

*O Lord, make thy Servant and Sovereign Lord  
King Charles*

or

*O Lord, make thy servant Charles our King*

**William Byrd**  
(1543-1623)

Byrd's anthem *O Lord, make thy servant Elizabeth our Queen*  
adapted for King Charles I and King Charles II  
(as sung at St George's Chapel, Windsor)

edited by  
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William Byrd's *O Lord, make thy servant Elizabeth* is one of the most well-known royal anthems of the early modern period. Sung as prayers for the monarch, one early example in English is the anonymous setting of *O Lord Christ Jesu* found in the Lumley partbooks in the British Library, dating from c.1548, which refers to 'thy noble servant our sovereign lord King Edward'. Most scholars agree that the musical style of Byrd's anthem points to it being an early work from the 1560s or 1570s, composed either when Byrd was still working at Lincoln Cathedral or in the early years of his appointment at the Chapel Royal in London from 1572. It may have been composed for the services sung each year on November 17th to mark the Queen's accession. The work remained popular long after the Queen's death; later generations simply up-dated the text to suit the ruling monarch. Thus the several surviving seventeenth-century sources of the work have texts that name King James or King Charles, referring to either Charles I or Charles II. Two different versions of the text are to be found, one referring to 'our Sovereign Lord King Charles' and the other more simply to 'Charles our King'. Both texts are found in sources dating from the time of Charles I. As well as surviving with different texts, the work also appears to have been sung in two different scorings, for either five or six voices. It seems likely that Byrd originally composed the work for SAATTB, but since the two tenor parts often sing the same music, as at the opening, some copyists may have mistakenly thought that there was just one tenor line.

This is not the only royal anthem by Byrd that appears to have been adapted for a later monarch, since we learn of a lost anthem *Behold (O God) with thy all-prospering eye* in a surviving book of texts in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (MS Rawl. Poet. 23) which refers to "our Soverain Lord King CHARLES of Britanie".<sup>(1)</sup> Byrd died in 1623 during the reign of King James. Another piece that underwent a similar adaptation was the popular royal anthem by William Cranford (dates unknown but active in the early decades of the seventeenth century) *O Lord, make thy servant*, which was probably originally composed for Charles I. In the Windsor manuscripts dating from the Restoration period it survives with a text for King James, presumably now James II, but the name James has been erased and substituted with 'ANNE', revealing that this early seventeenth-century work was performed at Windsor even after the accession of Queen Anne in 1702 (see MS 4, p.16).

The principal source used for this edition is the collection of partbooks compiled at St George's Chapel, Windsor during the reign of Charles I, now at Pembroke College, Cambridge (MSS Mus. 6.1-6).<sup>(2)</sup> The second contratenor partbook is missing from this set, so this part has been supplied from the manuscripts assembled by John Barnard at around the same time now held in the Royal College of Music in London (partbook MS 1046). At Windsor following the accession of Charles II it appears that the simpler form of words was adopted, as is shown by a score from the Restoration period copied at Windsor but now in the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge (MS 117). In the present edition, the text sung at St George's Chapel for Charles I is given in ordinary type, with the text sung for Charles II given below in italics.

Note 1. Matthias Range, *Music and Ceremonial at British Coronations from James I to Elizabeth II* (Cambridge, 2012), p.124).

Note 2. The origin of the Pembroke partbooks has been established by Keri Dexter in his article 'Unmasking 'Thomas Tudway': a new identity for a seventeenth-century Windsor copyist', in the *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle*, 32 (1999).

#### *Critical Commentary*

This edition uses the original note values and time signature. Barlines have been added. Editorial slurs have been added without comment, and editorial accidentals are given in brackets. Original clefs: S-C1, A1-C3, A2-C3, T1-C5, T2-C5, B-F4. The music has been transposed up a minor third due to the low tessitura of the alto (contratenor) parts. References are to the original pitch.

b.8, A1: dot missing

b.12, A2: sharp present but crossed out

bb.29-30, A1: corrupt: b.29 *sb c'* (bless-) *mn g* (-ing,) *mn g* (bless-), b.30 *crs a b flat* (-ing,) *c' b flat a g* (bless-) *mn e* (-ing). Reading here taken from Barnard's collection Primus Countertenor Cantoris RCM MS 1049.

b.43, A2: *br*.

b.48, A1: last note *b#*

# O Lord, make thy servant

William Byrd

Musical score for the first system of the piece. It features six vocal parts: Soprano, Alto 1, Alto 2, Tenor 1, Tenor 2, and Bass. The music is in a 4/4 time signature with a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The lyrics are: "O Lord, make thy Ser - vant our ser - vant, thy".

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Musical score for the second system of the piece. It features six vocal parts: Soprano (S), Alto 1 (A1), Alto 2 (A2), Tenor 1 (T1), Tenor 2 (T2), and Bass (B). The lyrics are: "So - ve - reign Lord King Charles to re - jice in thy". The lyrics are split across two lines for each part. The Soprano part has a long note with a fermata over it. The Tenor 1 and Tenor 2 parts have a long note with a fermata over it. The Bass part has a long note with a fermata over it.

S in thy strength; give him his heart's de - sire, and de - ny —

A1 strength, to re - jice in thy strength; — give him his heart's de - sire,

A2 joice in thy strength; give him his heart's de - sire, and de - ny not

T1 — re-joyce in thy strength, in thy strength; give him his

T2 — re-joyce in thy strength, in thy strength;

B thy strength;

S — not the re - quest of his lips, give him his heart's de -

A1 and de - ny not the re - quest of his lips, the re-quest of —

A2 the re - quest of his lips, the re - quest of his lips, give

T1 heart's de - sire, and de - ny not the re-quest of his lips, the re-quest of

T2 give him his heart's de - sire, and de - ny not the re -

B give him his heart's de - sire, and de - ny not the re -



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S  
of his lips. But pre-vent him with thine e-ver-last-

A1  
his lips. But pre-vent him with thine e-ver-

A2  
of his lips. But pre-vent him with thine e-ver-last-ing

T1  
lips. But pre-vent him with thine e-ver-last-ing

T2  
lips. But pre-vent him with thine e-ver-last-ing

B  
of his lips. But pre-vent him with thine e-ver-last-ing

30

S  
- ing bless - ing, bless - ing, e-ver-last-ing

A1  
last - ing bless - ing, with thine e-ver-last-ing bless - ing, and give him a

A2  
bless - ing, and give him a long life, ev'n for e-ver and e -

T1  
bless - ing, and give him a long life, ev'n for e -

T2  
bless - ing, and give him a long life,

B  
bless - ing, bless - ing,

S  
 bless - ing, and give him a long life, ev'n for e - ver and

A1  
 long life, ev'n \_\_\_\_\_ for e - ver and e - ver, ev'n \_\_\_\_\_ for e - ver and

A2  
 - - - - - ver, and give him a long

T1  
 8 ver and e - ver, and e - ver, and give him a

T2  
 8 ev'n for e - ver and e - ver, ev'n for e - ver and e - ver,

B  
 and give him a long life, ev'n \_\_\_\_\_ for e - ver and e - ver, and

S  
 e - ver, and give him a long

A1  
 e - ver, and give him a long life, ev'n for e - ver and

A2  
 life, ev'n for e - ver and e - ver, and give him a

T1  
 8 long life, ev'n for e - ver and e - ver, and give him a long life,

T2  
 8 and give him a long life for \_ e -

B  
 give him a long life, ev'n for e - ver and e - ver, and

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S  
life, ev'n for e - ver and e - ver, for e - ver and e - ver.

A1  
e - ver, and e - ver, for e - ver and e - ver, and e - ver.

A2  
long life, ev'n for e - ver and e - ver, and e - ver.

T1  
ev'n for e - ver and e - ver, and give him a long life for e - ver.

T2  
ver, for e - ver and e - ver, ev'n for e - ver.

B  
give him a long life, ev'n for e - ver, for e - ver and e - ver.

45

S  
A - - - - - men.

A1  
A - - - - - men.

A2  
A - - - - - men.

T1  
A - - - - - men.

T2  
A - - - - - men.

B  
A - - - - - men.