

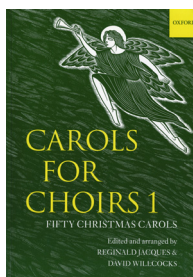
Oxford University Press wishes Sir David Willcocks a very happy 90th birthday on 30th December 2009.



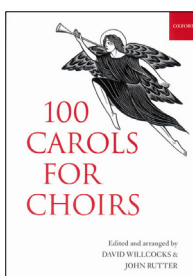
Sir David Willcocks with William Owen, author of [A Life in Music](#)

Sir David began his musical training as a chorister at Westminster Abbey from 1929 under Sir Ernest Bullock. In 1938 he was appointed organ scholar at King's College, Cambridge. After being awarded the Military Cross for his actions during the war, he completed his studies and in 1947 was elected a Fellow of King's College. He went on to become organist at Salisbury Cathedral and then to Worcester Cathedral where began his long association with the Three Choirs Festival and the City of Birmingham Choir. In 1960 he also became the musical director of the Bach Choir in London.

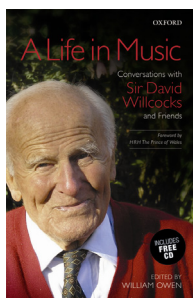
In the 1971 Queen's Birthday Honours, Sir David was appointed a Commander of the Order of the British Empire and was created a Knight Bachelor in 1977 in the Queen's Silver Jubilee Honours.



Sir David's long association with OUP began in the early 1960s with the birth of '[Carols for Choirs](#)'. After the success of the first book there was great demand for Sir David to produce a second volume, but by this time Reginald Jacques (his collaborator on the first volume) had died. Sir David recommended a new collaborator, a young composer named John Rutter. Between them they created the most successful and widely used series of carol books of the 20th century.



John Rutter writes: *Sir David Willcocks has transformed our musical celebration of Christmas, and it's hard to imagine now what it must have been like in the BCC era (before 'Carols for Choir'). His 90th birthday falls, appropriately, in the Christmas season, and I want to join his innumerable friends and colleagues in wishing him the happiest of birthdays. He has helped to make our Christmases merry for almost fifty years.*



Sir David's life is beautifully told in [A Life in Music](#); a collection of conversations and reminiscences with Sir David and friends with William Owen and includes a forward by HRH The Prince of Wales.

Reviews: *This volume is not merely a fascinating account of a distinguished musical career; it is also, and perhaps more importantly, the story of a rich life lived through music.*

Conor Farrington, Times Literary Supplement, December 2008

This is a joy and a fantastic idea. It tells the fascinating life story of a man who has stood at the very centre of British twentieth-century choral music.

Andrew Palmer, Cathedral Music

Sir David's birthday is being marked by a number of choirs who have had long associations with him, including King's College, Cambridge who will be recording music of Sir David's choice early next year, and The Bach Choir, with a concert this Christmas which will include a carol written in Sir David's honour by Bob Chilcott.