

BENJAMIN BRITTEN

Men of Goodwill

Variations on a Christmas Carol
for orchestra
(1947)

Faber Music Limited
London

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Britten composed 'Men of Goodwill' for the BBC programme with the same title which was broadcast on Christmas Day 1947, immediately before the Christmas Day speech of King George VI to the Empire. The programme, arranged and produced by Laurence Gilliam and Leonard Cotterell, was described as 'a Christmas journey across the world' and consisted of live and pre-recorded messages from post-war Europe and the Commonwealth. Continuity was provided by a narration, spoken by Laurence Olivier. The music, a series of variations on the carol 'God rest ye merry, gentlemen', was used as title music and interludes. It was performed by the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Walter Goehr.

To make a sequence suitable for concert performance the original second and fourth variations have been interchanged. The music of the present final variation (which, although marked 'new last section' in Britten's full score, was not used in the original broadcast) has been linked to the preceding variation to make a fugal coda.

Colin Matthews
November 1981

ORCHESTRA

Piccolo
2 Flutes
2 Oboes
2 Clarinets in B♭
2 Bassoons

4 Horns in F
2 Trumpets in C
2 Tenor Trombones
Bass Trombone
Tuba

Timpani
Percussion (2 players)
Cymbals, suspended cymbal, side drum,
tenor drum, bass drum, xylophone

Harp

Strings

Orchestral parts are available on hire from the publishers

Duration: c. 8 minutes

MEN OF GOODWILL

Variations on a Christmas Carol for orchestra

BENJAMIN BRITTEN
(1913–1976)

Allegro pesante (♩ = 152)

Score for the first section of the orchestra, measures 1 through 12. The instruments listed are Piccolo, Flutes 1 & 2, Oboes 1 & 2, Clarinets in B♭ 1 & 2, Bassoons 1 & 2, Horns in F 1 & 2, 3 & 4, Trumpets in C 1 & 2, Trombones 1 & 2, Bass Trombone, Tuba, Timpani, Percussion (2 players), and Harp.

Key markings and dynamics include:

- Horns in F:** *p* and *f* markings.
- Trumpets in C:** *f* *brillante* marking.
- Trombones 1 & 2:** *f* *brillante* and *f* *sempre* markings.
- Timpani:** *p* and *mf* markings.
- Percussion:** *p* and *mf* markings, with *B.D.* and *Cym.* indicated.

Allegro pesante (♩ = 152)

sul G (change bows ad lib.)

Score for the string section, measures 1 through 12. The instruments listed are Violins 1, Violins 2, Violas, Cellos, and Doublebasses.

Key markings and dynamics include:

- Violins 1 & 2:** *p* and *f* *sempre* markings.
- Violas:** *p* and *f* *sempre* markings.
- Cellos:** *p* and *f* *sempre* markings.
- Doublebasses:** *p* and *f* *sempre* markings.

A

1 & 2
Hns. in F
3 & 4
Tpts. in C
1 & 2
Tbns.
1 & 2
Tuba
Timp.
Cym.
B.D.
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vlc.
Db.

mf
mf
più f
più f
p
p
f
mf
mf
(sul G)
(sul G)
sul C

