

# THREE PARTSONGS

---



**for Mixed Choir (SATB)**

---

**Phillip A. Cooke**

# THREE PARTSONGS

## for Mixed Choir (SATB)

(2008 - 2012)

---

### PERFORMANCE NOTES

The *mmm* sound is a resonant humming sound, perhaps with a slightly open mouth if necessary to create a fuller sound.

The dotted arrow at bb 57-58 (*How Clear, How Lovely*) indicates a gradual shift from the word to a humming.

**Duration:** 12 minutes

**Cover photograph:** Hummingbirds (Ernst Haeckler)

**For more information:** [www.phillipcooke.com](http://www.phillipcooke.com)

First performed (as a set) by the Chapel Choir of Selwyn College Cambridge, conducted by Nicholas Cleobury at St Bride's Church, Fleet Street, London, on 21 March 2013

*I Stood on a Tower* and *How Clear, How Lovely* were first performed by the Arcadian Singers, conducted by John Forster at Keble College, Oxford on 03 March 2012

A recording of this piece is available on *Phillip Cooke: Choral Music* released on Regent Records, REGCD411

### PROGRAMME NOTE

The *Three Partsongs* are simple settings for SATB unaccompanied choir and are part of an ongoing set, taking their influence from the Romantic idea of the partsong as a simple, homophonic, melody dominated piece often taking its inspiration from nature and other Romantic notions. The partsong reached its apogee in the early years of the twentieth century with the likes of Parry, Stanford and Elgar being principal exponents, often bringing a high-minded seriousness to their settings of great English poetry both contemporary and from earlier epochs. The vogue for partsong writing carried on into the mid-twentieth century with notable contributions from Holst, Howells, Warlock and even Benjamin Britten. Perhaps the most famous set is Ralph Vaughan Williams's *Three Shakespeare Songs* of 1951. The partsong fell out of favour (along with its contrapuntal cousin, the madrigal) in the 1960s and is often viewed, today, as somewhat trivial and twee.

Like much of my work, I am trying to 're-encounter' previous genres and styles and make them more relevant for today – to speak the same language as previous composers but with a different accent - something that could only have been written today. 'I Stood on a Tower' is a setting of Tennyson and is bound together by a minor ninth harmony which colours the melancholy mood of the old year giving way to the new. 'Green' is a setting of DH Lawrence

and is sprightly and loose-limbed before a long crescendo matches Lawrence's passionate overtones. 'How Clear, How Lovely' is a setting of Alfred Housman's *XVI* from *More Poems* (1936) and is perhaps the closest in tone to the Edwardian partsong, however the sombre finale on the line 'falls the remorseful day' suggests somewhere darker and more painful than previous composers may have gone.

PAC

## TEXT

### I Stood on a Tower

I stood on a tower in the wet,  
And New Year and Old Year met,  
And winds were roaring and blowing;  
And I said, "O years, that meet in tears,  
Have ye aught that is worth the knowing?  
Science enough and exploring,  
Wanderers coming and going,  
Matter enough for deploring,  
But aught that is worth the knowing?"  
Seas at my feet were flowing,  
Waves on the shingle pouring,  
Old year roaring and blowing,  
And New Year blowing and roaring.

**Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809 – 1892)**

### Green

The dawn was apple-green,  
The sky was green wine held up in the  
sun,  
The moon [was] a golden petal between.

She opened her eyes, and green  
They shone, clear like flowers undone  
For the first time, now for the first time  
seen.

**DH Lawrence (1885 – 1930)**

### How Clear, How Lovely

How clear, how lovely bright,  
How beautiful to sight  
Those beams of morning play;  
How heaven laughs out with glee  
Where, like a bird set free,  
Up from the eastern sea  
Soars the delightful day.

To-day I shall be strong,  
No more shall yield to wrong,  
Shall squander life no more;  
Days lost, I know not how,  
I shall retrieve them now;  
Now I shall keep the vow  
I never kept before.

Ensanguining the skies  
How heavily it dies  
Into the west away;  
Past touch and sight and sound  
Not further to be found,  
How hopeless under ground  
Falls the remorseful day.

**Alfred E. Housman (1859 – 1936)**

# THREE PARTSONGS

ALFRED LORD TENNYSON (1809 - 1892)

for Mixed Choir (SATB)

PHILLIP A. COOKE (2008 - 2012)

## I. I Stood on a Tower

Andante sostenuto (♩ = c.76)

*pp espress.* *p*

Soprano  
I stood I stood I stood on a to'wer in the

Alto  
*pp espress.* *p*  
I stood I stood on a to'wer in the

Tenor  
*pp espress.* *p*  
I stood on a to'wer in the

Bass  
*pp espress.* *p*  
I stood on a to'wer in the

Piano (rehearsal only)  
*pp* *p*

5 *pp* *p* *pp* *pp* **A**

Soprano  
wet and New Year and Old Year met, I

Alto  
*pp* *p* *pp* *pp*  
wet and New Year and Old Year met, I

Tenor  
*pp* *p* *pp* *pp*  
wet and New Year and Old Year met, I

Bass  
*pp* *p* *pp* ✓  
wet and New Year and Old Year met, I stood I

Piano (rehearsal only)  
*pp* *p* *pp*

**B**

10 *p* *pp* *mp*

stood on a tower in the wet and winds were roaring were

stood on a tower in the wet roaring

stood on a tower in the wet roaring

stood on a tower in the wet

stood on a tower in the wet roaring

15 *p* *pp* *mp* *p* *pp*

roaring and blowing;

roaring roaring roaring

roaring roaring roaring

and winds were roaring were roaring and

20 **C**

*p* *mf* *mp*

And I said "O years that meet in tears have you aught that is

*p* *mf* *mp*

And I said "O years that meet in tears have you aught that is

*p* *mf* *mp*

And I said "O years that meet in tears have you aught that is

*pp* *mf* *mp*

blow - ing "O years that meet in tears have you aught that is

*pp* *mf* *mp*

24 **D**

*poco rit.* - - - - - *meno mosso; liberamente* (♩ = c.66)

Tenor Solo *p espress. lontano*

Sci - ence e - nough and ex - plor - ing,

*pp* *ppp sempre*

worth the know - ing? (hmm)\* (hmm)

*pp* *ppp sempre*

worth the know - ing? (hmm)\* (hmm)

*pp* *ppp sempre*

worth the know - ing? (hmm)\* (hmm)

*pp* *ppp sempre*

worth the know - ing? (hmm)\* (hmm)

*pp* *p*

*ppp*

\* (breathe regularly, though independently to sustain note)

29 *p sim.* *p* *pp* *p*

Wan - der - ers co - ming and go - ing. Mat - ter e - nough for de - plor ing But

(hmm) (hmm) (hmm) But

(hmm) (hmm) (hmm) But

(hmm) (hmm) (hmm) But

(hmm) (hmm) (hmm) But

(hmm) (hmm) (hmm) But

**E**

*poco rit.* - - - - - *Primo tempo* (♩ = c.76)

34 *pp* *pp espress.* *pp* *pp espress.* *pp* *pp espress.* *pp* *pp espress.*

ought that is worth the know - ing?" The seas The seas The

ought that is worth the know - ing?" The seas The

Tutti ought that is worth the know - ing?" The

ought that is worth the know - ing?" The

38

*p* *pp* *p*

seas at my feet were flo - wing, the waves on the shin - gle

*p* *pp* *p*

seas at my feet were flo - wing, the waves on the shin - gle

*p* *pp* *p*

seas at my feet were flo - wing the waves on the shin - gle

*p* *pp* *p*

seas at my feet were flo - wing the waves on the shin - gle

43

*pp* *pp* *p* *pp*

pour - ing, I stood on a to - wer in the wet and

*pp* *pp* *p* *pp*

pour - ing, I stood on a to'wer in the wet

*pp* *pp* *p* *pp*

pour - ing, I stood on a to'wer in the wet

*pp* *p* *pp*

pour - ing, I stood on a to'wer in the wet



**F**

48 *mp* *p* *pp* ✓

Old year roar - ing and roar - ing and blow - ing, and New year  
roar - ing roar - ing  
roar - ing roar - ing  
roar - ing roar - ing

rit. al fine. - - - - -

53 *mf* *mp* *p* *pp dim.*

blow - ing and blow - ing and blow - ing and roar - ing  
blow - ing blow - ing blow - ing roar - ing  
blow - ing blow - ing blow - ing roar - ing  
blow - ing blow - ing blow - ing roar - ing

57

roar - ing roar - ing

roar - ing roar - ing

roar - ing roar - ing

roar - ing roar - ing

roar - ing roar - ing

ppp

ppp

ppp

ppp

ppp

lunga

lunga

lunga

lunga

lunga

# II. Green

D H LAWRENCE (1885 - 1930)

Semplice; con movimento (♩ = c.112)

Soprano *mf* *mp* *mf*  
The dawn was ap - ple green, \_\_\_\_\_ The

Alto *mf* *mp*  
The dawn was ap - ple green, \_\_\_\_\_

Tenor *mp sub. p* *mp sub. p* *mp sub. p* *mp sub. p* *mp*  
The dawn, \_\_\_\_\_ the dawn, \_\_\_\_\_ the dawn, \_\_\_\_\_ the dawn, \_\_\_\_\_ the

Bass *mp sub. p* *mp sub. p* *mp sub. p* *mp sub. p* *mp*  
The dawn, \_\_\_\_\_ the dawn, \_\_\_\_\_ the dawn, \_\_\_\_\_ the dawn, \_\_\_\_\_ the

Piano (rehearsal only) *mp sub. p* *p* *mp sub. p* *p* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*  
(sim.)

5 *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf dim.*  
dawn was ap - ple green, \_\_\_\_\_ The dawn was ap - ple green, \_\_\_\_\_ The

*mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*  
The dawn was ap - ple green, \_\_\_\_\_ The dawn was ap - ple green, \_\_\_\_\_

*sub. p* *mp sub. p* *mp sub. p* *mp sub. p* *mp sub. p* *mp*  
dawn, \_\_\_\_\_ the dawn, \_\_\_\_\_ the dawn, \_\_\_\_\_ the dawn, \_\_\_\_\_ the

*sub. p* *mp sub. p* *mp sub. p* *mp sub. p* *mp sub. p* *mp*  
dawn, \_\_\_\_\_ the dawn, \_\_\_\_\_ the dawn, \_\_\_\_\_ the dawn, \_\_\_\_\_ the

*mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf dim.*

poco rit. - - - - - A tempo

9

*p*

dawn, The dawn, The dawn was ap - ple green,

*mf dim.* *p*

The dawn, The dawn, The dawn was ap - ple green,

*sub. p* *mp* *sub. p* *mp* *sub. p* *mp* *sub. p*

dawn, the dawn, the dawn, the dawn,

*sub. p* *mp* *sub. p* *mp* *sub. p* *mp* *sub. p* *mp*

dawn, the dawn, the dawn, the dawn, the dawn, the

(*p*) *mp*

13

*mf* *mp* *mf*

The sky was green\_ wine, The sky was green\_

*mf* *mp*

The sky was green\_ wine,

*mp* *sub. p* *mp* *sub. p* *mp* *sub. p* *mp* *sub. p*

the sky, the sky, the sky, the sky,

*sub. p* *mp* *sub. p* *mp* *sub. p* *mp* *sub. p* *mp*

sky, the sky, the sky, the sky, the

*mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

*sub. p* *mp* (sim.)

17 *mp* *fp* *mf*

wine, held up in the sun, the sky was green\_

*mf* *mp*

held up in the sun, the sky was green\_ wine,

*mp sub. p* *mp sub. p* *mp sub. p* *mp sub. p*

8 the sky, the sky, the sky, the sky,

*sub. p* *mp sub. p* *mp sub. p* *mp sub. p* *mp*

sky, the sky, the sky, the sky, the

*mf* *mf* *mp*

*poco rit.* - - - - -

21 *mp* *mf* *p*

wine, The moon a gol - den pe - tal\_ be - tween, pe -

*mf* *p*

The moon a gol - den pe - tal\_ be - tween, pe -

*mp sub. p* *mp sub. p* *mp sub. p* *mp sub. p*

8 the sky, the moon, the moon, the moon,

*sub. p* *mp sub. p* *mp sub. p* *mp sub. p* *mp*

sky, the moon, the moon, the moon, the

*mf* *p*

- - - - - **A tempo**

25 *mf* *p* *p sempre*

tal be - tween. Her eyes, Her eyes, Her

*mf* *p* *p sempre*

tal be - tween. Her eyes, Her eyes, Her

*mp sub. p* *mf*

the moon, the moon. She

*sub. p*

moon, the moon.

*mf* *p* *p sempre* *mf*

*p*

30

eyes, Her eyes, Her eyes, Her eyes, Her

eyes, Her eyes, Her eyes, Her eyes, Her

*mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

o - pened her eyes, She o - pened her eyes, She

*mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

She o - pened her eyes, She o - pened her eyes,

*mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

34

eyes, Her eyes, Her eyes, They shone, they shone, eyes, Her eyes, Her eyes, They shone, they shone, o - pened her eyes, and green, and green, and

*mp cresc* *mp cresc* *mp* *mp cresc* *mf* *mp* *mp cresc* *mp* *mf* *mp* *mp cresc*

rit. - - - - -

39

they shone, they shone, clear like flow - ers un - done, clear like flow - ers they shone, they shone, clear like flow - ers un - done, clear like flow - ers green They shone, clear like flow - ers un - done, clear like flow - ers green They shone, clear like flow - ers un - done, clear like flow - ers

*f* *mf espress.* *mp* *f* *mf espress.* *mp* *f* *mf espress.* *mp* *f* *mf espress.* *mp* *f* *mf espress.* *mp*

----- meno mosso (♩ = c.90)

44

*p lunga* *mp* *mf* *mp cresc*

un - done, For the first time, for the first time, for the first time, the

*p lunga* *mp* *mf* *mp cresc*

un - done, For the first time, for the first time, for the first time, the

*p lunga* *mf* *p* *mp cresc*

un - done, For the first time, for the first time, for the first time, the

*p lunga* *mf* *p* *mp cresc*

un - done, For the first time, for the first time, for the first time, the

poco accel. -----

49

*ff appass.*

first time, now for the first time, the first time, the first time, the first time

*ff appass.*

first time, now for the first time, the first time, the first time, the first time

*ff appass.*

first time, now for the first time, the first time, the first time, the first time

*ff appass.*

first time, now for the first time, the first time, the first time, the first time

*ff appass.*

first time, now for the first time, the first time, the first time, the first time



A tempo (♩ = c.90)

rit. al fine. - - - - -

55 solo sub. *pp*

seen. \_\_\_\_\_

*pp dim.* Green, green, green, green, green, green. *... ppp*

*pp dim.* Green, green, green, green, green, green. *... ppp*

*pp* *pp dim.* *... ppp*

Detailed description: The score is for a piece in 3/4 time, starting at measure 55. It features a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with a 'solo' instruction and a 'sub. pp' dynamic. The lyrics are 'seen.' followed by a line of dashes. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves: a right-hand staff with chords and a left-hand staff with a simple bass line. Dynamics include 'pp dim.' and '... ppp'. The piece concludes with a 'rit. al fine.' instruction.

# III. How Clear, How Lovely

ALFRED E. HOUSMAN (1859 - 1936)

Adagio tranquillo (♩ = c.52)

*pp* *espress.* *mp non troppo* *pp*

Soprano  
How clear, how love - ly bright, How beau - ti - ful to sight Those

Alto  
How clear, how love - ly bright, How beau - ti - ful to sight Those

Tenor  
How clear, how love - ly bright, How beau - ti - ful to sight Those

Bass  
How clear, how love - ly bright, How beau - ti - ful to sight Those

Piano (rehearsal only)  
*pp* *espress.* *mp non troppo* *pp*

6 *mp sim.* *pp* *mf* *mp*

beams of morn - ing play; How hea - ven laughs out with glee Where, like a

*mp sim.* *pp* *mp*

beams of morn - ing play; How hea - ven laughs out with glee a

*mp sim.* *pp* *mp*

beams of morn - ing play; How hea - ven laughs out with glee a

*mp sim.* *pp* *mp*

beams of morn - ing play; How hea - ven laughs out with glee a

*mp sim.* *pp* *mf* *mp*

11

*mf* *p* *sub. f* *appass.* *p* *sub. mf*

bird set free, Up from the eas - tern sea Soars the del - ight - ful day, Soars

*mf* *p* *sub. mp* *pp*

bird set free, Up from the eas - tern sea Soars

*mf* *p* *sub. mp* *pp*

8 bird set free, Up from the eas - tern sea Soars

*mf* *p* *sub. mp* *pp*

bird set free, Up from the eas - tern sea Soars

*mf* *p* *sub. f* *p* *mf*

*sub. mp* *pp*

rit. - - - - -

16

*p* *sub. mp* *pp* *pp* *pp* *espress.*

the del - ight - ful day, Soars the del - ight - ful day. To -

*p* *pp* *pp* *pp* *espress.*

Soars *\*mmm* To -

*p* *pp* *pp* *pp* *espress.*

Soars *\*mmm* To -

*p* *pp* *pp* *pp* *espress.*

Soars *\*mmm* To -

*p* *mp* *pp* *pp* *espress.*

*p* *pp* *pp* *espress.*

*\* See preface for details.*

Primo tempo (♩ = c.52)

20

day I shall be strong, No more shall yield to wrong, Shall squander life no

day I shall be strong, No more shall yield to wrong, Shall squander life no

8 day I shall be strong, No more shall yield to wrong, Shall squander life no

day I shall be strong, No more shall yield to wrong, Shall squander life no

25

more; Days lost, I know not how, re-trieve them now; I

more; Days lost, I know not how, re-trieve them now; I

8 more; Days lost, I know not how, re-trieve them now; I

more; Days lost, I know not how, I shall re-trieve them now; I

... *ff* *appass.*

*dim.*

shall re-trieve them now; Now I shall keep the vow I ne-ver kept be-

... *ff* *appass.*

*dim.*

shall re-trieve them now; Now I shall keep the vow I ne-ver kept be-

... *ff* *appass.*

*dim.*

shall re-trieve them now; Now I shall keep the vow I ne-ver kept be-

... *ff* *appass.*

*dim.*

shall re-trieve them now; Now I shall keep the vow I ne-ver kept be-

... *ff* *appass.* *dim.*

rit. - - - - - Primo tempo (♩ = c.52)

... *mf* ...

... *p*

*pp* *espress.*

*mp*

fore, I ne-ver kept be-fore. En-san-guin-ing the skies How

... *mf* ...

... *p*

*pp* *espress.*

*mp*

fore, I ne-ver kept be-fore. En-san-guin-ing the skies How

... *mf* ...

... *p*

*pp* *espress.*

*mp*

fore, I ne-ver kept be-fore. En-san-guin-ing the skies How

... *mf* ...

... *p*

*pp* *espress.*

*mp*

fore, I ne-ver kept be-fore. En-san-guin-ing the skies How

... *mf* ... *p* *pp* *espress.* *mp*

40

*pp* *mp*

heav - i - ly it dies In - to the west a - way; Past touch and sight and

*pp* *mp*

heav - i - ly it dies In - to the west a - way; Past touch and sight and

*pp* *mp*

heav - i - ly it dies In - to the west a - way; Past touch and sight and

*pp* *mp*

heav - i - ly it dies In - to the west a - way; Past touch and sight and

rit. - - - - -

45

*pp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *p*

sound Not fur - ther to be found, How hope - less un - der - ground

*pp* *mp* *mf* *p*

sound to be found How hope - less un - der - ground

*pp* *mp* *mf* *p*

sound to be found How hope - less un - der - ground

*pp* *mp* *mf* *p*

sound to be found How hope - less un - der - ground

*pp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *p*

poco meno mosso (♩ = c.46)

50 *p* molto espress. *pp* ✓ *p* *sim.* *pp* ✓ *p*

Falls the re - morse - ful day, Falls the re - morse - ful day, Falls the re - morse

Falls Falls Falls

Falls Falls Falls

Falls Falls Falls

*p* molto espress. *pp* *p* *pp* *p*

55 *pp* *ppp* poss. *mmm*

- ful day, Falls ----- *mmm*

Falls ----- *mmm*

Falls ----- *mmm*

Falls ----- *mmm*

*pp* *ppp* poss.