

# Songs in Divers Humours

for voice and lute



*Musikalische Unterhaltung (Musical Entertainment) - Caspar Netscher 1665 (Alte Pinakothek, Munich)*

David Protheroe



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# Introduction

This is my second collection of lute songs. The first, "Sonnets and Epigrams" was published by the Lute Society in June 2019.

I've called this collection "in divers humours" not only because the songs reflect varying moods, but because I've taken differing approaches to the lute accompaniment: sometimes lyrical with the lute expressing its own motifs in response to the voice, or elsewhere chordal, where the rhythmic figure in the lute part colours the mood of the song.

The first five songs are settings of Elizabethan lyrics, four sonnets and one song from a play. The sonnet hasn't been set to music as much as other verse forms (witness the large number of twentieth century settings of songs from Shakespeare's plays but few settings of his sonnets), but in my view the narrative structure of the sonnet lends itself well to the lute song.

There are settings of two modern poets with connections with the current lute world, Helen Overell and Glen Weir.

Finally, I've set two nonsense poems by Edward Lear, based on tunes I wrote when I was seventeen.

## Vocal part

The pull-out vocal part has a keyboard transcription of the accompaniment to aid singers unfamiliar with lute tablature. It also includes the texts of the poems at the end for reference.

The songs suit a medium voice (they generally range c'-d" or c'-e") at written pitch, which assumes a lute in G, though of course they can be sung higher or lower with lutes at other pitches. *The duck and the kangaroo* is a dialogue for contralto (duck, b-c") and bass (kangaroo, Bb -c').

The songs should be sung expressively to bring out the meaning of the text, even where I haven't marked the dynamics or expression. Tempo indications are approximate, but too slow is usually better than too fast.

Spelling and punctuation are modernised in the Elizabethan texts; the later texts follow the original.

## Lute part

The lute part is written in tablature for a six-course in renaissance tuning, except song 2 (*Fair ye be, but cruel*) which needs a seventh course, though the bass D can be played an octave higher instead.

Fingering is sometimes marked: otherwise the right hand generally follows renaissance practice and alternates thumb and index finger. The left hand should aim to sustain notes where possible: the keyboard version gives an indication of how notes might be sustained. In the tablature, lines indicate where a note should be held or released if it isn't obvious.

There are some non-standard articulation marks: accents in *Cope*, *Steeple Aston* to mimic the quill, staccatos in *Calico pie* to suggest the scampering mice, and grace notes in *The duck and the kangaroo* to convey the bouncing kangaroo.

The book has been typeset with Francesco Tribioli's Fronimo 3.0 tablature software.

David Protheroe, Farnham, November 2020 (with revisions August 2021).  
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# 1. Shall I then silent be?

1

Edmund Spenser  
- Amoretti: Sonnet 43 <sup>a)</sup>

DAVID PROTHEROE

*with passion* **mp**

Shall I then si- lent be, or shall I speak? and if I speak, her wrath re-

The first system of the musical score is in G major, 3/4 time. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo/mood is marked 'with passion' and the dynamic is 'mp' (mezzo-piano). The lyrics are 'Shall I then si- lent be, or shall I speak? and if I speak, her wrath re-'. The score includes a vocal line with notes and lyrics, and a lute line with tablature. The tablature uses letters 'a', 'b', 'c', 'd', 'e', 'f', 'g', 'h' on a six-line staff. The system ends with a repeat sign.

9

new I shall; And if I si- lent be, my heart will break, or cho- ked be with o- ver- flow- ing

The second system of the musical score continues the melody and lute accompaniment. The lyrics are 'new I shall; And if I si- lent be, my heart will break, or cho- ked be with o- ver- flow- ing'. The system ends with a repeat sign.

17 **mf**

gall. What ty- ran- ny is this, both my heart to thrall, and eke my tongue with proud re- straint to tie That neith- er

The third system of the musical score continues the melody and lute accompaniment. The lyrics are 'gall. What ty- ran- ny is this, both my heart to thrall, and eke my tongue with proud re- straint to tie That neith- er'. The system ends with a repeat sign.

25 **pp**

I may speak nor think at all, but like a stu- pid stock in sil- ence die! Yet I my

The fourth system of the musical score continues the melody and lute accompaniment. The lyrics are 'I may speak nor think at all, but like a stu- pid stock in sil- ence die! Yet I my'. The system ends with a repeat sign.

31 *mp*

heart with si- lence sec- ret- ly will teach to speak and my just cause to

*a* *a* *a* *c* *a* *b* *b* *c* *c* *e* *e* *b* *a* *c* *a* *c* *c* *b* *a*

36

plead, And eke mine eyes, with meek hu- mil- i- ty, love- learn- ed let- ters to her

*a* *c* *a* *b* *c* *a* *e* *e* *c* *b* *c* *a* *a* *c* *a* *b* *c* *c* *a* *e* *a*

42 *mf*

eyes to read; Which her deep wit, that true hearts' thought can

*colla voce*

*a* *a* *c* *a* *c* *a* *c* *a* *e* *a* *c*

47 *rit*

spell, will soon con- ceive, and learn to con- stue well.

*rit*

*a* *e* *c* *a* *a*

- a) On each day in spring 1594, Edmund Spenser wrote an amoret, or love sonnet, to his future wife Elizabeth Boyle, often referring to the church reading for that day.
- b) stupid stock: the reading for 6 March 1594, chapter 17 of Luke's gospel, mentions the mulberry tree (Latin: morus arbor). Elizabeth would surely have construed Edmund's flippant mistranslation (morus = moronic, arbor = piece of wood).
- c) my heart with silence... speak: i.e. though silent, I will communicate through my poems.

# 2. Fair ye be, but cruel

3

Edmund Spenser  
- Amoretti: Sonnet 56

DAVID PROTHEROE

7th course in D

*not fast, but with suppressed fury* *mf* < >

Fair ye be, but cruel

6

be, be, sure, but sure, but cruel and unproud and kind, less, as is a as is a

12

ti-storm ger that that with greed-i-ness ... Hunts af-ter blood: ^ when Find- ing a tree a-

16

he by chance doth find a fee-ble beast, ^ doth lone - all com- fort- less, ^ beats on it strong- ly ^ fell- y him op- press. it to ru- i- ate.



20 *mf*

Fair ye be, sure, but hard and ob-sti-nate,

25 *p*

as is a rock a- midst the rag- ing floods; 'Gainst which a ship, of

30 *mp*

suc- cour des- o- late, doth suf- fer wreck both of her- self and goods. That ship, that tree, and

35 *mf* *p*

that same beast am I whom ye do wreck, do ru- in, do

39 *mp* *rit.* *f*

ru- in, ye do ru- in and de- stroy

*rit.* *a*

# 3. Echo's lament for Narcissus

5

Ben Jonson

- Cynthia's Revels: act I scene ii

DAVID PROTHEROE

*Plaintively* *mf* *mp*

Slow, slow, fresh fount, keep time with my salt tears; Yet slow- er, yet, O faint- ly, gen- tle

8 *p*

springs! List to the hea- vy part the mu- sic bears, Woe weeps out her di-

15

vi- sion, when she sings. Droop herbs and flo- wers; Fall grief in

20

sho- wers; Our beau- ties are not

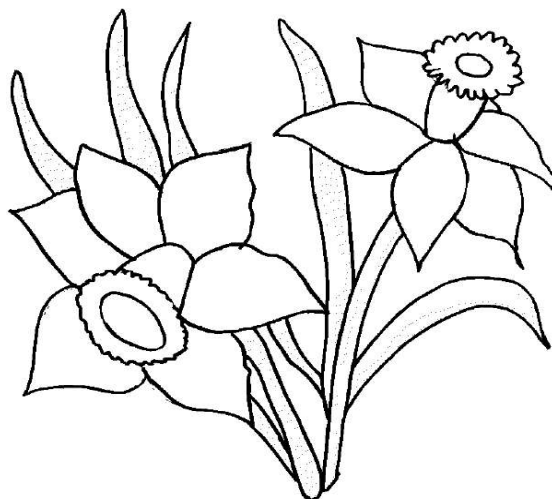
24

ours.	O, I could still, like melt- ing	snow u- pon some	crag- gy hill,	Drop, drop,	drop, drop,	

31

Since nat- ure's	pride is	now a	with- ered	daf- fo-	dil.	

(d)



# 4. In praise of music and poetry

7

Richard Barnfield  
- Poems in Divers Humours <sup>a)</sup>

DAVID PROTHEROE

*Slow, amiably* *mf* *p*

If mu- sic and sweet po- et- ry a- gree, as they must needs, (the

*mf*

sis- ter and the bro- ther), then must the love be great twixt thee and me, be- cause thou lov'st the

*b)*

one, and I the oth- er. Dow- land to thee is dear, whose heav'n- ly touch up- on the

*mp*

lute doth ra- vish hu- man sense; Spen- ser to me, whose deep con- ceit is such, as pas- sing all con- ceit needs no de-

24 *mp* (h)

# 5. Psalm 150

9

Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke  
- the Sidney Psalter a)

DAVID PROTHEROE

*Joyfully*

O laud the Lord, the God of hosts commend,  
With all your might lift His almighty i-ness:  
Ex- alt His Your great- est

9

*brashly*

power, ad- praise up- vance on His ho- great- li- ness: spend.  
Make trum- pets' noise in

16

*gently*

shrill- est notes as- cend: Make lute and lyre His lov- ed fame ex- press: Him let the

23

b)

pipe, Him let the tab- ret bless, Him or- gan's breath, that winds or wat- ers lend.

32

Let ring- ing tim- brels so His hon- our sound,

39

Let sound- ing cym- bals so His glo- ry ring, That in their tunes such me- lo- dy be

47

found, as fits the pomp of most tri- um- phant King. Con- clude: by

58

all that air, or life en- fold, let high Je- ho- vah high- ly be ex- tolled.

a) in the 16th century Protestant tradition, psalms were frequently translated into English verse forms ("metrical translation"). Philip and Mary Sidney, brother and sister, translated the psalms in order, a project completed by Mary after Philip's death after Psalm 43. Their translations circulating in manuscript were widely admired: a copy was presented to Queen Elizabeth. This is the last psalm, Psalm 150 "Laudate Dominum", in the form of a sonnet.

b) tabret: a small tabor (drum)

c) conclude: this is not just the closing couplet of this psalm, but of the Sidneys' marathon task in translating all the psalms.

# 6. Cope, Steeple Aston

Helen Overell

DAVID PROTHEROE

11

*mf*

I- ma- gine this, the last stitch put in place, threadfas- tened,

*accented*

10

trimmed, pins re- moved, need- les coun- ted in, the gar- ment fi- nished,

*rit* *a tempo*

*rit* *a tempo*

18

the tall- est, called up- on to stand, trans- formed by the man- tle— silk

*mp*

26

*mf*

backed with li- nen, sto- ries told, sewn on in gold, in e- ve- ry sort of hue— eve- ry- one crowds round to

36

*p* *mf* *rit* *a tempo*

mar- vel; here, an an- gel robed in green, winged ha- loed, sea- ted on a horse, plays the lute—

*rit* *a tempo*



48

plucks the strings with a quill, left hand po-si-tioned for a three note chord;

*p*

*rit*

57

the dap-pled steed with wa-vy mane, head til-ted, glan-ces to-wards the eight fold rose, each

*a tempo* *mf*

(strike same pose as angel)

67

inch of stance—ex-u-be-rant de-light.

*f*

The Steeple Aston cope is a surviving example of medieval embroidery from the 1330s which includes an enchanting depiction of an angel on horseback playing the lute. Helen Overell's poem about it was published in Lute News in 2019.



*The Steeple Ashton Cope (detail) ©Victoria and Albert Museum, London*

# 7. My ladye lay in cooling waters

Glen Weir <sup>a)</sup>

DAVID PROTHEROE

*Dreamily*

1. My la- dye lay in cool- ing wa- ters

Float- ing, stretch'd, with sil- ken skin; Per- fect breasts, her

dark haire flow- ing, Mer- cy! How my head did spin.

to coda

after verse 5  
D.C. al coda

CODA

to coda

after verse 5  
D.C. al coda

(6.) For- get you this day, by the poole.

molto rall.

CODA

+In subsequent verses, adjust the underlay in bars 7 and 9 so the most important word comes on the high note

a) This setting of his courtly poem as a lute song was commissioned by Glen Weir, a lute society member living in Adelaide.



*Drawing by Glen Weir*

1. My ladye lay in cooling waters,  
Floating, stretch'd, with silken skin;  
Perfect breasts, her dark haire flowing,  
Mercy! How my head did spin.

2. My ladye sat in cooling waters;  
Placed my hand upon her breast;  
With a sigh she gently kissed me,  
Would I ever touch the rest?

3. My ladye stood in cooling waters,  
Circled by my eager arms;  
In soft moonlight, her figure glowing,  
Such sweet delights flow'd from her charms.

4. My ladye lay in cooling waters  
Swooning, soft with angel face;  
Could it be that I am dreaming?  
Then awake without her grace.

5. My ladye walked from cooling waters  
Followed I, to show my heart;  
She turned to me, her dark eyes flashing,  
'Tis the end? Or but the start?

6. My ladye dress'd near cooling waters  
Donning silks and flowing tulle;  
Said I to her, I cannot ever  
Forget you this day, by the poole.

# 8. Calico pie

Edward Lear

- Nonsense Songs, Stories, Botany, and Alphabets

DAVID PROTHEROE

*mf*

1. Ca- li- co Pie, the lit- tle birds fly Down to the ca- li- co tree, Their

*mf*

7

wings were blue, And they sang "Til- ly- loo!" Till a- way they flew, And they ne- ver came back to me! They

12

ne- ver came back, they ne- ver came back, They ne- ver came back to me!

2. Ca- li- co Jam, the

*mp*

19

lit- tle fish swam, Ov- er the syl- la- bub sea, He took off his hat, To the sole and the sprat And the Wil- le- by- wat, But he

25

ne- ver came back to me! He ne- ver came back, he ne- ver came back, He ne- ver came back to me!

*pp (staccato)*

32 *pp* (b)

3. Ca- li- co Ban, the lit- tle mice ran to be read- y in time for tea, Flip- pe- ty flup, they drank it all up, and

39

danced in the cup, But they ne- ver came back to me! They ne- ver came back, they ne- ver came back, They ne- ver came back to

45 *f* (b)

me! 4. Ca- li- co Drum, the grass- hop- pers come, the but- ter- fly, bee- tle and bee,

*f* (thumb strum)

52

Ov- er the ground, a- round and a- round, With a hop and a bound, But they ne- ver came back to me! They

57 *plaintively* (b)

ne- ver came back, they ne- ver came back, They ne- ver came back to me!

# 9. The duck and the kangaroo (a dialogue)

Edward Lear

- Nonsense Songs, Stories, Botany, and Alphabets

DAVID PROTHEROE

*The duck*

1. Said the duck to the kang- a- roo, 'Good gra- cious! how you hop!

*with bounce*

*d e\* e f g g* *e e g g* *e e e e* *e d e e*

\*grace notes on the beat, a semitone below main note

5

O- ver the fields and the wa- ter too, as if you would ne- ver stop! My life is a bore in this nas- ty pond, and I

*e e e e* *e e g g* *e e e e*

8

long to go out in the world be- yond! I wish I could hop like you!" said the duck to the kan- ga- roo.

*e e e e* *e e e e* *g g e e*

11

2. 'Please give me a ride on your back!' said the

*c c c c* *d d d d* *a a c a c*

*e e e e* *a a a a* *a a a a*

14

duck to the kan-ga-roo. I would sit quite still, and say no-thing but "Quack!" the whole of the long day through! And we'd

Staff 1: Treble clef, G major. Notes: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (half).  
 Staff 2: Bass clef. Notes: G2 (half), A2 (half), B2 (half), C3 (half), B2 (half), A2 (half), G2 (half), F#2 (half), E2 (half).  
 Staff 3: Bass clef. Notes: G2 (half), A2 (half), B2 (half), C3 (half), B2 (half), A2 (half), G2 (half), F#2 (half), E2 (half).  
 Staff 4: Bass clef. Notes: G2 (half), A2 (half), B2 (half), C3 (half), B2 (half), A2 (half), G2 (half), F#2 (half), E2 (half).  
 Staff 5: Bass clef. Notes: G2 (half), A2 (half), B2 (half), C3 (half), B2 (half), A2 (half), G2 (half), F#2 (half), E2 (half).  
 Staff 6: Bass clef. Notes: G2 (half), A2 (half), B2 (half), C3 (half), B2 (half), A2 (half), G2 (half), F#2 (half), E2 (half).

17

go to the Dee, and the Jel-ly Bo Lee, O-ver the land and o-ver the sea;- Please take me a ride! O do!' said the

Staff 1: Treble clef, G major. Notes: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (half).  
 Staff 2: Bass clef. Notes: G2 (half), A2 (half), B2 (half), C3 (half), B2 (half), A2 (half), G2 (half), F#2 (half), E2 (half).  
 Staff 3: Bass clef. Notes: G2 (half), A2 (half), B2 (half), C3 (half), B2 (half), A2 (half), G2 (half), F#2 (half), E2 (half).  
 Staff 4: Bass clef. Notes: G2 (half), A2 (half), B2 (half), C3 (half), B2 (half), A2 (half), G2 (half), F#2 (half), E2 (half).  
 Staff 5: Bass clef. Notes: G2 (half), A2 (half), B2 (half), C3 (half), B2 (half), A2 (half), G2 (half), F#2 (half), E2 (half).  
 Staff 6: Bass clef. Notes: G2 (half), A2 (half), B2 (half), C3 (half), B2 (half), A2 (half), G2 (half), F#2 (half), E2 (half).

20

*The kangaroo*

duck to the kan-ga-roo. 3. Said the kan-ga-roo to the duck, "This re-

Staff 1: Treble clef, G major. Notes: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (half).  
 Staff 2: Bass clef. Notes: G2 (half), A2 (half), B2 (half), C3 (half), B2 (half), A2 (half), G2 (half), F#2 (half), E2 (half).  
 Staff 3: Bass clef. Notes: G2 (half), A2 (half), B2 (half), C3 (half), B2 (half), A2 (half), G2 (half), F#2 (half), E2 (half).  
 Staff 4: Bass clef. Notes: G2 (half), A2 (half), B2 (half), C3 (half), B2 (half), A2 (half), G2 (half), F#2 (half), E2 (half).  
 Staff 5: Bass clef. Notes: G2 (half), A2 (half), B2 (half), C3 (half), B2 (half), A2 (half), G2 (half), F#2 (half), E2 (half).  
 Staff 6: Bass clef. Notes: G2 (half), A2 (half), B2 (half), C3 (half), B2 (half), A2 (half), G2 (half), F#2 (half), E2 (half).

24

quires some lit-tle ref-lec--tion Per-haps on the whole it might bring me luck and there seems but one ob-jec-tion, which

Staff 1: Bass clef, G major. Notes: G2 (half), A2 (half), B2 (half), C3 (half), B2 (half), A2 (half), G2 (half), F#2 (half), E2 (half).  
 Staff 2: Bass clef. Notes: G2 (half), A2 (half), B2 (half), C3 (half), B2 (half), A2 (half), G2 (half), F#2 (half), E2 (half).  
 Staff 3: Bass clef. Notes: G2 (half), A2 (half), B2 (half), C3 (half), B2 (half), A2 (half), G2 (half), F#2 (half), E2 (half).  
 Staff 4: Bass clef. Notes: G2 (half), A2 (half), B2 (half), C3 (half), B2 (half), A2 (half), G2 (half), F#2 (half), E2 (half).  
 Staff 5: Bass clef. Notes: G2 (half), A2 (half), B2 (half), C3 (half), B2 (half), A2 (half), G2 (half), F#2 (half), E2 (half).  
 Staff 6: Bass clef. Notes: G2 (half), A2 (half), B2 (half), C3 (half), B2 (half), A2 (half), G2 (half), F#2 (half), E2 (half).

27

is, if you'll let me speak so bold, Your feet are un-pleas-ant-ly wet and cold, And would prob-a-bly give me the roo-ma-

30

tiz' said the kan-ga-roo. 4. Said the duck, 'As I sate on the rocks, I have

34

thought o-ver that com-plete-ly, and I bought four pairs of wor-sted socks which fit my web-feet neat-ly. And to

37

keep out the cold I've bought a cloak, And e-ver-y day a cig-ar I'll smoke, All to fol-low my own dear true



40

*slower* *The kangaroo*

love of a kan- ga- roo.

5. Said the kang- a- roo I'm rea- dy

44

all in the moon- light pale; But to ba- lance me well, dear duck sit stea- dy and

\*Play these arpeggios slowly

*The duck* *a tempo*

So a- way they went with a hop and a bound, And hopped the whole world three times round; and quite at the end of my tail!

*Crescendo*

51

who so hap- py, —O who, as the duck and the kan- ga- roo?

R

---

R

