

**THE FIRST BOOK OF  
SONGS OR AIRS OF FOUR  
PARTS. 1605, PP. 4-45**

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The First Book of Songs Or Airs of Four Parts. 1605, pp. 4-45 by Francis Pilkington & G. E. P. Arkwright

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**FRANCIS PILKINGTON & G. E. P. ARKWRIGHT**

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Mss 535.1.5 (20)

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The Old English Edition. No. 11.

THE FIRST BOOK

OF

SONGS OR AIRS

OF FOUR PARTS.

BY

FRANCIS PILKINGTON.

1605.

EDITED BY

G. E. P. ARKWRIGHT.

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## Preface.

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THE object of this Edition is to present in an accessible form various works by English composers of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, which would otherwise be difficult to obtain.

It is intended to reprint a selection from the music hidden away in public and private libraries, which is almost unknown, except to antiquaries and collectors of rare books.

Each volume will be accompanied by Introductions, Biographical Notices, and references to the authorities whence information is obtained.

1595. Julij 10.

Supplicat &c. Franciscus Pilkinton scholaris facultatis musice e Collegio Lincolniensi ut gratiose secum dispensetur pro circuitu. Causa est quia instantibus jam Comitibus aliam congregationem expectare non potest. Hec dispensatio concessa est simpliciter<sup>a</sup>.

From the year 1602 till his death Pilkington was connected with the Cathedral at Chester. The researches of Dr. Bridge have shown that the first appearance of his name in the Treasurer's Books occurs at Midsummer, 1602, when he was Singing-man or Chaunter. At this date, it will be observed, the madrigal writer Thomas Bateson was Master of the Choristers at Chester, and Dr. Bridge suggests that it was the publication of Bateson's Book of Madrigals of 1604 which incited Pilkington to produce his first "Book of Songs or Ayres" in 1605, now reprinted for the first time.

In 1612 Pilkington was made Minor Canon<sup>b</sup>, and in the following year he published his second book.

This was—

"The | First Set | of | Madrigals | and Pastorals | of 3. 4. and 5. Parts. | Newly Composed | by Francis Pilkington, Bat | chelor of Muficke and Lutenift, and one of | the Cathedrall Church of Chrft and | bleffed Mary the Virgin | in Chefter. | London: | Printed for M. L. I. B. and T. S. | the Affignes of W. Barley. | 1613."

It is dedicated to Sir Thomas Smith of Hough, and is dated "from my mansion in the Monastery of Chester, the 25. day of September, 1612." There is a set in the British Museum of which the Altus, Bassus and Quintus books are dated 1613, and the Cantus and Tenor, 1614. This may be taken to show that a second impression or edition was issued in the year after its original publication. In this volume is a setting of "When Oriana walkt to take the air," words that Bateson had set for the "Triumphs of Oriana<sup>c</sup>."

<sup>a</sup> The "Circuitus" was one of the formalities preliminary to the taking of a Degree: see Clark's "Register of the University of Oxford," Vol. II. Part I, 1887. I am indebted to the Rev. T. Vere Bayne, Keeper of the Archives, for the copies of the Graces.

<sup>b</sup> Minor Canonries were often bestowed on Lay Clerks and Organists, as may be seen from investigating e.g. the Canterbury Cathedral Registers, printed by the Harleian Society. I do not believe that Minor Canons were necessarily Clergymen, in which opinion I am glad to be supported by Dr. Bridge, whose search in the Bishop's Register of Ordinations shows that Pilkington was not ordained at Chester. It is possible of course that he may have been ordained elsewhere.

<sup>c</sup> Bateson sent his setting too late for publication in the "Triumphs," and printed it in his 1604 set. Pilkington altered the words a little, writing after Elizabeth's death.



Two Hymns or Anthems which Pilkington contributed to Leighton's 'Tears or Lamentations,' appeared in 1614; one is in 4 parts, "Hidden O Lorde;" the other in 5, "High mighty God."

His last publication was—

"The | Second Set | Of Madrigals, and Pastorals, | of 3. 4. 5. and 6. Parts ;  
| Apt for Violls and Voyces: Newly Composed by Francis | Pilkington,  
Batchelar of Muficke, | and Lutenist, and Chaunter of the Cathedrall | Church  
of Christ, and blessed Mary the | Virgin, in Chester. | London: | Printed by  
Thomas Snodham, for M. L. | and A. B. 1624. | "

In the Dedication to Sir Peter Leighe of Lyme, Pilkington speaks of "this fruit of my now aged Muse," and says, "It will infinitely refresh my wearie steppes: and (happily) yet enlive my fainting spirits, that I may lagge on, yet one journey more, (if not in the middest) yet in the Rereward of those many expert and able servants of this Souveraigne Queen to doe her and you some further service." In this set there are twenty-seven pieces, the last being a Pavan for the Orpharion composed by the Earl of Derby. There are also, besides the Dedication, two commendatory Sonnets signed by William Webbe and Henry Harpur; the latter, as Dr. Bridge points out, had been once a Chorister in the Cathedral.

Pilkington's hope of "lagging on one journey more," if it meant that he proposed to bring out another book, came to nothing, for he never published anything again, though there is a little lute-music by him still existing in manuscript in the British Museum (Addl. MSS. 31,392) and in the Cambridge University Library (Dd. ii. 11). The latter contains compositions by him for a Mrs. Eliz. Murcott. Pilkington was made Precentor to the Cathedral in 1623, and died in 1638. No record of his burial has been discovered and his Will has not been found.

There is mention of other persons of the name of Pilkington in the Chester Treasurer's Books, who were probably members of his family. One of these, Thomas Pilkington, is identified by Dr. Bridge with that Thomas Pilkington who is mentioned by Anthony Wood under the heading of Francis Pilkington in his *Fasti Oxon.* anno 1595. He was musician to Henrietta Maria, and invented an Instrument called the Orphion<sup>4</sup>; not to be confounded with the Orpharion. He died, says Anthony Wood, at Wolverhampton, aged 35, "in the times of rebellion or usurpation."

<sup>4</sup> See Hawkins' *Hist. of Music*, 1776, Vol. III. p. 345.

In preparing this brief notice of Pilkington, I have largely depended upon a lecture by Dr. J. C. Bridge of Chester, read before the Chester Archaeological Society and printed in the Society's Journal, Part I., Vol. VI., and my best thanks are due to Dr. Bridge for permitting me to make use of his discoveries. He has also given me other valuable help, especially in making search for record of Pilkington's supposed Ordination, in the Bishop's Register. My thanks are also due to the Rev. T. Vere Bayne, Keeper of the Archives of the University of Oxford, for giving me copies of the Graces for Pilkington's Degree; and to Miss L. Middleton, whose Article in the Dictionary of National Biography I have made full use of, for helping me with information as to some of the authorities she there quotes.

It should be added that the words of four of the songs in this volume had been already printed in "England's Helicon," 1600. These are:—

"Beauty sat," there called "To Colin Clout," by "Shepherd Tony," words which I have ventured to alter. "With fragrant flowers," by Thomas Watson, there entitled, "The Nymphs meeting their May-Queen entertain her with this ditty." This was, no doubt, originally a Welcome-song for Queen Elizabeth, as the words of the refrain in England's Helicon appear as "O beauteous Queen of second Troy." It was probably adapted by Pilkington to welcome James I. somewhere on his journey to London in 1603, as James had not visited Chester before the appearance of this volume in 1605. "Down a down" is called "Phœbe's Sonnet, a reply to Montanus' passion;" it is by Thomas Lodge, and first appeared in his romance of "Rosalind" in 1590. Lastly, "Damelus' Song to his Diaphenia" is by Henry Constable.

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\* Not issued separately.