

# O happy dames

Edited by Jason Smart

John Sheppard (d.1558)

Mean

Countertenor

Tenor

Bass

Keyboard

[O hap - py

[O hap - py dames that may em -

[O hap - py dames that may em - brace the

3

dames that may em - brace the fruit of your de - light,

- brace the fruit of your de - light, O hap-py dames that

fruit of your de - light, O hap-py dames that may em -

O hap-py dames that may em - brace the fruit of your de - light,

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O hap-py dames that may em - brace the fruit of your de - light,  
 may em - brace the fruit of your de - - - light, of your de -  
 - brace the fruit of your de - light Help to be -  
 O hap-py dames that may em - brace the fruit of your de -

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Help to be - wail the woe - ful case and eke the hea - vy plight, the  
 - light Help to be - wail the woe - ful case and eke the  
 - wail the woe - ful case and eke the hea -  
 - light,] Help to be - wail the woe - ful case and

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hea - vy \_\_\_ plight Of me that won - ted to re - joice, \_\_\_

8 hea - vy plight Of me that won - ted to re - joice,

8 - vy \_\_\_ plight Of me that won - ted

eke the hea - vy \_\_\_ plight Of me that won - ted to \_\_\_

19

of me that won - ted to re - joice, to re - joice

8 of me that won - ted to re - joice the for - tune

8 to re - joice, of me that won - ted to re -

re - joice, of me that won - ted to re - joice the

\* The strokes through the stems serve to clarify the voice leading

23

the for - tune of my plea - sant choice, my plea - sant choice, \_\_\_\_\_

of my plea - sant \_\_\_\_\_ choice, \_\_\_\_\_ the

- joice the for - tune of my plea - sant choice, the for - tune of my

for - tune of my plea - sant \_\_\_\_\_ choice, *the for - tune of my plea - sant*

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the for - tune of my plea - sant choice, \_\_\_\_\_ the

for - tune of my plea - sant choice, the for - tune of my

plea - sant choice, \_\_\_\_\_ the for - tune of my

choice, *the for - tune of my plea - sant* \_\_\_\_\_ choice,

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for - tune of my plea - sant choice: Good la - dies, help to  
 plea - sant choice, the for - tune of my plea - sant \_\_\_\_\_  
 plea - sant choice, the for - tune of my plea - - - - sant \_\_\_\_\_  
 the for - tune of \_\_\_\_\_ my plea - sant choice:

34

fill my mourn - ing voice, \_\_\_\_\_ good la - dies,  
 choice, plea - sant choice: Good la - dies, help to  
 choice: Good la - dies, help to fill my mourn - ing  
 Good la - dies, help to fill my mourn - ing voice, my

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help to fill my mourn - ing voice, good la - dies, help to fill my mourn - ing  
 fill my mourn - ing voice, to fill my mourn - ing voice, good la - dies,  
 voice, good la - dies, help to fill my mourn - ing voice, to fill my  
 mourn - ing voice, \_\_\_\_\_ good la - dies, help to fill

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voice, my mourn - ing voice, my mourn - ing voice.]  
 help to fill my mourn - ing \_\_\_\_\_ voice.] \_\_\_\_\_  
 mourn - - - ing \_\_\_\_\_ voice, my mourn - ing voice.]  
 my mourn - ing [voice, my mourn - ing] voice.

## The Text

The text set by Sheppard is the first verse of a poem written by Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey (1516/7–1547) while on a military campaign in France in 1545–6. It is one of the earliest English examples of a major male poet expressing the voice of a woman (although this is not apparent from the single verse set by Sheppard). The spelling of the text as it appears in the Bass part of Sheppard's setting is as follows.

O happy dames that maye embrace  
the fruyte of yo<sup>r</sup> delight  
help to bewaile the wofull cace  
& eke the hevy plight  
of me that wontid to Reioyse  
the fortune of my pleasaunt choyce  
good ladies help to fill my mornynge voice

## The Music

Of the two sources of this partsong to carry Howard's text, one is a Bass partbook (source **A** below) that is little, if at all, later in date than the poem. This has been given primacy in the edition. The other, a now incomplete Tenor part in an early seventeenth-century partbook from Ludlow, Shropshire (source **D**), allocates the phrases of the poem somewhat differently and in a way that is incompatible with **A**. Its readings have not been followed here. All four voice parts survive anonymously in the Hamond Partbooks (source **C**), but here Howard's poem is supplanted by a sacred text, 'I will geve thanks vnto *the Lord with my holl harte*'. These words are a poor fit for the music, so it is unlikely that the adaptation was made by Sheppard. The Mean part is found in another manuscript (source **B**) with a different sacred text that fits the music better: 'O happie man if thou repent and wille returne to me'. In this source the work is ascribed to 'm<sup>r</sup> jonson', presumably meaning the Scottish priest-composer Robert Johnson who fled to England long before the Scottish Reformation to escape charges of heresy. Perhaps the music is Sheppard's and the words Johnson's – the Protestant flavour of the text might support this view – but it was not at all usual for a musical borrowing to assume the name of the borrower unless some modification to the music had taken place, which is not the case here.<sup>1</sup> Who composed the music remains debatable, although the style of the music favours Sheppard. A fifth manuscript, Thomas Mulliner's collection of keyboard music (source **E**), preserves an arrangement of the piece on two staves. It gives the secular title, but no composer's name. Mulliner's arrangement is provided in the edition for comparison and, if desired, solo performance. There is no reason to suppose that it would have been used to accompany the singers.

## Editorial Conventions

The nomenclature of the voice-parts follows the Tudor convention.

The original clef, staff signature and first note of each part are shown on the prefatory staves.

Editorial accidentals are placed above the notes concerned and remain operative throughout the bar. The *b* with the superscript dot in the Bass part at bar 6 is not in the score, but is implied by the *B<sup>b</sup>* staff signature.

Underlay between square brackets is wholly editorial. This includes all the underlay in the top three voices, which has been guided by the underlay of the contrafacta.

Spelling of the text has been modernised.

Underlay repeat signs in the Bass part have been expanded editorially in italics.

Ambiguities of underlay in the Bass have been resolved without comment.

The texts of the contrafacta have not been recorded for this edition.

## Sources

**A** Kew, The National Archives, MS SP 1/246, ff.16–29 (c.1545–50; B only).

(B) f.28<sup>v</sup> at beginning: 4 parts  
at end: sheperd

**B** London, British Library Add MS 15166 (c.1566; M only with contrafactum text *O happie man if thou repent*).

(M) f.86<sup>v</sup> at end: m<sup>r</sup> Jonson

**C** London, British Library Add MSS 30480–4 (The 'Hamond Partbooks', c.1560–1590; all parts with contrafactum text *I will geve thanks unto y<sup>e</sup> Lord*).

30480 (M) f.47 [no ascription]  
30481 (Ct) f.56 [no ascription]  
30482 (T) f.52 [no ascription]  
30483 (B) f.55 [no ascription]  
30484 — —

<sup>1</sup> John Milsom, 'Causton's Contrafacta', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 132, no.1, pp.1–31.

**D** Shrewsbury, Shropshire County Record Office, LB/15/1/228 (c.1616; T only, starting at second A in bar 18).

(T) f.12 [no ascription]

**E** London, British Library Add. MS 30513 ('The Mulliner Book', early 1560s; arrangement for keyboard).

(keyboard) f.107 Title between staves: O happye Dames

A later owner of the manuscript, John Stafford Smith, has added 'Earl of Surry' above the beginning of the piece and occasional words from Howard's poem, mostly from the second verse. These are not collated in the notes below.

### Notes on the Readings of the Sources

Within each section below the references are listed by source. Each reference to a bar or group of bars is separated by an oblique stroke. Within these references multiple readings in the same voice are separated by a comma and readings in different voices by a semicolon. The order within each entry is: (1) bar number(s); (2) voice, or, for source **E** whether right hand (RH) or left hand (LH); (3) reading of the source (with any subsequent bar numbers in brackets). Pitches are in capital letters. Note values are abbreviated in italics, e.g. *b* = breve, *dot-m* = dotted minim. The symbol  $\sphericalangle$  denotes an underlay repetition sign.

#### Staff signatures and accidentals

**A** 18 B new line in source without staff signature begins with first D, no further staff signature given but note the next reference / 43 B  $\natural$  for B /

**B** 44 M no # /

**C** 1–end B staff signature *b* for B deleted on every staff / 25 M # for F (but not in 34) /

**E** 1–end all Bs in both hands are implied flat by the staff signatures except for those for the LH in bar 43 which are specifically marked  $\natural$  (the staff signatures are ignored in the edition) / 21 RH new line in source begins with E, staff signature *b* for upper and lower B /

#### Underlay

**D** 18–20 T *my heavy plight* for *wonted to rejoice* (perhaps 13–16 had repeated *help to bewail the woeful case*) / 20–21 T *and*  $\sphericalangle$  below CB / 22 T  $\sphericalangle$  below A / 23–25 T *of me that wonted to rejoice for the fortune of my pleasant choice*, (25–26) *of me*  $\sphericalangle$  below *mA dot-mC crC* / 27 T  $\sphericalangle$  below A (intended for 28?) / 31 T  $\sphericalangle$  below D / 32 T  $\sphericalangle$  ambiguously placed below last two notes / 34–36 T *the fortune of my pleasant* imprecisely below ACCBGDDC, (17) *choice* below D / 38–39 T underlay *to fill my illegible*, (40) *good*  $\sphericalangle$  (in place of *to fill my mourning voice*) below AC /

#### Rhythms

**B** 31 M *sbA* is *mA mA* / 34 M *dot-mA crA* for *mA mA* /

**C** 3 Ct *sbA* for *mA mA*; T *sbE* for *mE mE* / 6 B *sbB* for *mB mB* / 7 T *sbE* for *mE mE* / 8 Ct *sbA* for *mA mA* / 12 M *mB mB* are *dot-m cr* / 13 B *m m* for *dot-m cr* / 14 B *sbA sbD* for AADD / 17 Ct *sbD sbC* for DDCC / 18 B *sbC* is corrected *m*, no tie / 19 T *bA* for *sbA sbA* / 20 Ct *sbC* for *mC mC* / 20–21 B *sbE sbD sbC* for EEDDCC / 31 M A is *m m* / 32 Ct *mE* corrected to *sb* for *mE mE* / 40 M *sbA* for *mA mA*; B *sbF* for *mF mF* / 42–43 M *mA sbA sbA* for AAAAA / 43–44 Ct no tie / 43 T *sbA* for *mA mA*; B *sbD* for *mD mD* /

**D** 26 T *dot-mB crG* for *mB mG* /

#### Other readings

**A** 10 B D is B (implied flat by staff signature) /

**B** 1 M clef C2, mensuration symbol  $\text{C}$  /

**C** 18–19 M DCEDC all a third higher /

**D** 32 T *crA* for *qG qA* (but not in 41) /

**E** 15–16 RH for *sbE m-rest* Mulliner originally wrote *dot-mE crD mC* but deleted the D and C, corrected the E to *sb* and added the *m-rest* in the lower voice / 18 RH G is F (cf. 21 which has G) / 19 RH the lines through the stems serve to clarify the part-writing / 25 LH first F in lower voice is D corrected to F / 31 RH upper voice originally with superfluous *mA mG* after B with corresponding displacement of the following notes then subsequently corrected (by Mulliner?) to the reading in the edition / 34 RH superfluous *mA mA* in upper voice before F, (35) upper voice FF for DD, lower voice superfluous *mD mD* deleted before *mD*, (36–37) RH lower voice originally *mF mC mG mF sbF sbD* (the last two possibly a chord) corrected to the reading in the edition, these corrections apparently by Stafford Smith, no doubt after comparing 27–28 / 37 LH *sbD* erroneously corrected to *sbB* and altered back to D by later hand / 40 RH rest erroneously omitted in lower voice / 43 LH extra *sbD* in lower voice /