

# THE EMPORIA STATE

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## Four Studies in Elizabethan Drama

**Roma Ball**

"The Choirboy Actors of St. Paul's Cathedral"

**Jim C. Pogue**

*"The Two Gentlemen of Verona and Henry Wotton's A Courtlie  
Controuersie of Cupids Cautels"*

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# The Choir-Boy Actors of St. Paul's Cathedral

by Roma Ball\*

In 1926, H. N. Hillebrand made the following statement:

I have found five lists of names of the vicars choral and choir boys at St. Paul's, extending from 1554 to 1598. None of the names is familiar, unfortunately, but I submit the lists none the less, for they may be of possible future use.<sup>1</sup>

Midway in Hillebrand's list for 1574, inconspicuously placed,<sup>2</sup> there occurs the name of Thomas Morley, madrigalist and theorist. Hillebrand's oversight is understandable, but the presence of Morley's name stresses the necessity for information concerning the personnel of this famous cathedral which contributed so greatly to the development of Elizabethan drama. This study is a first attempt to supplement the existing histories of the choirboy actors of Paul's, in the hope that such information will offer at least a partial answer to the vexing question of what happened to the child actors when they had reached maturity, and that it will also serve as a means of seeing the child actors of Paul's in a much clearer perspective—that is, first, as choirboys and, secondly, as actors.

As St. Paul's Cathedral dominated the landscape of London, so its influence penetrated into many aspects of London life. Religion, music, drama, and even guild activities were intimately connected with the activities of the Cathedral which, according to Stow, was founded in 610.<sup>3</sup> Soon thereafter, perhaps around 635, the Gregorian chant is thought to have been incorporated into its services.<sup>4</sup> Since musical notation, at this time, was barely in its infancy, the chant made necessary a body of trained singers. Thus, from the earliest days in the record of this Cathedral, it is probable that a group of choirboys was employed in its ceremonies. The first direct evidence for a choir school, however, is contained in a document (1180-1200) ordering the boys, at meals, to sit upon the ground rather than at table with the vicars for the purpose of reminding the children of their almonry status.<sup>5</sup> (This atmosphere of a somewhat begrudging charity is important, for it is from this attitude that the sixteenth century policy of impressment is developed.) Considerably more information is derived from a statute of c. 1250, in which the *precentor* (choir director) was given the following responsibilities:

. . . to rule the choir in raising and lowering of the chant and in psalmody; to order the singers on the table through the master of the song school, to goad the negligent to sing, to chide and keep quiet

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1. H. N. Hillebrand, *The Child Actors*, p. 110.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 111.

3. John Stow, *A Survey of London*, I, p. 342.

4. A. F. Leach, *The Schools of Medieval England*, p. 6. Leach bases his conclusion upon evidence from Bede.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 109.

those who make a noise or rush about the choir in a disorderly manner. On the great feast he begins the *Benedictus* and *Magnificat*, the processional chants and sequences, and examines the boys for admission to the choir . . . .<sup>6</sup>

From the above allusion to *sequences*, which led to the growth of liturgical drama, one may suggest that the choirboys, rather than the students of the grammar school (a separate institution), were first to take part in activities of a semi-dramatic nature.

Shortly afterwards, in 1263, the children were forbidden to sing the anthems traditionally connected with the Boy Bishop ceremony,<sup>7</sup> although the ceremony continued intermittently into the sixteenth century.<sup>8</sup> There were eight choirboys in 1329,<sup>9</sup> ten in 1345,<sup>10</sup> and only eleven in 1594.<sup>11</sup> So far as size was concerned, therefore, the choir school was a relatively stable institution throughout its history. There is a question, however, as to the financial status of these choirboys: *i.e.*, whether or not they remained as almonry students. In the early history of the school, certainly, the boys were charity pupils. In the reign of Richard II (1377-99), evidence contained in a calendar of obits shows that the boys—*pueris elemosinae*—received sums ranging from 8*d.* to 5*s.* 6*d.* on fifteen occasions during the church year.<sup>12</sup> During Richard's reign, the children also took part in an actual dramatic activity concerning the preparation of a play, in 1378, of "the history of the Old Testament," which was stolen before it could be performed.<sup>13</sup> In the light of previous references to *sequences* and to the Boy Bishop ceremonies, as well as the fact that extant mysteries made extensive use of music, it seems probable that the choirboys were involved, whether or not they had full responsibility for the performance. Their fourteenth-century excursion into drama may well have been brief, however, for almost no information about these children exists from this date throughout the fifteenth century. While there is a description of a 1485 procession of Elizabeth, wife to Henry VII, which included ". . . singing children, some arrayed like angelles, and others like virgins, to sing sweete songs as her grace passed by . . . .," these children may or may not have been from the choir school (but the fact that the procession moved from the "Towre to Powles" makes the suggestion seem feasible).<sup>14</sup>

Though the records of the fifteenth century provide slight information concerning these children, the hey-day of Paul's coincides with the opening of the sixteenth century. Chambers lists six (three probable and

6. *Ibid.*, p. 160; the use of cheironomic signs probably indicates that polyphony had not yet come to Paul's, although it was well established upon the Continent at this time.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 144.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 153-54.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 215.

10. Sir E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, II, p. 10.

11. Hillebrand, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

12. W. S. Simpson, *Documents Illustrating the History of St. Paul's Cathedral*, pp. 76-106.

13. Hillebrand, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

14. Quoted in William Herbert, *The History of the Twelve Great Livery Companies of London*, I, p. 95.

three definite) Masters of the choir school from c. 1521 until c. 1606.<sup>15</sup> Thomas Hikeman may have been Master around 1521, but he apparently had no reputation as a musician. Musical evidence enters the record only with the coming of John Redford, Master around 1540, who held a slight reputation as a composer, chiefly of organ music, and whose four-voice motet, *Christus Resurgens*, is extant.<sup>16</sup> He is also represented in the *Mulliner Book*.<sup>17</sup> Redford was a traditional figure in English music, sometimes following the older pattern of imitating vocal polyphony and sometimes writing in a style more characteristic of instrumental composition.<sup>18</sup> In a fashion typical of the later Masters of the choir school, Redford was also the author of an interlude, *Wyt and Science*, which was presented at court between 1538 and 1546, and which contained three songs, one preceded by the direction, "Here cometh in four with viols and sing . . . ."<sup>19</sup>

Chambers suggests that Thomas Mulliner<sup>20</sup> was the next Master, following Redford's death in 1547.<sup>21</sup> Whatever the status of its editor, the *Mulliner Book* (compiled from c. 1545 to c. 1585) is justly famous. It contains pieces for organ, for cittern, and for gittern; its range of compositions includes dances, secular songs and anthems, psalm tunes, and chant melodies; and the composers represented are Tallis, Blitheman, Shepherd, Alwood, Edwards, Johnson, Tavener, Tye, and William Munday, most of whom were associated with the Chapel Royal rather than with Paul's.<sup>22</sup> While this evidence is in no way conclusive, it lessens the possibility of Mulliner's connections with the Cathedral.

The date of Sebastian Westcote's Mastership of the choir school at Paul's is debatable. In 1545, he was a Yoeman of the Chamber at court.<sup>23</sup> In 1551, according to the *Household Accounts of Princess Elizabeth*, he received payment for bringing the children's and players' garments.<sup>24</sup> It is not clear, however, if he were the Master of the choir school at this time, although evidence from an unexpected source suggests that he may have become Master at a relatively early date. In 1549, the choir school of St. Paul's began a sporadic association with the Company of the Merchant Taylors, which arrangement, though intermittently, continued at least through Westcote's Mastership, and it may well be that he was responsible for its commencement. The Merchant Taylors records for 1549/50 reveal that the sum of 10s. was given "For having the children of 'Poules' for their playing upon viols and singing at the Feast day [St. John's day]."<sup>25</sup> In 1551/52, payment was made "To the Master of the singing children at St.

15. Chambers, *op. cit.*, II, p. 9.

16. Gustave Reese, *Music in the Renaissance*, p. 777.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 851.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 854.

19. *Loc. cit.*

20. Chambers, *op. cit.*, II, p. 9.

21. Pearl Hogrefe, *The Sir Thomas More Circle*, p. 314.

22. Reese, *op. cit.*, p. 851.

23. Chambers, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 8-9.

24. Hillebrand, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

25. Charles M. Clode, *Memorials of the Guild of Merchant Taylors of the Fraternity of St. John the Baptist*, p. 526.

Paul's for their playing and singing at the Feast day, 13s. 4d."<sup>26</sup> (If only these records had listed the Master by name! One does note, however, that 13s. 4d. was the customary payment for the dramatic performance at court.) In 1554/55, the "children of 'Polles' and the musicians of my Lord of Pembroke" received 20s. for performance on Feast day,<sup>27</sup> and although the records thereafter are silent as far as any direct association goes, the boys of St. Paul's and the Merchant Taylors organization seem to have been more closely connected than has heretofore been realized.

In 1554, the records of a suit in the Court of Exchequer contain the first listing of names of vicars choral and choirboys (reproduced by Hillebrand). With this list begins the unfolding of a series of relationships of significance to musical and literary scholarship of the Elizabethan period. The list cites the following vicars choral: Sebastian Westcote, Philip Apryce, Robert Seye, Thomas Martyn, John More, and Robert Bale.<sup>28</sup> Other than Westcote, the name of Apryce is of some importance. He seems to be the same as one Philip Ap Rhys, Welsh composer of ". . . the sole surviving reasonably complete organ-Mass in England . . ." <sup>29</sup> The 1554 list also mentions the following choirboys: John and Simon Burde, Richard Hewse, George More, John Alkok, Gilbert Maxsey, Roger Stakhouse, Richard Prynce, John Farmer, and Robert Chofe.

John Farmer, alone of this group, achieved considerable reputation as a musician. (The others seem not to have established reputations either in music or in drama.) For many years, John Farmer was known only as a sixteenth century composer who lived in London and published a madrigal collection in 1599. Since he was listed as a choirboy in 1554, probably between nine and thirteen years of age, one may fix his birthdate c. 1541-45. Recent evidence connects him with Christ Church, Dublin, where he apparently served as organist and Master of the Children, having been appointed to this position in 1595.<sup>30</sup> It is possible, however, that he maintained some connection with Paul's from his choirboy days until, and even after, his Dublin experience. His madrigals were published by an associate of Morley's and were dedicated to the Earl of Oxford,<sup>31</sup> who was the sponsor of the combined company of children from Paul's and the Chapel Royal.<sup>32</sup>

Two other items, although of a later date, may be related to this 1554 list. A pageant of 1556-57, for Sir William Harper, Lord Mayor, included a procession to the Cathedral ". . . and ther met ym a pagantt gorgyously mad, with childeryn, with dyvers instruments playng and syngyng . . ." <sup>33</sup>

26. *Ibid.*, p. 528.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 529.

28. Hillebrand, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

29. Reese, *op. cit.*, p. 855.

30. *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, III, p. 30.

31. *Loc. cit.*

32. Hillebrand, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

33. Charles M. Clode, *The Early History of the Guild of Merchant Taylors of the Fraternity of St. John the Baptist*, I, p. 244.

And for a similar pageant in 1561, again in honor of Harper, one finds the record, "Item paid to Mr. More for the hyer of V harps and his child playing in the pageant, xxjs."<sup>34</sup> More senior was probably the vicar choral and his son, George, a choirboy of the 1554 group.

Unfortunately there is no list of personnel for the decade of the 1560's, yet the children frequently performed at court from 1554 until 1574, the date of the second listing of personnel. During these twenty years, they were engaged in at least twenty known performances. Of these appearances, there are only two plays known by title: *Effigia* (1571), and *Alkmeon* (1573).<sup>35</sup> Hillebrand conjectures that most of the plays in this period were written by Westcote. Indeed, since Westcote has left behind no musical compositions, it may well be that his chief interest lay in the writing and producing of drama.

In 1574, Bishop Edwin Sandes included the following names of vicars choral in his *Visitation Book*: Thomas Sterrie, Thomas Woodson, Giles (Egidius) Hawkes, Henry Mudde, John Ramsay, and John Meares.<sup>36</sup> Woodson most probably was Thomas Woodson, composer and (in 1581) Gentleman of the Chapel Royal, a position which he held at least until 1603 when he was granted livery at the death of Elizabeth. Woodson wrote an organ composition entitled *Forty Wayes of 2 parts in one on the "Miserere."*<sup>37</sup> At the present, there is no information available for the other vicars choral of the 1574 list. The choirboys, however, include George Bowring, Thomas Morley, Peter Philip, Henry Nation, Robert Knight, Thomas Brande, Edward Pattmie(?), Robert Baker, and Thomas Johnson. Of Bowring and Nation, the only further information available seems to be that of their inclusion in Westcote's will in 1582.<sup>38</sup> The other names are of much more interest.

Thomas Morley, for example, is considered one of the greatest of Elizabethan composers. While the details of his biography are well known, his importance to and as a representative of Paul's is so vast as to warrant an examination of the major events in his career. He was born in 1557 and died c. 1604. There seems to be a discrepancy between his birthdate and his appearance in the 1574 list, however. Scholars have generally assumed that children remained with the choir only until the period of voice change. Morley, to the contrary, would have been seventeen years old in 1574. Of course, he may have stayed on for a time as an assistant. The next recorded date for Morley is that of his having received the degree of Bachelor of Music from Oxford in 1588.<sup>39</sup> Following his graduation, he is believed to have become an organist at St. Giles', Cripplegate, three years later rejoining St. Paul's, this time as an organist, where he remained until

34. *Ibid.*, p. 269.

35. H. N. Hillebrand, "Sebastian Westcote, Dramatist and Master of the Children of Paul's," *JEGP*, XIV (1915), pp. 574-75.

36. H. N. Hillebrand, *The Child Actors*, p. 111.

37. *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, IX, p. 361.

38. H. N. Hillebrand, *The Child Actors*, p. 329.

39. *DNB*, XIII, p. 981.



1592. During this period, he was accused of having taken part in various religious plots.<sup>40</sup> In 1592, he left Paul's to become a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal, and from 1596 until 1601, he lived in the same London parish as did Shakespeare. His fame rests primarily upon his madrigals and his treatise on theory entitled *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, which presents a vivid picture of musical life in Elizabethan England and gives a clear, comprehensive treatment of the musical theory of the time.

One phase of Morley's career which has been overlooked (and which again connects him, though vaguely, with the drama) is his venture into printing. Beginning in 1598 and extending for the next twenty-one years, Morley was granted a license to print music books and manuscript paper. His "assignes," William Barley (Bartley, printer of Farmer's *Madrigals*), Thomas Este (East), Peter Short, John Windet, and others, printed a surprisingly large number of musical works.<sup>41</sup> Windet (although after Morley's death) printed Marston's *Sophonisba*, a drama containing numerous musical stage directions.<sup>42</sup> Morley's own duties as editor included the publication of *Canzonets or Little Short Songs to Foure Voyces* (1597), *Madrigalls to Five Voyces* (1598), *The First Booke of Consort Lessons* (1598), and *The Triumph of Oriana* (1601).<sup>43</sup>

Of Peter Phillip (Philips), choirboy with Morley, Grove explains:

He was born somewhere in England between 1560 and 1570, but he lived in the Netherlands at the end of the 16th and beginning of the 17th centuries . . . . He may have been brought up in London as a choir-boy at St. Paul's Cathedral.<sup>44</sup>

The 1574 list helps narrow the possible dates of Philip's birth, since, assuming the usual age for entry into the choir school as nine, it is unlikely that Philips was born much later than 1564. He became a composer, and was one of the first English musicians to employ the figured-bass in his works.<sup>45</sup> His sojourn in the Netherlands, however, places him outside the mainstream of English music.

Since Robert Knight is referred to as ". . . an English 16th century composer," one of whom it is said that "Nothing is known of his life," the 1574 listing is especially helpful.<sup>46</sup> It is probable that he was born somewhere between 1561 and 1565. Only one extant work, a five-voice motet, *Propterea Maestum*, has been definitely ascribed to him.<sup>47</sup> (A Mass and three other motets may be assigned either to Robert or Thomas Knight, a musician who flourished between 1535 and 1545.)

The next choirboy list was that included in Westcote's will in 1582.

40. *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, V, p. 895.

41. *Loc. cit.*

42. Chambers, *op. cit.*, III, p. 433.

43. Thomas Morley, *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, p. vii.

44. *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, VI, p. 712.

45. Reese, *op. cit.*, p. 739.

46. *Loc. cit.*

47. *Loc. cit.*

Nevertheless, the period from 1574 to 1582 saw the boys performing at least seven plays at court. Probably some of the children from the 1574 list appeared in the following plays: *The historye of Titus and Gisippus* (1577), *A Morall of the marryage of Mynde and Measure* (1579), *The history of Cipio Africanus* (1580), and *A storie of Pompey* (1581).<sup>48</sup> From 1551 to 1582, under Westcote's supervision, the children appeared in at least twenty-seven performances at court. In 1582, Westcote died. His will, reprinted in Hillebrand, mentions seven persons as "sometymes children of the saide Almenry howse. . . ."<sup>49</sup> They are Bromeham, Richard Huse (Hewse, choirboy in 1554), Robert Knight (1574), Nicholas Carleton, (Thomas? Bayle).<sup>50</sup> Henry Naison (Nation, 1574), and Gregory (George) Bowring (1574). Of those not already discussed in this study, only Nicholas Carleton seems to have become well known as a musician. His recognized works are arrangements of his own vocal compositions for organ or virginal, and a duet for four hands, also for organ or virginal.<sup>51</sup>

Following the death of Westcote, Paul's boys entered into a decade of much confusion. Westcote's departure, of course, was certain to have had a profound effect upon the children's activities. At the same time, the Cathedral passed into the supervision of Bishop Aylmer. Seemingly a devoted follower of Elizabeth and a man who was very much interested in promulgating what he believed was a sound theological doctrine, he nevertheless was severely criticized. By 1584, Thomas Giles had succeeded Westcote as Master of the children. In this year, the Earl of Oxford, Henry Evans, and John Lyly produced two plays (*Sapho and Phao* and *Campaspe*) at the Blackfriars theatre, using children from the Chapel Royal and Paul's.<sup>52</sup> Of these three men, Evans seems to have been the key figure in a matter which has yet to be clarified. While Evans had become most important to the Chapel Royal, he was also, at this point, highly important to Paul's. As heretofore explained, Westcote, Paul's, and the Merchant Taylors had maintained at least a tenuous relationship during Westcote's mastership. Evans was a close friend of Westcote's (a legatee in Westcote's will).<sup>53</sup> Moreover, in 1571, at the insistence of the Earls of Leicester and Sussex, he had been appointed to the position of clerk of the Merchant Taylors Company.<sup>54</sup> The Earl of Oxford was also "free" of the Merchant Taylors Company. The significance of this evidence has never been made clear. For example, it is possible that Evans had originally hoped to have been appointed Master following Westcote, but since he was not a musician, Giles had succeeded to the position. However, the

48. H. N. Hillebrand, "Sebastian Westcote, Dramatist and Master of the Children of St. Paul's," *JEGP*, XIV (1915), p. 575.

49. H. N. Hillebrand, *The Child Actors*, p. 329.

50. Perhaps this might be Thomas Bayle whom Chambers, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 301-02, lists as an actor at Sherwsbury in 1501.

51. Reese, *op. cit.*, p. 855.

52. H. N. Hillebrand, *The Child Actors*, p. 134.

53. *Ibid.*, p. 329.

54. Herbert, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 167-68.

fact remains that Evans did engineer, in one way or another, the joint performances which are yet so puzzling in the history of the child actor.

From 1587 until 1590, the children appeared at court on nine occasions.<sup>55</sup> During 1589, they became involved in the notorious Marprelate controversy and were inhibited for approximately the next decade.<sup>56</sup> Though dramatic activity came to an apparent standstill, the choirboy organization continued at the Cathedral, at least insofar as court appearances were concerned. The next list, that of 1594, is derived from the Register of Archbishop Whitgift.<sup>57</sup> At this time, the vicars choral included John Ramsay (also listed in 1574), John Sharpe, Thomas Harrolde, Thomas Gyles (Giles), Michael Amner, Nicholas Younge, and Robert Brown. Choirboys were Edward Buckeredge, William Thayer, John Taylor, Germaine (Germanus) Wilson, Richard Badlowe, Thomas Weste, Giles Jennynges, Humphrey Weste, and William Maycocke.<sup>58</sup> Of the choirboys, it is possible that John Taylor is the same as the John Tailor listed by Chambers as a member of the Admiral's Men in 1601-2.<sup>59</sup> Besides Giles, who will be discussed later, Nicholas Younge, a vicar, seems to have had an extensive career outside the Cathedral. In June of 1572, he was one of the visitors to the Merchant Taylors School who examined the students, and is described as "Doctor" in the record of this event.<sup>60</sup> In 1588, he edited an anthology of Italian madrigals, *Musica Transalpina*. In the preface to this work, he is described as the director of a singing society comprised of "Gentlemen and merchants of good accompt . . . ."<sup>61</sup> And the records of the Merchant Taylors indicate that he maintained contact with that company as late as 1597.<sup>62</sup>

Bishop Bancroft recorded yet another list of personnel in 1598, in which the vicars choral had added only one new member, Robert Gunsley, and had lost none of its personnel from the 1594 list. The choirboys included John Taylor (1594), William Thaire (Thayer, 1594), Richard Brackenbury, John Norwood, Robert Coles, John Thomkins, Samuel Marcupp, Thomas Rainescrofte, Russell Gyrdler, Carolus Pytcher, and Charles Pendry.<sup>63</sup> Hillebrand notes that Coles and Norwood acted in Marston's *Antonio and Mellida* (1599?).<sup>64</sup> To John Thomkins and Thomas Rainescrofte belong especially important histories.

In all likelihood, John Thomkins was a member of the Thomkins family that produced more musicians than possibly any other family in England. At least one member named John lived from 1586 to 1638, becoming organist at King's College, Cambridge, in 1606, and receiving the

55. H. N. Hillebrand, *The Child Actors*, p. 138.

56. Chambers, *op. cit.*, II, p. 19.

57. H. N. Hillebrand, *The Child Actors*, p. 111.

58. *Loc. cit.*

59. Chambers, *op. cit.*, II, p. 341.

60. Clode, *Memorials*, p. 408.

61. Reese, *op. cit.*, p. 821.

62. Clode, *Memorials*, p. 538.

63. H. N. Hillebrand, *The Child Actors*, p. 111.

64. *Ibid.*, p. 289.

degree of Bachelor of Music in 1608.<sup>65</sup> The Bancroft listing coincides with these dates. About 1619, Tomkins became organist at St. Paul's and became a member of the Chapel Royal in 1626. He assisted, also, in the preparation of Ravenscroft's *Psalter* (1621).<sup>66</sup>

Of Thomas Ravenscroft, Grove remarks: "He was a choirster at St. Paul's Cathedral in London under Edward Pearce, and from 1618 to 1622 he was music master at Christ's Hospital."<sup>67</sup> While Ravenscroft is not listed in the 1607 record (which includes the name of Pearce or Peers), a Thomas Rainescrofte does appear in the 1598 list. Ravenscroft's age has been a matter of speculation. In 1614, one of the prefaces to his *Brief Discourse* cites his age as twenty-two. According to this evidence, he would have been fifteen when he received the Bachelor of Music degree at Cambridge in 1607.<sup>68</sup> However, if he had entered the choir school at the usual age of nine, his birthdate could be as early as 1589, making him eighteen at the time of his graduation from Cambridge—still quite a respectable accomplishment. Strangely enough, it is to Ravenscroft that present-day knowledge of Elizabethan folk music is largely due. He printed three catch-books: *Pammelia* (1609), *Deuteromelia* (1609), and *Melismata* (1611).<sup>69</sup> To *Deuteromelia*, the world owes a debt of nostalgia, if not of gratitude, for *Three Blind Mice* was first printed in this collection.<sup>70</sup> The tremendous success of these books during the decline in popularity of the madrigal is of equal interest. Reese has suggested that Ravenscroft may have been trying to reach a new public.<sup>71</sup> The psalter also enjoyed great popularity during this period, containing music of a simpler nature than the earlier polyphonic compositions. One of the best known psalters was Ravenscroft's, published in 1621, a second edition appearing in 1633.<sup>72</sup> Of the more than twenty-one composers included, three ex-choristers from Paul's are to be found—John Tomkins, Thomas Morley, and John Farmer (not to mention Ravenscroft himself). Two other names of some interest are also brought to one's attention—John Milton (the father of the poet) and William Harrison, actor.<sup>73</sup>

Despite confusion concerning the exact date of the reopening of Paul's, it must have been the boys mentioned in the 1598 list who provided at least the nucleus of the acting company when it was reactivated. For the period, 1600(1599?) to 1602, Hillebrand assigns the following plays: Lyly's? *Maids Metamorphosis*; Marston's *Jack Drum's Entertainment*; the anonymous *Dr. Dodypol*; Marston's *Antonio and Mellida*; and Marston's

65. DNB, XIV, pp. 936-37.

66. *Ibid.*, pp. 937-38.

67. *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, VIII, p. 63.

68. H. N. Hillebrand, *The Child Actors*, p. 112.

69. Reese, *op. cit.*, p. 833.

70. *Ibid.*, p. 834.

71. *Ibid.*, p. 835.

72. *Loc. cit.*

73. Chambers, *op. cit.*, II, p. 320. Harrison seems to have been with Worcester's company in 1583.

*Antonio's Revenge*.<sup>74</sup> To this listing, Harbage has added the anonymous *Blurt Master Constable*; Marston's *Histriomastix* and *What You Will*; and Middleton and Dekker's *The Family of Love*.<sup>75</sup>

Bishop Travis was initially responsible for the examination of the last extant list of Paul's personnel in 1607, at which time the vicars choral included John Sharpe (1594, 1598), Nicholas Younge (1594, 1598), Thomas Harrolde (1598), Peter Hopkins, Edward Peers (replacing Thomas Giles as Master), and George Brown. The children included Henry Burnett, Richard Kenede, John Mansell, Thomas Waters, Thomas Peers, Richard Patrick, Nicholas Cross, John Dawson, and Thomas and Lightfoot Codbolt.<sup>76</sup> Of the vicars choral, only Nicholas Younge (who had, by this time, been with the Cathedral for at least thirteen years) was particularly noted as a musician. There is apparently no information about the musical ability of Peers (Pierce, Pearce). Again, one finds that none of the children in this list appears to have been engaged in a further career as a musician, nor did any apparently succeed as an actor. As a company of actor-musicians, Paul's had ceased to be in 1607.

Three individuals of major interest remain to be discussed—Sebastian Westcote, John Heywood, and Thomas Giles. In considering musical contributions to the drama, one is almost reluctant to admit that Westcote, the most celebrated of all Masters of Paul's, has left no extant compositions nor even a reputation of being an outstanding performer. Actually, the only direct information relating to his rôle as a musician is contained in his will:

Item I geve and bequeathe to the vse of the Almenrye Howse of the said Cathedrall Church of St Pawle where I nowe dwell to be and remayne vnto the same Almenrye howse to the vse of the Almenere there for the tyme beinge forever towards the furnishinge of the same howse, my cheste of vyalyns and vialles to exercise and learne the children and Choiristers there.<sup>77</sup>

To his eternal credit as a musician, however, is his supervision of the training of some of the greatest of Elizabethan composers.

During Westcote's first years of tenure at Paul's, John Heywood appears as his associate, but the extent of his connection with Westcote and Paul's boys is a matter of conjecture. He was employed by the Chapel Royal as a singer from 1519 until 1521, and as a virginalist from 1529 until 1549,<sup>78</sup> but his activities were by no means limited to the Chapel, for he appeared with the children of Paul's in an interlude before the Princess Mary in 1538<sup>79</sup> and is known to have participated in a pageant at Mary's coronation.<sup>80</sup> Unfortunately, only one of his songs is extant.

74. H. N. Hillebrand, *The Child Actors*, p. 208.

75. Alfred Harbage, *Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions*, p. 347.

76. H. N. Hillebrand, *The Child Actors*, p. 112.

77. Quoted in H. N. Hillebrand, *ibid.*, p. 327.

78. *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, IV, p. 272.

79. *Loc. cit.*

80. Clode, *Early History*, II, pp. 111-12.

Thomas Giles, the next-to-last Master of Paul's, was a well known organist. Immediately after the Dissolution of 1539/40, he became head choirister at Westminster Abbey and was succeeded by William Munday in 1543.<sup>81</sup> From 1543 until 1582, there are no records of his activities other than the fact that he succeeded Westcote in the Mastership of the children at Paul's in 1582.<sup>82</sup> Because of his long life and also because one of his sons bore the given name of Thomas, his career has caused scholars many moments of uncertainty. Chambers, for example, states that Giles became instructor in music to Prince Henry in 1606 and to Charles I in 1613.<sup>83</sup> Observing that Giles's first post was sanctioned in 1540, one would be forced to conclude that his was a career of seventy-three years' duration. It is reasonable, therefore, to think that it was his son and namesake, Thomas, who served at court along with Nathaniel Giles, his other son. It may be that the younger Thomas was one of the composers who wrote for Champion's *Masque of Lord Hayes*.

One frequently discovers statements to the effect that the choirboy-actors were well trained in instrumental music. The chief evidence of a documentary nature is that of Westcote's will, in which he bequeaths viols and violins for the use of the boys and choiristers of Paul's for their further training. The record of Merchant Taylors' payment of the children for their "playing upon vials and singing" is, therefore, of some value. The most conclusive evidence, however, is that provided by the later careers of the Paul's choirboys themselves. Hillebrand has listed a total of forty-nine boys. Of the ten found in the list of 1554, John Farmer is known to have pursued a successful career as a musician. Of the nine found in the 1574 list, Morley and Philips had outstanding careers; that of Robert Knight seems to have been quite satisfactory. The nine boys listed in 1594, on the other hand, have left no evidence of musical careers, although John Taylor may have become an actor. Thomas Ravenscroft and John Tomkins, mentioned in the 1598 list, had notable careers as musicians, while Robert Coles and John Norwood continued for a time, at least, as actors. Not included in a formal listing as such, but mentioned in Westcote's will, was another well-known musician, Nicholas Carleton. All of the names presented by Hillebrand have been checked with existing lists of actors, the *Dictionary of National Biography*, and various musical references. It seems significant, therefore, that of the children known to have been choirboys at one time during the period from 1554 until 1598, a total of seven were later distinguished musicians; two (both from the 1598) definitely followed an acting career; and one (from the 1594 list) may possibly have become an actor. Thus, it is doubly important that no

81. *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, III, p. 622.

82. *Loc. cit.*

83. Chambers, *op. cit.*, II, p. 319.

84. Reese, *op. cit.*, p. 883.

information, at least at the present, is available concerning the choirboys of Paul's in 1607. Certainly, one may conclude that Hamlet's distrust of the child actors may have been unfounded, judging from this evidence. The boys of Paul's made an enormous contribution to the history of Elizabethan drama, but their *raison d'être* was to provide music for the Cathedral. When this conclusion is accepted, their contributions seem all the more remarkable.