

Kostentyn - Constantine in Kerrier Funeral Hymn

Communicated by James Roberts (born 1839) to M H N Cuthbert Atchley who published an arrangement for 4 voices in the Old Cornwall Society Journal 1936 (Vol 2, no. 6 pages 11-13). Cornish version written by Robert Morton Nance in 1962.

3 Weep not for him/her ye standers by,
Na oleugh war y lerg h a dus

7 who gather here a - round.
us sevys ryb an beth.

11 His/Her body in the grave must lie
Ow cortos son an corn deth bras;
until the trumpet sound.
ena ef a wroweth

Verse 2

Our flesh is as the dust and clay
To which it must return,
O holy sirit grant, we pray,
That we may cease to mourn.

Gwers 2

Ky mabden yu kepar ha'n pry
Whath ynno may tewlel;
A spyrys Sans, Gront oll dhyn ny
Ma na wren kynny pell.

Verse 3

Look down with pity's softest eye,
And grant him/ her peace and rest.
His / Her Sins forgive, His/her soul recieve,
Eternal Jesu blest.

Gwers 3

Treythek myr warnan , ha ry
Dhodho powes a bys;
Gaf e Jesu, ha bynary
Y enef kemer dhys.

Cornish version by A.S.D.Smith 1962

Gwers 1

Na-n-oleugh ef, why bobel dha
Usy cuntellys a der dro;
Y gorf a-dal y'n beth growedha
An corn whethys erna vo.

Gwers 2

Agan kyk yu avel dowst ha pry
A-res dewheles dhedha
A Spyrys Sans, gront dhyn-ny
Na-wryllyn namoy murnya.

Gwers 3

Myr orto gans trueth moyha cuf,
hodho gront cres ha powesva.
Y gamwyth gaf, y enef resyf,
Jesu gwyn, a-bys nefra.

Kostentyn - Constantine

Kostentyn / Constantine in Kerrier from Cornish instrumental Tradition as recorded by the Racca Project 1995-1997.

The image shows a musical score for the piece 'Kostentyn - Constantine'. It is written in 2/2 time and consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a 2/2 time signature. The second staff starts with a measure rest labeled '3'. The third staff starts with a measure rest labeled '7'. The fourth staff starts with a measure rest labeled '11'. The music is a single melodic line in treble clef, featuring a mix of quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes, with some rests and repeat signs.

Notes

Communicated by James Roberts of Constantine to M H N Cuthbert Atchley who published an arrangement for 4 voices in the Old Cornwall Society Journal 1936 (Vol 2, no. 6 pages 11-13). James Roberts was born in 1839 and in 1936 it was described as having been sung “70 or 75 years ago as the coffin was carried from the church to the grave side, or at the grave side only”. The original 19th century words were taken from common inscriptions on grave stones but Atchley together with a vicar from Constantine, the Rev. Charles Plank, changed the words from the second into the third person in order to make them suitable as a hymn. They also substituted the last verse, which they found muddled, with one from another Cornish grave stone. The original words were not recorded.

In 1962 both Robert Morton Nance and A.S.D. Smith published Cornish versions of the lyrics in the Old Cornwall Society Journal. Both are loose translations and make an interesting comparison in the different style of Cornish used by Nance and Smith.

The melody has been drawn into Cornish instrumental tradition and was noted by the Racca Project 1995 / 1997. As an instrumental the tune parts “A” and “B” tend to be repeated to make a 30 bar tune. It was played at the Battle of the Somme commemoration service for the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry at St Petrocks Church Bodmin 1st July 2016.

Merv Davey 1st July 2016

Sources:

Old Cornwall, 1936, Vol 2, No 12 pages 11-13

Old Cornwall, 1962, Vol 6, No 2, page 61

Old Cornwall, 1962, Vol 6, No 3, page 119 Racca, Cornish Tunes for Cornish Sessions (Calstock, Racca Project, 1997) no 160