

Sixteen Anthems, 1766

JOSIAH FLAGG in 1766 published at Boston a music book entitled *Sixteen Anthems*. The exact title is as follows:

Sixteen/ Anthems,/ collected/ From Tan'sur, Williams, Knapp, Ashworth & Stephenson./ To which is added,/ a few Psalm Tunes./ Proper to Entertain and Improve those who have made some Proficiency in the Art of/ Singing./ Engraved and Printed by Josiah Flagg, and Sold by him at his House near the Old-North Meeting-House, and at/ his Shop in Fish-Street, also by the Booksellers in Boston, New-England. (Price 6 Shillings.)

The American Antiquarian Society copy contains title-page [p. 1], with reverse blank [p. 2], blank page recto [p. 3], page with "To the Reader," "Explanation of foreign Words," and "An Alphabetical Table," [p. 4]. These preliminary pages were in type, followed by pages 5 to 60, all engraved on one side of the leaf with reverse blank. The Table indexes the first lines of the tunes, comprising eighteen Anthems, six Psalm Tunes, and one Song. There is no tune indexed beyond page 60, and page 60 seems, according to the appearance of the book and the binding, which is original, to be the final page. The size of the book is $5\frac{1}{4}$ inches high by $8\frac{3}{4}$ wide.

The Library of Congress copy is identical, except that it has ten unnumbered pages beyond page 60, or pages 61 to 70, apparently engraved by the same hand and in the same style as the earlier part of the book. The ten pages contain an Anthem, Psalm 29, by William Knapp, beginning "Bring unto the Lord, O ye mighty"; and including A Hymn for Ester, by W. S., beginning "Jesus Christ is ris'n today"; and an Anthem out of the second chapter of Luke, beginning "Behold I bring you glad Tidings." Assumedly these ten pages were engraved and added in a later issue and binding. None of them are called for in the Table.

The book is advertised in *The Massachusetts Gazette and Boston News-Letter* of October 2, 1766, as follows:

A COLLECTION

Of all Tansu'r's, and a Number of other Anthems, from Williams, Knapp, Ashworth, and Stephenson. To which are added, some Tunes from Lion, Smith, Ravencraft, &c — Just Published and to be sold by Josiah Flagg (who teaches Psalmody, on Monday and Thursday Evenings) at his House near the Old North Meeting House; also to be sold at his Shop in Fifth Street, by Mess'rs Thomas Leveret, and Samuel Webb in Cornhill, and the rest of the Booksellers in Boston, by Benjamin Loring, at the Head of the Long Wharff, and by Mr. Salmon, at his House near the Sign of the Lamb.

N.B. A sufficient Number of Persons appearing that want any particular Anthem, or Tune, may have it struck off immediately.

In this advertisement it is noticeable that Flagg states that he published and sold the book, but he does not state that he engraved it, as is the inference in the imprint. A careful reading of the imprint would lead to the conclusion merely that the book was engraved, but that it was printed and published by Flagg. The statement in the advertisement that buyers could have individual tunes or pages struck off immediately is interesting. No such individual printings are known.

Revere undoubtedly engraved the music for this volume. It is exactly like his work in the 1764 volume, and even more like the later *New England Psalm Singer* of 1770. The lettering, notes of music, and clef signs were all characteristically his, and unlike any of the other engravers of music of his period — Benjamin Pierpont, J. W. Gilman, S. Wightman, or J. Norman. Flagg himself, in spite of the imprint, was not an engraver. He was a close friend of Revere and presumably would have engaged no other engraver to do his work.

The book is rare, with the only known copies in the American Antiquarian Society and the Library of Congress.