

Blackburn Cathedral, 23 December 2013

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Nine Lessons & Carols

What a joyful evening that was, and yet one which was also tinged with a special sadness, for this was the last appearance of long-time Blackburn chorister **Anthony Tattersall** who, with his family, would be emigrating to New Zealand early the following morning.



Anthony joined the cathedral choir at the age of 8 thirty-four years ago – his twin brother, **Peter**, had joined at the same time. and his elder brother, **David**, had been an outstanding head chorister. Anthony became a dedicated teacher, a brilliant recording engineer (he recorded many of our cathedral concerts) and also he founded **Octavius** – an outstanding group of singers who had graced some of our services for many years.

The clergy and choir began to line up in the assembly area – watched over by portraits of two past bishops – Baddeley and Claxton.



Whist in the corner of that packed assembly area BBC Radio Lancashire was preparing to record the whole service for transmission on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, directed by **Gerald Jackson** – as he had for the last 40 years!

The first verse of *Once in Royal David's City* was sung most confidently by choir prefect **Oliver Fulwell** – we had made a good start!



Director of Music, **Samuel Hudson**, had chosen a splendid programme of carols – mixing traditional and modern in happy juxtaposition:

What sweeter music – John Rutter
Adam lay ybounden – Boris Ord
In the bleak midwinter – Harold Darke
In the Stillness of a church – Sally Beamish
Alleluia, Virga Jesse – William Byrd, ed Samuel Hudson
There is no Rose – Benjamin Britten
My Lord has come – words & music by Will Todd (b. 1970)
The Lamb – John Tavener
Der Engel sprach zu den Hirten (SATTBarBB) – Schütz, ed S Hudson
The Three Kings – Peter Cornelius, arr Ivor Atkins
Ding dong! merrily on high – arr Willcocks

plus more carols for us all to sing:

God rest you merry, gentlemen
While shepherds watched their flocks,
O come, all ye faithful, and
Hark! the herald-angels sing

The first lesson was read so well by chorister **Zak Tayler**...



...seen here approaching the central lectern with assistant Virger, **Rachel Fielding**, whose husband, **Paul**, sings alto in the cathedral choir, son **William** (far right, below) is head chorister and whose daughter **Elizabeth** is a keen member of the Girls' choir.





It was a special delight for us to welcome **Bishop Julian** to preside over his first Nine Lessons and Carols, seen here with the Dean, our four Residentiary Canons, our assistant Curate, two Archdeacons and the Bishop of Lancaster & the Very Revd. Canon Kevin Kenny.

Bishop Julian gave the Blessing, flanked by the archdeacons of Blackburn and Lancaster, and the Bishop of Lancaster, with the Bishop's Chaplain in attendance.



Cantoris men, L-R: Paul Fielding, Alastair Bolton, Anthony Tattersall, Edward McCullough, Philip Johnson, Choral Scholars Philip Almond and Nic Walker, Stewart Hopkinson (Chairman of the Choirs' Association) and Philip Wilson, whose second-hand bookstall in the crypt is supplying steady much-welcome funds for the Choirs' Association and our *Music & More* magazine. (Thank you!)



And we recessed to the glorious strains of Bach's *In dulci Jubilo* played by assistant Director of Music, **Shaun Turnbull**.

But in the Song School there was the final farewell to **Anthony Tattersall** when **Samuel Hudson** presented him with a parting present – a card and some NZ currency (in addition to the pair of paintings of local scenes he'd already received).



Derek Crompton again sang the solo in *The Three Kings* with authority and musicianship – which he has made his own for many years.

Choirmen L-R: Matthew Thomas, Derek Crompton, Philip Hunwick, James Twigg and Andrew Orr.

And waiting their turn to sing were the boys: Callum Briggs, Sebastian Roberts, Joseph Dearden, Joshua Holden & Lee Felipe



It was a memorable evening for us all.
Anthony, with his wife Kerry and children Matthew and Charlotte, take with them our boundless thanks and very best wishes for their happiness and success in their new life in New Zealand.