

MODE 7

SOH  
(TETRARDUS)

tonic dominant

MODE 8

tonic dominant





MODE TWO

2 De-us (etc.) ter - rae.  
 2 Al-le - lú - ia vi - am pru-dén-ti - ae.

MODE THREE

3 Tan-tum er-go sa-cra-mén-tum  
 A-men  
 3 Dum cla-má - rem ad Dó-mi - num  
 and a-sleep we may rest in peace.

MODE FOUR


4 Cre-do in u-num De - um tu - ae.  
*(examples of Mode 4 transposed)*  
 4 Lae - tén-tur cae - li quó - ni - am ve-nit.

MODE FIVE

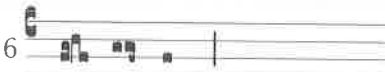
5   
A - gnus De - i

  
(e) jus.


5   
Al - le - lú - ia

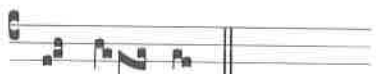
  
e - i

MODE SIX

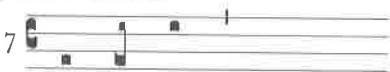
6   
San - ctus

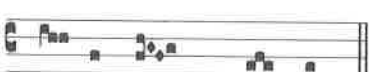
  
de Ma - rí - a Vír - gi - ne.

6   
Ré - qui - em


  
ae - ter - nam.

MODE SEVEN


7   
Ho - sán - na

  
já - nu - is clau - sis.

7   
In pa - ra - dí - sum

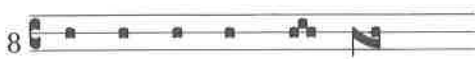
  
al - le - lu - ía.

MODE EIGHT

8   
Ve - ni Cre - á - tor Spí - ri - tus

  
A - men





Con-fir-ma hoc De - us



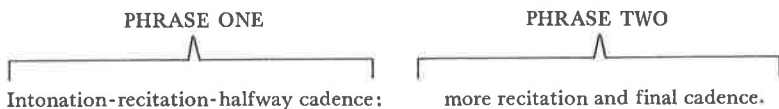
doth live and reign e - ter-nal-ly.

# 11

## PSALMODY MADE EASY

PSALMODY is at the very heart of the chant, so do try to get lots of practice in singing the psalms. There is one psalm-tone for each mode, and each tone has one simple form and several more elaborate forms. There is generally a choice of final cadences, or endings (sometimes also called 'differences'), but the books always tell you clearly which one to use. The psalm-tone always corresponds in mode (and in the choice of the final cadence) to the *antiphon*, which is a short refrain sung before and after the psalm, and which is a pointer to some aspect of the feast, or the Sunday, or the time of day when the service is being celebrated.

If you are a beginner, it is a good plan to start by singing through the psalm-tone once or twice on the note-names, then on 'la, la, la' several times, until you know it by heart, before you try to fit the words to it. It is fun to do this, and very relaxing. The psalm-tone is a neat little musical form, made up of two phrases that balance each other. Some of the psalm-tones are extremely beautiful with haunting modal melodies. Here is a plan of the general shape of a psalm-tone:



If the text of the first phrase is very long, you make a slight pause and drop your voice a tone or a minor third (according to which psalm-tone it is) about halfway through the phrase. This is called a 'flex', and is often indicated by this sign: † .

Here is an example of a psalm-tone, *Tone Five*:

The diagram shows a musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The staff is divided into two main sections: PHRASE ONE and PHRASE TWO. PHRASE ONE includes an 'Int.' (Introduction), 'Recit. & flex' (Recitation with a flex sign †), and a 'mediant cad.' (mediant cadence). PHRASE TWO includes a 'recit.' (recitation) and a 'final cadence'. The notation uses various note values and rests to represent the pitch and rhythm of the psalm-tone.

The mediant and final cadences may be shaped according to a variety of patterns. Basically they follow the accentuation of the text (in English the stresses) and can be *one-accent cadences*, or *two-accent cadences*, with or without one, two, or even three preparatory syllables. In the example shown above, we have a *one-accent cadence* as the mediant cadence, and a *two-accent cadence* as the final cadence, and no preparatory syllables.

## 12 WHERE DO YOU FIND THE PSALM-TONES?

THE EIGHT psalm-tones are given here for the sake of convenience. You can also find them clearly set out in the *Liber Usualis* with many examples of pointed psalms, but this is a book which it is becoming more and more difficult to procure. They can be found, too, in the *Antiphonale Monasticum* and the *Psalterium Monasticum*, and for English psalmody in *The Psalm-Tones - Extract from the Sarum Psalter* (Wantage, 1959). The *New Jubilate Deo* (CTS 1978) contains examples of one psalm and one canticle written out in full.



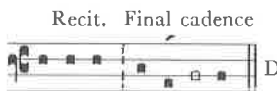
Don't be alarmed by such an array of final cadences! It's really *much* simpler than it looks. And several of the psalm-tones only have one ending. When there is a choice, as here, the final cadences are often given letter labels for easy identification. A capital letter indicates that the last note is the tonic or final of the mode. The choice of ending will depend upon the antiphon that precedes and follows the psalm: the ending that leads most naturally into the repeat of the antiphon is usually the one indicated in the service-books. You don't have to work this out for yourself: the editors have done it for you! See page 32 for an illustrated example of how to find out which psalm-tone to sing and which final cadence is the right one.

*N.B.* In English psalmody the final cadences are often indicated by arabic numerals.

**ONE**  
TONE TWO

Mediant cadence: one accent.

Final cadence: one accent with one preparatory syllable.



### TONE THREE

Mediant cadence: two accents, with anticipation of the second accent in the case of dactyls.

Final cadences: one accent with either one, two, or three preparatory syllables.

The main staff for Tone Three is divided into four sections: 'Int.', 'Recit. & flex', 'mediant cad.', and 'Recit.'. A dagger symbol (†) is placed below the 'Recit. & flex' section, and an asterisk symbol (\*) is placed below the 'mediant cad.' section. To the right, five detailed musical examples are shown, each with a label: 'b', 'a', 'a2', 'g', and 'g2'. These examples illustrate various final cadences for the tone, showing different combinations of preparatory syllables and accents.

### TONE FOUR

Mediant cadence: one accent with two preparatory syllables.

Final cadences: one accent, or one accent with three preparatory syllables. In cadence E the accent is anticipated in the case of dactyls.

The main staff for Tone Four is divided into four sections: 'Int.', 'Recit. & flex', 'mediant cad.', and 'Recit.'. A dagger symbol (†) is placed below the 'Recit. & flex' section, and an asterisk symbol (\*) is placed below the 'mediant cad.' section. To the right, two detailed musical examples are shown, each with a label: 'g' and 'E'. These examples illustrate final cadences for the tone, showing one accent with three preparatory syllables (g) and one accent with two preparatory syllables (E).



**TONE SEVEN**

Mediant cadence: two accents.

Final cadences: two accents.

The main staff for Tone Seven is divided into four sections: 'Int.', 'Recit. & flex', 'mediant cad.', and 'Recit.'. A dagger symbol (†) is placed below the 'Recit. & flex' section, and an asterisk symbol (\*) is placed below the 'mediant cad.' section. To the right, five detailed musical examples are shown, labeled 'a' through 'd'. Each example shows a short melodic phrase with square notes and accents (indicated by slanted lines above the notes). Example 'a' is the most complete, showing the final cadence with two accents. Examples 'b' and 'c' show variations of the cadence. Example 'c2' is a second variation of 'c'. Example 'd' shows a different variation of the cadence.

**TONE EIGHT**

Mediant cadence: one accent.

Final cadences: one accent with two preparatory syllables.

The main staff for Tone Eight is divided into four sections: 'Int.', 'Recit. & flex', 'mediant cad.', and 'Recit.'. A dagger symbol (†) is placed below the 'Recit. & flex' section, and an asterisk symbol (\*) is placed below the 'mediant cad.' section. To the right, four detailed musical examples are shown, labeled 'G', 'G2', 'a', and 'c'. Each example shows a short melodic phrase with square notes and accents. Example 'G' is the most complete, showing the final cadence with one accent and two preparatory syllables. Example 'G2' is a variation of 'G'. Examples 'a' and 'c' show other variations of the cadence.

How does one know which psalm-tone to use and which final cadence is the correct one? Here is an example, in Latin and in English, from Lauds and Vespers for Easter and during the Octave from the *Antiphonale Monasticum*, (p. 453):

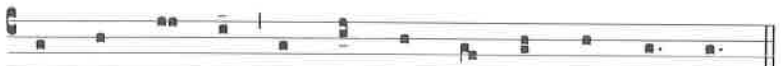
1 Ant. VIII G



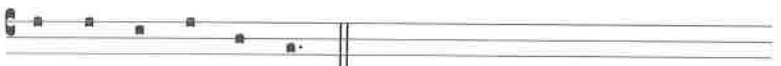
Ange - lus au - tem Dó - mi - ni \*de - scén - dit de cac - lo,



et ac - cé - dens re - vól - vit lá - pi - dem, et se - dé - bat



su - per e - um, al - le - lú - ia, al - le - lú - ia.



E u o u a e.

Ps. xciiij Dominus regnavit

The indications at the top, '1 Ant. VIII G' may be interpreted as follows: 'First antiphon, Tone Eight, cadence G'. And in order to make sure that you get the right ending for the psalm that follows, the notes are given at the conclusion of the antiphon, with the vowels taken from the last words of the *Gloria Patri*, i.e., 'Saeculorum. Amen'. The cantors intone *Dominus regnavit*, using Tone Eight, and sing as far as the mediant cadence. Then the choir enters. Here is the same example from Palmer's edition of *Easter Week* (p. 3):





● In the New Testament canticles (Magnificat, Nunc Dimittis, Benedictus) the intonation is used for *every verse*, unless (as in the Nunc Dimittis) some of the verses are so short as to make this impossible.

● The Cantor intones the first verse, and sings as far as the mediant cadence, often shown in the text by an asterisk \*. One side of the choir finishes the first verse. The verses may then be alternated between the two sides of the choir.

● At the mediant cadence there is a slight pause, to allow the sound of the music to die gently away. The length of this pause will depend upon the acoustics of the church, but should not normally be longer than about five syllables. (In the twelfth century it is recorded that at Cluny the monks used to pause at this point for the space of three 'Our Fathers', whilst they meditated! Peter the Venerable reduced it to a 'pausa mediocris').

● There should be no break at all between the verses, but the opposite side of the choir should take care not to come in too soon or to overlap with the final cadence of the preceding verse.

● Try to sing lightly and flexibly with a beautiful legato. Let the rhythm of the words guide your singing, particularly in English, so as to avoid that unnatural staccato typewriter effect one sometimes hears. It can help the phrasing if you make a gentle crescendo up to the mediant cadence, and a decrescendo towards the final cadence.

● Try to balance the two sides of the choir, so that the general effect is one of a succession of flowing waves, merging into each other.



Like certain Jewish psalm-tones, the TONUS PEREGRINUS has two reciting notes, and this may perhaps explain its name – the ‘wandering tone’. The first phrase uses LAH for recitation and the second SOH.

The mediant cadence is a one-accent cadence, with three preparatory syllables in the Roman form. The final cadence is a one-accent cadence with one syllable of preparation.

### Tonus Irregularis

PHRASE ONE PHRASE TWO

† \*

Le vá - vi ó-cu - los me - os in món - tes, \*unde ve - ni - et  
*I will lift up mine eyes un - to the hills.\**

au - xí - li - um mi - hi.  
*from whence com - eth my help.*

In this hauntingly beautiful tone the mediant cadence is a straightforward one-accent cadence. For the final cadence, you simply fit the four last syllables to the four cadential notes, irrespective of accents or stresses.



for Advent and Christmas, such as 'Creator of the stars of night' (EH 1) or 'Come thou Redeemer of the earth' (EH 14) would be a good choice for a start, especially as people seem to expect the medieval sound at Christmas, and they certainly enjoy it. Tell them that they are singing Christian music that has been sung for hundreds of years and has stood the test of time, music that unites us with the undivided Church of the early centuries.

You might also include the Advent Prose 'Drop down, ye heavens, from above' (EH 735), and let the congregation join in the refrain, with the choir singing the verses, if they are experienced enough. When these hymns and the prose have been learnt you could move on to the hymns and proses of other seasons of the year. After this, you will be ready to explore further afield. For the Anglican Eucharist, Part XII of the *English Hymnal* gives English texts for all the Sundays and Feast Days. Full-scale adaptations of these texts to the music of the Sarum Rite might be too difficult at this stage, though they are obtainable from St Mary's Press, Wantage. English adaptations of the *Ordinaries* have been published by the Plainsong and Mediaeval Music Society and by St Mary's Press. The *New English Hymnal* contains a fresh liturgical section with a number of useful chant items: see below p. 48.

If you sing in a Roman Catholic parish which doesn't normally sing the chant it would be a good plan to start with something as well-known as the little Easter 'Alleluia' (*New Jubilate Deo*, p. 15), or the 'Tantum ergo' (*NJD*, p. 33), or the 'Salve Regina' (*NJD*, p. 42 - an example of much later chant). Then you could teach your choir to sing an easy, straightforward Kyrie, Sanctus or Agnus Dei. (Those in *New Jubilate Deo* are simplicity itself). Try to avoid overdoing the 'Missa de Angelis', though it is nice to have something as well-known as that to fall back on. Don't ever *begin* with something as long as a Gloria or a Credo, as this will discourage by its length. And when you do tackle a piece as

long as that, take one small phrase at a time, singing first the tune, then reciting the words rhythmically (not forgetting to translate them!) and then putting words and music together.

Introduce each short piece of the Ordinary into the Mass as it is learnt, and it doesn't matter if the rest of the Mass is being said in English. If possible, keep on singing the new piece for several weeks running, to get your singers thoroughly accustomed to these additions to their normal repertoire. And gradually you will build up a complete Mass Ordinary, and possibly several, so that you can ring the changes.

If it is possible to have a five-minute run-through with the congregation before the service begins, it is quite remarkable what a lot can be learnt. It is a good plan to start with something very short and direct, like the responses after the readings:

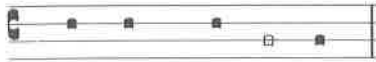


Ÿ Ver-bum Dó - mi - ni.  
R̥ De - o grá - ti - as.



Ÿ The word of the Lord.  
R̥ Thanks be to God

Sing them both in Latin and in English, and keep people on their toes, singing the right response in the same language as your versicle. The response should be thundered back with enormous energy, not sung in an apathetic half-hearted whisper. Another response, which is almost identical (and an excellent one with which to start your congregational practice) is in the Easter Vigil:



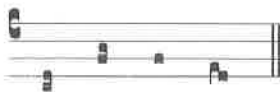
Ÿ Lu-men Chris - ti.  
R̥ De - o grá - ti - as.



Ÿ Christ our light.  
R̥ Thanks be to God.

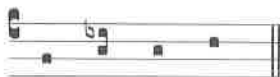
It is a magnificent sound when the whole assembly sings this joyful Easter response!

When the congregation can manage these short responses, and the Amens, and the Preface Dialogue (*New Jubilate Deo*, p. 15), you will be ready to start on some of the easier pieces of the Ordinary, as you did with the choir. It won't be long before everyone is able to sing some of the more developed pieces, such as the beautiful 'Kyrie IX' Cum Jubilo (*NJD*, p. 57). I taught this Kyrie recently to a large group of schoolchildren who had never heard the chant. We started by learning the little phrase



e - lé - i - son.

which occurs six times in the piece. The children went through the piece on their music sheets and counted how many times, and noticed where it was found. Then they learnt the other little phrase



e - lé - i - son.

and looked to see where it occurred and how many times (three times). Then a small group of young adults sang through the whole piece, and the children chimed in with their 'eleison' each time. By using this method they very easily learnt a fully developed piece – with fun, little effort, and absolutely no difficulty.

All the above is work you can do with a large group of people. When your smaller group of singers (forming the choir) is ready for more of a challenge, let them begin to study some of the pieces of the Proper: first the Introits and Communions, then the easier Alleluias (without the verse, at first), then the Graduals (possibly by solo singers to begin with) and finally the Offertories (which are quite tricky although they look deceptively easy). The music can all be found in the new *Graduale Romanum*.



As you progress, you can try to sing a complete service in chant: Compline, for example, the last of the Day Hours, and a service that has been popular for many centuries. It is a very suitable choice for a late evening service. You can sing the PMMS English version of Compline, or the new Latin version from the *Liber Cantualis*, which has one or two psalms instead of three. Or you can sing the old monastic version from the *Antiphonale Monasticum*.

## 14 ADVENTUROUS CHANTING

IN ITS journey through the centuries, the massive repertoire of the chant has appeared in different versions in different parts of Europe. There are also specific chants that are unique to a particular church, cathedral or religious order. This additional repertoire of great richness is there to be explored, and it may well contain pieces that are particularly appropriate to the needs of your choir. Most parishes at some time wish to celebrate a very special occasion and to mark the continuity of Christian worship in that church. What could be more appropriate than to search out some chants that would have been sung there for hundreds of years? A few years ago, Gloucester Cathedral celebrated the thousandth anniversary of the enthronement of Abbot Serlo by singing Vespers from an office book that had come from the Cathedral itself.

One easily accessible source is a modern edition of hymns by the Benedictines of Stanbrook with melodies taken from English regional manuscripts - Ely, Worcester, Peterborough, York, Salisbury and many others. Then there are the fine facsimile editions by Walter H. Frere of the *Antiphonale* and the *Graduale* from Salisbury Cathedral, containing the music of the Divine Office and the Mass, according to the Sarum Rite, and Nick Sandon has recently published *The Use of Salisbury, 1 The Ordinary of the Mass; 2 The Proper of the Mass in Advent*.

## 14.1 The Sarum Rite

In the British Isles the medieval Sarum Rite, which had originated with the clergy of Salisbury Cathedral, came to be adopted in a great number of cathedrals and churches, as far afield as Elgin in Scotland and Dublin in Ireland. *The Use of Sarum* (edited by Walter H. Frere) records exactly the liturgical practice in Salisbury Cathedral during the Middle Ages until well into the sixteenth century. In fact, by the time it ceased to be used, this magnificent rite had become almost universal in the British Isles.

With the renewal of interest in early music of all sorts and with the growing realisation of the need for greater authenticity, musicians are returning more and more to our native sources and trying to reconstruct the great liturgies of the past. A number of these have been broadcast recently by the BBC. A useful anthology entitled *Medieval Music* (in the collection *The Oxford Anthology of Music*) by W. Thomas Marrocco and Nicholas Sandon gives a complete reconstruction of Mass for Easter Sunday as it would have been celebrated during the Middle Ages in Salisbury Cathedral.

Other parts of the country also had their special rites: York did, and so did Lincoln, and Hereford, and Bangor. Some of the religious orders also had special rites. So if, for example, there used to be a Dominican Priory in your neighbourhood, the choir would be sure to have followed the thirteenth-century customs of the Dominican Order. Before you start searching for suitable material, check the history of your church or diocese.

## 14.2 Alternatim

Another whole area of adventurous chanting is the field of *alternatim* – the reconstruction of polyphonic or organ music involving the alternation of sections of chant with sections of measured music. If your choir is used to singing Renaissance music, search out some of the hymn settings

by composers such as Tallis or Palestrina, and sing the alternate verses *using the chant of the period*. For you must remember that the style of chant performance in the sixteenth century was entirely different from the way in which the chant is usually sung today. By and large, singers today are all attempting to reproduce what they think the chant would have sounded like when notation first appeared: roughly, in what they consider to have been the style of the tenth century. The evidence seems to show that in the tenth century, when the chant was still a living oral tradition, it was sung quite fast, with lightness and delicacy and rhythmic variety. Over the centuries, however, the *tempo* had become progressively slower, so that if you want to give a really *authentic* performance of a Palestrina or Tallis hymn-setting, the chant sections will have to be sung in slow, equal notes, very firmly and deliberately. The result, far from being boring, is astonishingly splendid and very moving. It is a marvellous experience to sing it in this way, and it is not difficult to involve the whole congregation in the singing of these sections.

The same principle of authenticity applies if your choir is called upon to sing the chant sections in a performance of a seventeenth century organ mass, such as Couperin's 'Messe pour les paroisses'. It would be a complete anachronism to sing the chant sections in these performances as if your choir was Solesmes under Dom Gajard. Each note of the chant should really be sung *about as slowly as one bar of the music*, and there would be a semi-metrical interpretation of certain words, particularly the dactyls. Incredible! Yes, but extremely effective and moving in performance.

That sort of reconstruction requires a great deal of homework, but the standards of authenticity in performance are now such that we cannot get away with howling anachronisms in liturgical music.

Ideally, too, these works should be performed in their liturgical context.

### **14.3 Liturgical Drama**

One more suggestion: you might also enjoy celebrating a church festival, such as Easter, or Christmas, or Epiphany, by performing one of the little plainchant dramas which so enriched the liturgical lives of Christians in earlier centuries. These, too, are best performed in their liturgical context.

### **14.4 Singing the chant today**

But now, to return to singing the chant from the service books of today. The official service books of the Roman Catholic Church, including the 1974 *Graduale Romanum*, embody the patient research that has been carried out by the Monks of Solesmes over the past century. They bear the well-known rhythmic signs of Solesmes which, since 1908, have represented a school of interpretation that has carried the chant to every corner of the globe.

The work of analysing and interpreting the earliest manuscript sources continues, and scholars are gradually discovering more and more about the meaning of the original neum notation. Minute details of the astonishingly flexible rhythm of the chant are slowly being uncovered, and some of the techniques of this ancient and highly-wrought art are at last yielding up their secrets. The newest editions of the service-books are beginning to incorporate some of the more recent findings: take, for example, the new *Liber Hymnarius* (Solesmes, 1983), which introduces modified note-forms in order to give a more faithful interpretation of the early neum notation.

# 15 SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

## 15.1 **Latin Service Books and other Chant Collections**

The most easily accessible sources of the chant in Latin for contemporary use are the following:

*Graduale Romanum* (Solesmes, 1974). This contains all the music for the Mass according to the new Roman rite and calendar.

*Graduale Triplex* (Solesmes, 1979). The same as the above, but with the early neums of the schools of St Gall and of Laon added in below and above the square notation. A book for choirmasters and cantors.

*Kyriale* (Solesmes, 1985). An attractive hardback, replacing the little paperback Desclée edition of 1961.

*Liber Hymnarius* (Solesmes, 1983). This is Volume II of the new *Antiphonale Romanum* (Vol. I is to be published shortly). It is an important service book, containing not only the hymns for the Divine Office throughout the year, but also Invitatories, Invitatory Psalms (with full notation), and a number of florid Responsories.

*Ordo Missae in Cantu* (Solesmes, 1975). An altar book, containing the Greeting, Penitential Rite (including the new rite of the Blessing and Sprinkling with Holy Water), the Gloria and Credo intonations, the four Eucharistic Prayers, the Communion Rite and the Concluding Rites.

*Processionale Monasticum* (Solesmes, 1983). This is a reprint of the old 1893 edition but with neums added to a number of pieces from the *Hartker Antiphoner* (St Gall MSS 390-391). A splendid collection of processional chants that it is normally difficult to lay one's hand upon.

*Psalterium Monasticum* (Solesmes, 1981). The new monastic Latin Psalter, using the text of the New Vulgate (Rome, 1979). The distribution of the 150 psalms is

given as in the Rule of St Benedict, together with three other possible methods of distribution; also additional antiphons, blessings at Vigils, a new series of Short Lessons, etc.

## 15.2 Chant Anthologies

Berry, Mary: *Cantors - A Collection of Gregorian Chants* (Cambridge University Press, 1979; third printing 1987). The special feature of this collection is that it contains both Latin and English words, so that every piece can be easily sung in either language.

*Liber Cantualis* (Solesmes, 1978). A good selection of chants taken mainly from the old *Liber Usualis*. It includes several Mass Ordinaries (new Mass Rite), and the new Compline.

*New Jubilate Deo* (CTS, 1978) *Jubilate Deo*, originally launched in 1974, was a collection of traditional chants for use at Mass and elsewhere in the Liturgy. This new and redesigned edition includes Mass IX and a simple *Asperges me*, but most importantly an English translation of the sung texts.

### ● For those wishing to refer to the early neum notation:

*Graduale Triplex* (see above, 15.1).

*Graduel Neumé* (Solesmes, 1972). This is a facsimile edition of Dom Eugène Cardine's own 1908 *Graduale*, on each page of which he has drawn the early neums from the school of St Gall, for the purpose of study and comparison with modern transcriptions into square notation.

*Offertoriale Triplex* (Solesmes, 1985). This is a revised edition of Dr Karl Ott's *Offertoriale* (Paris, 1935) and it includes all the Offertory Verses not to be found in the *Graduale*. Neums from Laon MS 239 and Einsiedeln MS 121 have been added above and below the staff.

### ● For the Sarum Rite:

*Antiphonale Sarisburiense*. A reproduction in facsimile of a manuscript of the thirteenth century with a Dissertation

and Analytical index, by Walter Howard Frere (PMMS, London, 1901-1924. Republished in 1966 by Gregg Press, Ltd., Farnborough, Hants.)

*Graduale Sarisburiense*. A reproduction in facsimile of a manuscript of the thirteenth century, with a Dissertation and Historical Index illustrating its development from the Gregorian Antiphonale Missarum, by Walter Howard Frere (PMMS, London, 1894. Republished in 1966 by Gregg Press, Ltd., Farnborough, Hants.)

*The Use of Salisbury* - Vol 1: *The Ordinary of the Mass*

Vol 2: *The Proper of the Mass in Advent*

edited by Nick Sandon (Newton Abbot, 1984, 1986). Two splendidly informative and practical volumes. The first of these gives the history of the rite followed by the full Latin text of the Ordinary of the Mass (the Celebrant's part), with rubrics in English. The Salisbury *Kyriale* follows, clearly set out using square notation. Vol 2 contains the Propers for both the Advent and Christmas seasons.

● **For examples of other English rites:**

*Hymnale* (Stanbrook Abbey Press, 1963). A collection of Office Hymns with melodies drawn from English sources.

● **For examples of liturgical reconstructions:**

*Medieval Music*, edited by W. Thomas Marrocco and Nicholas Sandon for The Oxford Anthology of Music (Oxford University Press, 1977). Contains the Procession before Mass and Mass for Easter Day in Salisbury Cathedral. Also the 'Play of Herod' from the Fleury Play Book (twelfth century). Unfortunately, the editors have adopted an ambiguous form of notation.

*All the modern Latin service books can be obtained from the Westminster Cathedral Bookshop, London or from the Newman Bookshop, Oxford. The Solesmes editions can also be obtained direct from Solesmes itself.*

### 15.3 **English Service Books and Chant Collections**

#### **By far the best-known of these is still**

- *The English Hymnal* (Oxford University Press, 1933), which includes a good selection of Office Hymns and Sequences (mainly drawn from English sources, principally Sarum).

*The New English Hymnal* (Norwich, 1986) contains a substantial new section of liturgical items, many of them greatly to be welcomed (the great *O Antiphons*, for example and the Christmas sequence *Laetabundus*.) It is to be hoped that the numerous errors in the chant notation will be corrected when the time comes for a more carefully-edited second edition.

- St Mary's Press, Wantage, has published a large collection of service books and leaflets, including many new plainchant adaptations for use with the most recent revisions of the Anglican Eucharist.

#### **Music for the Eucharist (1662)**

*Missa cum júbilo* with *Missa Alme Pater*  
*Ordinary for Sundays in Advent and Lent*

#### **Music for use with Series 3 (ICET)**

*Missa Lux et origo*  
*Missa normativa* (Gloria & Creed set to *Missa de Angelis*)  
*The Thanksgiving Series 3* (Wantage, 1976). This is an altar-size publication.

#### **Music for ASB Rite A**

*Missa de Angelis*  
*Simple setting A*  
*Simple setting B*

Wantage have also published settings of some of the music for the new Holy Week rites. Ask for their current catalogue. They have also produced a small collection of Sequences and Proses for the different seasons and feasts of the liturgical year.



● **Music available for the Choir Office in English includes:**

*Antiphons upon Benedictus*, adapted by G. H. Palmer (Wantage, 1958).

*Christmas Nocturns* (Wantage, 1963).

*Easter Nocturns from the Sarum Use* (Wantage, 1954).

*The Order of Tenebrae*, adapted by G. H. Palmer (Wantage, 1956).

*The Order of Vespers*, adapted by G. H. Palmer (New and Revised Edition, Wantage, 1968).

*The Plainchant of Holy Week according to the New Rite* (Wantage, 1964).

*The Sarum Psalter*, G. H. Palmer (New Edition, Revised and Enlarged, Wantage, 1963).

*Te Deum* ICET (Wantage, 1972): Solemn tone (Sarum)  
Simple tone (Ambrosian)

● **For the Psalm-Tones, the following leaflet is useful:**

*The Psalm Tones from the Sarum Psalter* by G. H. Palmer (Wantage, 1959).

There are many other items: consult the Catalogue of St Mary's Press, Wantage. St Mary's Press also publishes a certain number of organ accompaniments.

● Publications by the *Plainsong and Mediaeval Music Society*:

*The Ordinary of the Mass* - Sarum Kyriale and chants. English text. (Tenth edition, 1937).

*The Plainsong of the Holy Communion* ('The Little Red Book').

*An Order for Compline*.

Under the auspices of the PMMS a new *English Kyriale* is being prepared with a wide selection of Mass Ordinaries newly adapted to the present official texts. It is hoped that this will be published very shortly.

## 15.4 General Reading and works of reference

### (a) STYLE AND PERFORMANCE

#### ● For the earlier school of Solesmes:

Gajard, Joseph: *La Méthode de Solesmes* (Desclée, 1956).

Gajard, Joseph: *Notations sur la Rythmique Grégorienne* (Solesmes, 1972).

#### ● For the recent Solesmes research into the earliest neum notation:

Cardine, Eugène: *Gregorian Semiology* (Solesmes, 1970, English transl. 1982).

This important treatise should be studied in conjunction with the *Graduale Triplex* (see above 15.1).

#### ● For the theory of a mensural interpretation of early chant:

Vollaerts, J. W. A.: *Rhythmic Proportions in Early Medieval Ecclesiastical Chant* (Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1958).

#### ● For a critique of the above:

Cardine, Eugène: *Is Gregorian Chant Measured Music?* (Solesmes, 1964). Cardine adds in an appendix a critique of Dom Gregory Murray's book *Gregorian Chant according to the Manuscripts* (London, 1963), in which he concludes that this title is 'fundamentally wrong and can only lead inexpert readers astray'.

#### ● For an introduction to the performance of later chant:

M. Thomas More: 'The Performance of Plainsong in the Later Middle Ages and the Sixteenth Century' (*Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*, 92, 1965/66, pp. 121-134).

● **For the liturgical practice of Sarum, the following is indispensable:**

Frere, Walter Howard: *The Use of Sarum* (2 vols., Cambridge University Press, 1898. Republished in 1969 by Gregg Press, Farnborough, Hants.)

● **The following are useful handbooks for choirmasters and organists:**

Denis Stevens: *Plainsong Hymns and Sequences* (RSCM Study Notes, No. 12).

Michael Fleming: *The Accompaniment of Plainsong* (RSCM Study Notes, No. 11).

**And finally, for a more detailed study of the whole question of accompaniment, see**

Arnold, J. H.: *Plainsong Accompaniment* (Oxford University Press, 1927/1964).

Two books containing accompaniments for Latin plainchant have recently been published by Solesmes. They are:

*Graduale romanum comitante organo*,  
volumes 1, 2 and 3 (Solesmes, 1984, 1985 and 1986 respectively); and

*Liber Cantualis comitante organo* (Solesmes, 1981).

(b) HISTORY OF THE CHANT

Apel, Willi: *Gregorian Chant* (Indiana University Press, Bloomington and London, 1958; Fifth Printing, 1973). An excellent analytical study.

Corbin, Solange: *L'Eglise à la Conquête de sa Musique* (Paris, 1960). An excellent historical study of early liturgical practice written in a lively style, suitable for the non-specialist (provided he knows French!) but nevertheless a major work of scholarship.

*Historical Companion to Hymns Ancient and Modern*, edited by Maurice Frost (London, 1962). This contains much useful information about individual plainsong hymns.

- Hughes, Andrew: *Medieval Music* (University of Toronto Press, 1974). This is pure bibliography, comprising an extensive list of suggestions for anyone wishing to embark upon a serious historical study of the chant.
- The *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London, 1980). There is a splendid article on *Plainchant* and there are many others on specific topics connected with the chant.
- The *New Oxford History of Music, vol. ii: Early Medieval Music up to 1300*, edited by Dom Anselm Hughes (Oxford University Press, 1954, Second Impression, 1955) is a useful reference book.
- The *Pelican History of Music* (Penguin, 1971). The first volume contains a good introduction to the subject by Alec Robertson.
- Werner, Eric: *The Sacred Bridge* (Vol 1, London, 1959, Vol 2, New York, 1984). This important study shows the interdependence of the Jewish and Christian traditions of liturgical music.

# 16

## RECORDINGS

THE most comprehensive coverage of the chant on records still comes from the two great French Abbeys that used to record for French Decca: Saint-Pierre de Solesmes (Benedictine Monks) and Notre-Dame d'Argentan (Benedictine Nuns). Since the demise of French Decca, however, it is quite hard to come by some of these earlier recordings, which still hold their place in the catalogues as outstanding examples of an earlier style. For records are, of their nature, ephemeral: tastes and styles of performance evolve; newer recordings replace older ones; choirmasters change; record companies go out of business and new labels appear overnight. For a general survey of chant recordings from the very beginning (1904) up to the end of the seventies, see the present author's article 'Gregorian Chant: The restoration of the chant and seventy-five years of recording' in *Early Music* (Vol. 7, No. 2, April 1979, pp. 197-217; OUP).

SOLESMES, at present, under their new Choirmaster, Dom Jean Claire, are marketing their own records. Their newer series includes recordings of the Masses of Christmas and Easter, Quasimodo, the Requiem Mass and extracts from the Office for the Dead together with Masses of Our Lady and Proper Music for Benedictine monasteries. They can be obtained direct from Solesmes itself (see address section 17.2). The series is also being produced under licence for the English-speaking world with sleeve-notes, etc., in English. Distribution is by Creative Joys Inc., P.O. Box 1568, Orleans, MA 02653.

ARGENTAN have produced three new recordings over the past few years with Alpha Records: *Puer natus est nobis* (ACA 510 for the record and CACA 510 if you prefer a cassette), which contains the music for Midnight Mass and the Day Mass; *Alleluia* (ACA 525) with music for the Easter Vigil and Easter Day; and finally *Veni Creator* (ACA 531) with the Masses for the Vigil of Pentecost and for Whitsunday itself. These records are all easily obtainable in England.

If you are a beginner I do recommend the cassette entitled *Cantors* made by the Westminster Cathedral Choir under Stephen Cleobury (Cambridge University Press, ISBN 0-521 23773-4). All the pieces in the anthology of the same name (see above, 15.2) have been recorded, so you can follow them in the book while listening to the cassette.

The German Archiv series *The Gregorian Chant* is still available, with recordings from *Einsiedeln* in Switzerland (2553 131), *Santo Domingo de Silos* (2533 163) and *Montserrat* in Spain (2533 158), and *Milan* (Ambrosian Chant) (2533 284) in Italy. Santo Domingo has a most beautiful example of the Lamentations as sung in Holy Week, performed by a solo cantor. Montserrat gives the rarely-heard responses for Nocturns of the Nativity. A further disc in the same series comes from Münsterschwarzach in Germany, under Father Joppich: chants for Palm Sunday (2533 320). Archiv's most recent chant recording, *Anglo-Saxon Easter*, made for the occasion of the British Museum exhibition "The Golden Age of Anglo-Saxon Art 966-1066" contains chants and tropes from the Winchester Troper sung by the Schola Gregoriana of Cambridge, (Digital Stereo 413546-1; Cassette, 413546-4). And if you are interested in hearing some of the earliest recordings of Gregorian Chant, Discant Recordings, c/o Professor Nick Sandon, Music Department, University College, Cork, Cork, Republic of Ireland, or from The Schola Gregoriana of Cambridge, 124 Cambridge Road, Barton CB3 7AR.

*Company.* The album is available by mail order from Discant Recordings, Exeter, Devon, or from The Schola Gregoriana of Cambridge, 124 Cambridge Road, Barton CB3 7AR.

There are numerous other sources of recordings of Gregorian Chant and many Abbeys, both in England and on the Continent - including St Cecilia's Abbey, Ryde - have produced their own souvenir records, sometimes privately.

The privately produced records are usually on sale at the monasteries of origin. All the others can be obtained at any retailer, or from A. R. Mowbray & Co. Ltd., 28 Margaret Street, London WIN 7LB.

# 17

## APPENDIX

17.1 SOME ASSOCIATIONS which promote the study and performance of the chant:

### **The Plainsong and Mediaeval Music Society**

Secretary: Miss Catherine Harbor,  
c/o Turner,  
72 Brewery Road,  
London N7 9NE

### **The Gregorian Association**

Chairman: Phillip Woolley, Esq.,  
195 Conisborough Crescent,  
London, SE6 2SF

### **The Schola Gregoriana of Cambridge**

124 Cambridge Road, Barton, Cambridge, CB3 7AR

### **Consociatio Internationalis Musicae Sacrae**

20/A, Piazza S. Agostino, Rome, Italy

### **Associazione Internazionale Studi di Canto Gregoriano**

Segretaria: Via Casalmaggiore, 58,  
1-26100 Cremona,  
Italy

## 17.2 SPECIALIST PUBLISHERS, DISTRIBUTORS and BOOKSELLERS

**Desclée:** see Solesmes below

### **Discant Recordings**

c/o Professor Nick Sandon,  
Music Department,  
University College,  
CORK,  
Cork, Republic of Ireland

**Gregg Press** publications may be obtained from:

Information Publications International,  
White Swan House,  
Godstone, Surrey, RH9 8LW

**Newman Bookshop**, 87 St Aldate's, Oxford OX1 1RB

### **Plainsong and Mediaeval Music Society**

Secretary: Miss Catherine Harbor,  
c/o Turner,  
72 Brewery Road,  
London N7 9NE

**St Mary's Press**, Wantage, Oxfordshire, OX12 9DJ

**Solesmes and Desclée** editions may be obtained from:

Editions de l'Abbaye Saint-Pierre de Solesmes,  
72300 Sablé-sur-Sarthe, France

### **Stanbrook Abbey Press**

St Mary's Abbey, Callow End, Worcester

### **Westminster Cathedral Bookshop**

42 Francis Street, London, SW1