

# Hatfield

Tr. 5  
1. Let others boast how strong they be, Nor death nor danger fear; But we'll confess O Lord to thee, What feeble things we are.

C.  
2. Our life contains a thousand springs And dies if one be gone; Strange that a harp of thousand strings Should keep in tune so long!

T. 8  
3. He spoke and straight our hearts and brains In all their motions rose; Let blood, said he, flow round the veins, And round the veins it flows.

B.

Tr. 10 15  
1. Fresh as the grass our bodies stand, And flourish bright and gay; A blasting wind sweeps o'er the land, And fades the grass away.

C.  
2. But 'tis our God supports our frame, The God that built us first: Sal-va-tion to th'Al-migh-ty name That reared us from the dust.

T. 8  
3. While we have breath, or use our tongues, Our Maker we'll adore; His Spirit moves our heaving lungs, Or they would breathe no more.

B.

This tune was probably composed by William Billings before 1780, and copied into *The Waterhouse Manuscript* at (or soon after) a singing-school session; the manuscript page is dated May 30, 1780. Obviously the copyist, Susanna Heath, didn't complete copying the Treble part. The words are recondite, apparently a later stanza from a longer poem, *Here is a song, which doth belong*, but the first complete version of this poem was not published until 1812.

The tune appeared in Shumway's *American Harmony* (1793) with different words, *Naked, as from the earth we came*, then in Ingalls' *Christian Harmony* (1805) as *The True Penitent*, with yet different words. Billings had apparently considerably revised the tune in the 1780s or 1790s, but the revision didn't appear until the posthumous *Psalm-Singer's Amusement* in 1804 or thereabouts, when it was paired with Isaac Watts' words above.