

16. A Hawkes-Up, for a Hunt's Up (A Briefe Discourse, 1614)

Thomas Ravenscroft
(c. 1582-c. 1633)
arr. William Melton

Ravenscroft, Thomas

(born between 1582 and 1592, possibly in Sussex; died after 1633, possibly in London)

Ravenscroft joined the choir of St. Paul's Cathedral in the late 1590s. He received his bachelor's degree from Cambridge sometime after 1605, then worked in theatre posts as a singer, instrumentalist, composer and actor. He was music master at Christ's Hospital from 1618 to 1622.

Ravenscroft composed anthems, motets and fantasias and left two theoretical treatises, *A Briefe Discourse of the True (but Neglected) Use of Charact'ring the Degrees...Examples Whereof are Exprest in the Harmony of 4 Voyces* (London, 1614) and *A Treatise of Musick* (MS). He is however best remembered for his collections of folk transcriptions: *Pammelia* (1609, comprising a hundred rounds and catches), *Deuteromelia* (1609; 31 pieces including the immortal 'Three Blind Mice') and *Melismata* (1611; 21 pieces, largely madrigals). In 1621 he published a popular psalter (*The Whole Booke of Psalmes*) containing more than 100 metrical Psalm tunes, many to his own harmonisations. Sir John Hawkins would write of Ravenscroft's influence over a century afterwards that 'even at this day he is deemed a happy man in many places, who is master of a genuine copy of Ravenscroft's Psalmes'.

'A Hawkes-Up, for a Hunt's Up' appeared as the third number in *A Briefe Discourse* of 1614. Despite the title it does not make use of 'The Hunt's Up' ground or discant, but does share a rollicking 6/8 chorus and an exhortation to wake and greet the new hunting day.

Text by William Melton