

PARACLETE  PRESS

# Good King Wenceslas

A Dramatic Paraphrase for SATB,  
Soprano and Baritone Soli, and Piano

Leslie Betteridge

## Leslie Betteridge

Mr. Betteridge has given much of his life to Church music. One of his earliest compositions, a Toccata for violin and piano, which he composed at the age of 18, was played at a Festival of British Music by Marie Hall, a world-famous violinist.

His first major appointment in Church music was organist and choirmaster at the well-known Church of St Barnabas, Oxford. During World War II he served in the army, finished as a Staff Major at the War Office, London. Recommencing his musical work, he succeeded Dr. George Oldroyd at St Michael and All Angels, Croydon.

In 1964, he was appointed to the Cathedral of the Most Holy Trinity, Bermuda, where he took a leading part in the musical life of the island. In addition to his Cathedral work, he conducted the Bermuda Philharmonic Society chorus and orchestra. It was during this time Paraclete Press became interested in his work, and began publishing his compositions for choir and organ.

He is an Associate of Trinity College, London, and a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists.

# Good King Wenceslas

A Dramatic Paraphrase  
by  
Leslie Betteridge

## Notes on the Performance

King Wenceslas ..... Baritone  
(Adorned in crown and robe)

Page ..... A Boy or Girl soprano  
(Clad in tunic and hose)

Peasant ..... Non-singing part  
(Dressed in rags)

Chorus ..... Four parts or Unison

Chorus to be standing in choir formation back stage.  
Front stage to be clear for action by King, Page and Peasant.

## Notes on the Carol

The words are by John Mason Neale (1818-66) and they relate to the legend of King Wenceslas who lived and was martyred in Bohemia in the 10th century. Its only claim to be treated as a carol is that the event (if it ever happened) took place on St Stephen's day (26th December). The moral of the story tells of the blessedness of charity.

The tune is of much earlier origin and comes from the famous collection known as 'Piae Cantiones' which was compiled by Theodoricus Petrus of Nyland in Finland in 1582. The tune was originally used in conjunction with the spring carol 'Tempus adest florum', then in 1853 Dr. Neale substituted it for his rather inferior but now more popular words.

To the Bermuda Philharmonic Society who first performed it.

# Good King Wenceslas

## A Dramatic Paraphrase

Original Words by Dr. J. M. Neale  
Original Tune from "Piae Cantiones"

Leslie Betteridge

**Allegro moderato**

Piano\*

*f* R.H.

8va - - - - -

5

8va - - - - -

10

*Enter King from right - who strides in*

15

*with dignity and looks around.*

*tr.*

The musical score is written for piano in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of four systems of music. The first system starts with a treble clef and a bass clef, with a key signature of one sharp and a 4/4 time signature. The tempo is marked 'Allegro moderato'. The first system includes a dynamic marking of 'f' and 'R.H.' (Right Hand). The second system begins with a measure number '5' and includes an '8va' (octave) marking. The third system begins with a measure number '10' and includes the instruction 'Enter King from right - who strides in'. The fourth system begins with a measure number '15' and includes the instruction 'with dignity and looks around.' and a trill marking 'tr.'.

\* Whilst the accompaniment is written for piano it may be adapted for organ, if preferred.

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20 *King and members of chorus all shade their eyes and look around.*

Chorus\*  
(Piano  
ad lib)

*f* Good King Wen - ces - las looked out, On the

25 *Indicate round about.*

Feast of Ste - phen, When the snow lay round a - bout,

32 *Indicate deep and even.* *Everyone points upwards.*

Deep and crisp — and ev - en. Bright - ly shone — the moon that

39 *Indicate cold.* *Enter Peasant (far left).*

night, Though the frost — was cru - el When a poor — man

46 *Everyone points at Peasant gathering fuel - near left wings.*

came in sight, Gath - 'ring win - ter fu - el.

\* The chorus parts may be sung in unison throughout, with accompaniment.

52 **Boldly** *f* *King looks at wings (right).* *ff* *King shouts:*  
 King: "Page, come ye hither, and by me stand."  
 Hith-er page and stand by me. Hith-er page and stand by me.

57 *Enter Page (running).* *King points at Peasant.*  
 If thou know'st it tell - ing, Yon-der pea-sant who is he? Where and what his dwell - ing?

63 *Page points afar.* *Points upwards.*  
 Page: Sire, he lives a good league hence, Un-der-neath the moun-tain, Right a - gainst the

68 *Again points afar.*  
 for - est fence, By Saint Ag - nes foun - tain.

72 *King points to wings (right).* *Page runs off (right).* *King shouts:*  
 King: "Prithee forget thou not the wine."  
 Bring me flesh and bring me wine, Bring me pine logs hith - er:

76 (King) *King points at Page and self.* *King points at Peasant.*  
 Page returns with logs and bottle.  
 Thou and I will see him dine, When we bear them thith - er.

80 *King and Page waltz around stage.*  
 Chorus *f* Page and mon - arch forth they went, Forth they went to -  
 (forth) (Forth)

86 *(Wind effect if possible.)*  
 - geth - er; Through the rude winds wild la -

91 **Slower** *Again indicate cold.*

ment, And the bit - ter weath - er.

(And)

96 *King and Page stop.* **Slower** *Page looks at King.*

Page *f* Sire, the night is dark-er now,

Piano *mf* *rall.*

102 *Page points to sky and wings.* *Page shouts:* "Dim the lights 'tis a dark night." *Stage lights are dimmed.* *Page again points to sky.*

*ff* Sire, the night is dark-er now, *f* Sire, the night is

108 *(Wind effect, if possible)* **Gradually get slower** *Page clasps heart.*

dark-er now, And the wind blows strong - er; Fails my heart I

*8va*

*p*

*Shakes head and sinks to floor.**King helps Page  
to his feet.**King followed by Page march briskly around.*

112

**Still slower****Briskly***Lights up.*

King:

know not how; I can go no long - er. *f* Mark my foot steps good my page,

118

*King stops and points at page.*

Tread thou in them bold - ly; Thou shalt find the win - ters rage Freeze thy blood less

123

*King followed by Page resumes march.*

cold - - ly. *ff* In his mas - ter's steps he trod  
*8va* - - - - -

128

*Both stop and point down.**Chorus, King and Page  
place forefingers to lips.*

Where — the snow lay din - ted; Heat was in the ve - ry shhh hush  
(instead of "sod")



*Chorus points at King.* *All hands together as in prayer.*

132

S  
A

Which the — Saint had — print — ed. There — fore Chris — tian men, be sure, —

T  
B

*Chorus point at King.* *All hands together as in prayer.*

This line if sung in unison

132

Which the Saint had print — ed. There — fore Chris — tian men, be sure,

*Everyone points at audience.*

136

Wealth or rank pos — sess — ing, Ye who now will bless the poor,

*Everyone points at audience.*

Unison line

136

Wealth or rank pos — sess — ing, Ye who now will bless the poor,

140 **Slower ff** *Everyone points up to Heaven.*

*Curtain.*

Shall \_\_\_\_\_ your - selves find bless - - ing. \_\_\_\_\_

**ff**

Shall your - selves find bless - ing. \_\_\_\_\_

**ff**

Shall your-selves find bless - - ing. \_\_\_\_\_

**ff**

Shall \_\_\_\_\_ your - selves find \_\_\_\_\_ bless - - ing. \_\_\_\_\_

*Everyone points up to Heaven.*

**Slower ff**

*Curtain.*

Unison line

Shall your-selves find bless - - ing. \_\_\_\_\_

**Slower**

140

**ff**

rall. - - - - -

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