

**SELECT ENGLISH SONGS
AND DIALOGUES OF THE
16TH AND 17TH CENTURIES.
BOOK I; PP. 1-34**

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Select English songs and dialogues of the 16th and 17th centuries. Book I; pp. 1-34 by Arnold Dolmetsch

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ARNOLD DOLMETSCH

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N.Y. 212

of the 16th and 17th Centuries

BOOK I

Edited by ARNOLD DOLMETSCH

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Boosey

PREFACE.

THE preface to the first volume of "Select English Songs and Dialogues" should be read in connection with this one.

In the Songs dating from the second and third quarters of the seventeenth century, I have paid great attention to those Graces, Divisions and alterations of Rhythm which, according to Rules and Conventions understood by everyone at that time, did so modify the effect of the music.

Sometimes, one finds almost everything written out in full in the original. In other cases, the Graces are indicated by signs; but, usually, the English composers left these important details to the ingenuity and taste of the performer.

This publication being intended for practical use, I have endeavoured to make it as easy as possible to understand for the musicians of to-day.

Those alterations of Rhythm which hardly admit of discussion, I have incorporated in the text.

The Graces given out in full in the original I have more clearly defined as regards time-values.

Other Graces I have indicated by signs, the detailed explanation of which will be found at the end of each song.

Variations and Ornaments which could not be clearly indicated by signs or would have obscured the text, have also been given out at the end of the songs.

It should be understood that the execution of Ornaments is not bound by absolute laws. Some might be elaborated, others simplified or left out without departing from the proper style of the music.

The following Rules should be kept in mind by those who want to alter the Graces.

In all Trills, be they short or long, the auxiliary note, which is a semitone or a tone above the principal note, must be sounded first, on the beat, well accented, and should recur on the accented part of some subdivision of the bar.

In Mordents, the main note is sounded on the beat, and accented. The auxiliary note, generally a semitone below it, comes on the unaccented part of a subdivision of the bar.

If the Mordent is preceded by an Appoggiatura, either from below or above, the Appoggiatura comes on the beat and bears the accent. But one should always arrange for the main note to come on an accented subdivision of the bar.

All Graces should be very smoothly slurred, and kept a little softer than the main notes. The Appoggiaturas are the only exception to that Rule; they must be sung louder than the main note, the tone gradually diminishing and almost dying on the latter.

Expression should always be considered more important than strictness of time. The end of all phrases should be retarded.

In the Accompaniment all full chords should be played more or less *arpeggio*, the bass note taking the beat.

The addition of a Viola da Gamba or soft Violoncello playing the Bass would be an improvement to most of the songs, especially the early ones.

No. 1, "*O Death, Rock me asleep.*" There is a Tradition mentioned in Hawkins's "History of Music," and which nothing disproves, as far as I know, that this song was written by the unfortunate Queen Anne Boleyn, whilst in prison, waiting for her execution.

The present version is based upon the only early copy I know, that contained in Add. MSS. 15117 in the British Museum. It has an accompaniment for the Lute, in Tablature. The copy was made about 1615, by some person not very skilled in the art, for it contains many mistakes and obscure passages. After years of study, and comparisons with similar music of the same period, I have arrived at the present version, which cannot be far from the original.

No. 2, "*With my Love my Life was nestled.*"

No. 3, "*Love wing'd my hopes.*"

No. 4, "*What if my mistress.*"

These three songs are taken from Thomas Morley's "First Book of Ayres, or Little Short Songs to sing and play to the Lute and Base Viol"; printed in London in 1600.

This book is famous because it contains the original setting of "*It was a Lover and his Lass*" from Shakespeare's "As you like it."

Whilst the only known copy of this book was in England, the Shakespeare song was copied and various arrangements of it published.

This precious volume is now in America, in a private collection of Shakespeare relics, where I have been privileged to study it.

I have endeavoured to render the effect of the original Lute and Viol accompaniment as closely as possible.

No. 5, "*The Lachrymæ Pavan.*" This is one of the most famous songs of the Elizabethan period. One finds it transcribed in various ways, in most collections in England and abroad. The present version is taken from "The Second Book of Songs, or Ayres of 2, 4, and 5 parts, with Tableture for the Lute or Orpherian, with the Violi de Gamba," etc., London, 1600.

No. 6, "*Now ye Springe is come.*"

No. 7, "*I prethee Sweete.*"

No. 8, "*Cloris sigh't.*"

No. 9, "*Lye still my deare.*"

These four songs are taken from a manuscript collection preserved in the British Museum, Add. MS. 10337. No authors' names are given except at No. 7, to which the name of Henry Lawes is appended. Most of the Graces and Runs are given in the original, which also has a Rudimentary Virginal accompaniment. It was written about 1630.

No. 10, "*The Primrose.*" This is one of Herrick's most charming poems, set by Henry Lawes in his happiest manner. It was first published in the First Book of "Ayres and Dialogues" by Henry Lawes, London, 1653. All the songs are given with an unfigured Bass, and without any Graces.

No. 11, "*O my Clarissa.*" This song was first printed in the third edition of "Select Ayres and Dialogues" issued by John Playford in 1659. William Lawes was the elder brother of Henry Lawes, and a famous composer of instrumental music. But he also wrote charming songs. He was killed at the siege of Chester in 1645.

No. 12, "*The Lark Song.*" This is the famous "*Lark Song*" which Samuel Pepys brought home on September 10th, 1668, and straightway taught to "Mercer," his wife's maid, "in a quarter of an hour, so excellent an eare she has." Yes indeed, she must have had, and a good voice too, for the song is difficult. And none but those who can reach the high notes of its "airy strains" with perfect ease ought to venture to sing it.

ARNOLD DOLMETSCH.

O Death rock me asleep.

*Ascribed to
Ann Boleyn
circa 1536.*

The first system of music consists of a vocal line on a single treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment on two staves (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 3/2. The vocal line begins with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line and chords in the right hand.

O Death, O Death rock me a - sleep,

The second system continues the piece. The vocal line has a whole rest, followed by a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. The piano accompaniment continues with its characteristic rhythmic pattern.

Bring me to quiet rest, Let pass my weary

The third system shows the vocal line with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. The piano accompaniment continues.

guilt - less ghost, Out of my woe - full breast.

The fourth system concludes the piece. The vocal line has a whole rest, followed by a half note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4. The piano accompaniment continues.

Toil on the pass-ing bell, Ring out the dole-ful knell,

Let the sound my death tell, Let the

sound my death tell; For I must dye, There is no

re-me - - dye, For now I dye,

For now I dye, I dye, I dye, I dye, I dye, I dye, I dye.

dye, I dye.

II

Alone in prison stronge,
 I wayle my destynye,
 Woe worth this cruel hap that I
 Should taste this miserye.
 Toll on the passing bell,
 Ring out the doleful knell,
 Let the sound my death tell.
 For I must dye,
 There is no remedye,
 For now I dye.

III

Farewell my pleasures past,
 Welcum my present payne,
 I feel my torments so increase,
 That lyfe cannot remayne.
 Cease now the passing bell,
 Rung is my doleful knell,
 For the sound my death doth tell.
 Death doth draw nye,
 Sound my end dolefully,
 For now I dye.

II

With my Love
my Life was nestled.

Thomas Morley.
1600.

With my Love my

life was nes - tled, In the sum of hap - pi-ness, From my Love my life was wres - ted

To a world of hea - vi-ness. O let love my life remove, Since I live not

where I love. O let love my life remove, Since I live not where I love