Seraphic Minstrels

Sound, sound your instruments of joy!

W B Niniss, Cornwall (fl. c.1810-30?)

Symphony

Treble

Intro & Interlude

1 Sound, sound your instruments of joy,

Alto

4 Let heav’n and earth and sea proclaim,

Tenor

5 Let us to his almighty Name

Horn in F

8 Sound, sound your instruments of joy

Let heav’n and earth and sea proclaim

Let us to his almighty Name

Bass

Inst. _ _ _ _ _ _ _

E: ‰

To triumph shake each string, to triumph shake each string;

The won’drous love abroad, the won’drous love abroad;

Who reigns beyond the sky, who reigns beyond the sky:

 inst. _ _ _ _ _ _ _

8

See! the glad’ning dawn appears,

Surprising scene! stupendous love!

Bright angels deck the morn;

The Lord of Life descend!

Behold! // the great I AM is given; //

He left // his glorious realms above //

// The King // of Glory born.

// To be // the sinner’s friend.

Text repeats are shown between the // signs.
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Seraphic Minstrels was copied from a manuscript by Rollo Woods, probably from a Dorset ms, and differs little from the version now to be found in the New Oxford Book of Carols. Two printed versions of the carol are known - Ralph Dunstan's Second Book of Christmas Carols (1925), and Old Cornish Carols, a less well known collection by Ben Barnicoat (1927). Barnicoat took the music with very little adaption from ms sources written and collected by his grandfather Francis Woolcock (1810-1880), of Tregony, Cornwall, and his transcription was used in NOBC. The notes in NOBC are dismissive of the way Dunstan rewrote the majority of the harmonies. The text, verses 1, 2 & 4, are from Samuel Pearce (c.1776) and used by Barnicoat. Dunstan supplied verse 3, and verse 5 comes from the ms used by Rollo Woods, the repeat being difficult to fit to the music. This trans. © 2008 Shelwin Music, Oxford. Tel: 01865 865773