IN DULCI JUBILO

arranged by
R. L. Pearsall
(1795-1856)

Original title page of the MS reads:

Weihnachtenlied.

für viii. principal-stimmen und chor,
componiert [mit benutzung einer
alten melodie auctore Petro
Dresdensi A.D. 1420 - als
cantus firmus:]
von

Robt L. Pearsall de Willsbridge
Joh. O. Eques

Opus X

Karlsruhe 7. Novemb: 1838

Translated, modernised and expanded version:

Christmas [Eve] Song.

for Semi Chorus ssaattbb and Full Chorus SATBB
composed using an ancient melody
with text by Peter of Dresden (1420) by

Robert Lucas Pearsall Esq. of Willsbridge
Knight of Justice of the Order of
the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem

Opus X

Karlsruhe, 7th November, 1838

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(Also appears on the last page of music, so choirs need not copy the first and last pages of this PDF)
IN DULCI JUBILO

Moderato

Soli

1. In dul-ci ju-bi-lo nun sin-get und seid froh
2. O Je-su par-vu-le nach dir ist mir so weh

Alto

1. In dul-ci ju-bi-lo nun sin-get und seid froh
2. O Je-su par-vu-le nach dir ist mir so weh

Soli

1. In dul-ci ju-bi-lo nun sin-get und seid froh
2. O Je-su par-vu-le nach dir ist mir so weh

Tenor

1. In dul-ci ju-bi-lo nun sin-get und seid froh
2. O Je-su par-vu-le nach dir ist mir so weh

Bass

1. In dul-ci ju-bi-lo nun sin-get und seid froh
2. O Je-su par-vu-le nach dir ist mir so weh

10

s1

un-sers Her-zens Won-ne leit in pre-se-pi-o und
tróst’ mir mein Ge-mü-the O pu-er Op-ti-me durch
cres

a1

un-sers Her-zens Won-ne leit in pre-se-pi-o und
tróst’ mir mein Ge-mü-the O pu-er Op-ti-me durch
cres

b1

un-sers Her-zens Won-ne leit in pre-se-pi-o und
tróst’ mir mein Ge-mü-the O pu-er Op-ti-me durch
cres

18

s1

leuch-tet als die Son-ne ma-tris in gre-mi-o
al-le dei-ne Gü-te O Prin-cep-s Glo-ri-a
dim

a1

leuch-tet als die Son-ne ma-tris in gre-mi-o
al-le dei-ne Gü-te O Prin-cep-s Glo-ri-a
dim

b1

leuch-tet als die Son-ne ma-tris in gre-mi-o
al-le dei-ne Gü-te O Prin-cep-s Glo-ri-a
dim

R. L. Pearsall (1795-1856)
ed. R. Doveton

Now attrib. Heinrich Seuse (1295-1366)

trad. um 1400 arr.
Soli & Chor

S + s1

A + s2 + a1 + a2

T + t

B + b

for

for

for

for

for

for

for

for

for
Da die Engel singen novä cantüca; da
die Schellen
Da die Engel singen
da die Schellen
Da sie singen novä cantü-
Da Engel singen da die
Da die Engel singen, die
die Schellen klingen in Regis curi-
da die Schellen klingen in regis curia.
klingen in Regis curia.
in regis curia.
cä; in Regis curia!
Da die Schellen klingen in curi-
Schellen klingen da in Regis curi-
klin-gen in Regis cu-ri-a. [dim]

Schellen klin-gen in Regis cu-ri-a. [dim]

for Ei-a, wär’n wir da! [dim]

Ei-a, wär’n wir da! [dim]

Ei-a, wär’n wir da! [dim]

Ei-a, wär’n wir da! [dim]

Ei-a, wär’n wir da! [dim]

Ei-a, wär’n wir da! [dim]

Sic in both the MS and Novello (1837) but usually, rightly or wrongly, altered to a B♭
It would appear that this is the first German language edition of the work to be published. It is based on Pearsall’s manuscript, a copy of which has generously been supplied by the librarian of the Stiftsbibliothek at Kloster Einsiedeln where many of the composer’s manuscripts are archived. The title-page of the MS is signed and dated 7 Nov. 1838 by the composer, apparently post-dating the two English printed editions mentioned below. Perhaps it is a fair copy made after it had been sung at Karlsruhe in 1834. The musical and Latin texts appear to be in Pearsall’s hand but the vernacular is in a different, Germanic, hand, conceivably that of his daughter, Philippa, an artist, who perhaps did the curious decoration of the title-page in red and black ink. Pearsall states that he composed In Dulci Jubilo for a Choral Society at Karlsruhe (where he and his family resided for 12 years). Referring to Joachim Draheim’s Karlsruher Musikgeschichte (2004), the most likely candidate is the Verein für ernste Chormusik which flourished c.1826-47 under the direction of Heinrich von St. Julien (1801-44) and Anton Gersbach (1803-48). The same book refers to Pearsall as an adherent of the Cecilian movement, whose choirs were the size of English choral societies.

Pearsall probably found the song in the Klug’schen Gesangbuch of 1533. His incorrect attribution of the text to Petro Dresdensi is also to be found on p. 387 of Itinerarium Germaniae by Martinus Zeiller (Straßburg 1674): “...Petro Dresdensi, so zum Zeiten des Hussiten-Kriegs [1419-34] gelebet / und das Gesang In dulci Jubilo, und andere / soll gemacht haben.” Both melody and text are now known to be older than he thought.

It should be made clear that neither Pearsall’s manuscript nor the early printed sources are free of errors and ambiguities and that no modern English-language version reproduces Pearsall’s intentions even when the editor claims to have consulted the MS. My primary aim has been to present a credible German language version based on the only extant source known: the Einsiedeln MS. Edgar Hunt is wrong to suggest in his otherwise useful book on Pearsall (1977) that Walter Parratt’s edition does so (indeed, it specifically states that it has been altered for St George’s, Windsor). In short, Pearsall’s arrangement was not composed for an English Cathedral or University Chapel choir but for an ensemble consisting of 8 solo voices (the principal voices or soli) and a 5-part chorus. This chorus must needs consist of a bare minimum of 10 singers (making two to each part).

Comparison has been made with a copy of the Novello edition of 1837, kindly provided by Richard Barnes, (the second English printed edition, the first having been issued by D’Almaine and Co. the year before). This contains its own inaccuracies but largely answers the following questions regarding voice allocation:

Q. 1) Does ‘Soli’ above the Soprano stave in Bar 1 mean 4 soloists or does it mean all 8 solo voices? A.: Probably all 8.
Q. 2) Do the Soli continue to sing with the Chorus in bars 26-31? A.: Yes. (Novello confirms this).
Q. 3) Is the 3-voice section of v.3 to be sung by the soloists or the Chorus? A.: Chorus. (Novello confirms this too).

This edition does, however, deviate from the MS in the following respects:
- The upper principal voices (Soli) have been renamed. Cantus 1, 2, 3 & 4 become respectively Sop. 1, Sop. 2, Alto 1, & Alto 2.
- The upper Chorus (Chor) voices have been renamed. Cantus 1 & 2 become respectively Sop. & Alto.
- ‘Bassus’ has been modernised to ‘Bass’.
- The layout has been compressed. The voices of the Chorus are indicated in capitals and those of the Soli in lower-case.
- Slurs, used irregularly in the MS, have been added without comment and redundant slurs in the MS are dotted.
- Square brackets have been used for editorial markings.
- Bars 57-61: In the MS the Chorus basses do not sing, but in the Novello edition they do, so it is included in small print.

The original mediæval German text, haphazard punctuation and capitalization and other eccentricities have been retained insofar as they are fully comprehensible. Note that the Latin must be sung with German pronunciation.

The research which went into this near-Urtext edition is far from exhaustive but study of the manuscript in conjunction with the Novello edition has resolved many questions. Nevertheless, Pearsall might have accepted later alterations made by others such as to the text underlay which may surprise those acquainted with commonly used editions of the piece.

Thanks are due to Gordon Pullin, director of Bristol Chamber Choir, previously Bristol Madrigal Society (of which Pearsall was a member) which gave the first English performances of In Dulci. He put me in touch with Pater Lukas, librarian at Kloster Einsiedeln, who in turn provided me with an excellent colour copy of the MS.

For many years my chamber choir Vocalis, Frankfurt has enjoyed singing the piece in German, albeit only recently in the original version presented here. Now other German choirs can share in Pearsall’s chaste yet glowing harmonies which somehow epitomise the spirit of Christmas music. Robin Doveton, 2020.