

# The Elgar Society JOURNAL



JANUARY

1982

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*The editor does not necessarily agree with the views expressed by contributors, nor does the Elgar Society accept responsibility for such views.*

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The cover portrait appears by kind permission of "Radio Times".

# The Elgar Society Journal

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## EDITORIAL

JANUARY 1982

Vol. 2, no.4

It cannot be said that the last few months have matched the heady excitements of early summer, but much has been happening. Another successful Three Choirs Festival at Worcester, and the traditional excellent Elgar Society Tea to launch things off from an Elgar viewpoint! Arranged by the West Midlands branch, some 71 persons came along, including several visitors from overseas.

One thing noticeable is the veritable spate of Elgar recordings which have been issued this year, and which is reflected in the unusually large number of pages we have had to devote to record reviews. Some of these recordings have brought Elgar pieces to the catalogues for the first time.

Abroad Elgar's music continues to achieve recognition or rediscovery, and I was interested to discover, on a recent visit to Toronto, that the Toronto Orpheus Choir (a fine body of singers) is to perform the "Scenes from the Bavarian Highlands" in June 1982. Also, Joseph Pilbery (a member of the Society) is to conduct "Cockaigne" in Gibraltar in January. At home our branches continue successfully, and a special occasion was the visit of Lady Barbirolli to the East Midlands branch. Sir John was, of course, a devoted Elgarian, and it is a pleasure for us that Lady Barbirolli finds time to help and attend so many Elgar events.

The foremost Elgar story of the last few months however, is of the sale at Sotheby's of the proof copy of the full score of the Violin Concerto. Given by Elgar to the great Bach scholar C.S. Terry, in October 1910, the fascination of the copy lies in the many corrections and important alterations in Elgar's hand. Terry typed out an account of the many changes made before the first performance, and this is contained in the volume. Additionally there are five letters from Elgar, photographs of Elgar, Kreisler, Plas Gwyn, newscuttings and programmes. It is interesting to note that the famous Spanish quotation was changed slightly in Terry's presence, and he was always convinced that the 'Soul enshrined' was Elgar's own. We should all be glad that this priceless item has been purchased for the British Library.

RONALD TAYLOR  
Editor

A. T. "Bertie" SHAW

On October 24th, 1981 the death occurred of A.T. Shaw, just short of his 85th year. In that long life Bertie Shaw devoted much of his enthusiasm and talents to propagating the work of Edward Elgar. One of the founder-members of the Elgar Society he was its chairman for many years, and the architect of much of its expansion. His musical career stretched back over 60 years, almost all of it in the Malvern and Worcester areas. For many years he was actively connected with the Three Choirs Festival, and had often sung tenor in the chorus. His love of music and Worcestershire gave strength to the reborn Malvern Festivals in post-war years, and to the Elgar Society which rose from them. Until almost the end of his life he continued to write music criticisms, frequently acutely observed, for the local newspapers. In the Malvern Gazette for October 29th appeared a long obituary in which Frank Greatwich detailed some of Bertie Shaw's contributions to local musical life. We quote from it here, with due acknowledgement:

"Very few readers of Worcestershire newspapers will be able to recall a time when critical music notices appeared without the initials A.T.S. appended.

Bertie Shaw contributed such notices, as well as other articles on music, for more than 50 years. At a conservative estimate those initials must have appeared in local papers between 5,000 and 6,000 times. He always wrote with great care and competence and endeared himself to editors by the strictest adherence to deadlines...

As well as the influence his writing had in the encouragement of musical appreciation locally he contributed in many other ways. For example, through his educational posts as a teacher of music and art; as a church organist for more than 50 years; as chairman of the Malvern Elgar Festivals held just after the second world war; as editor for a number of years of Worcester Three Choirs Festival programme book, and as one of the principal founders, and chairman...of both the Elgar Society and Worcester Concert Club. Much of this activity stretches back to a time, a generation ago, when considerably less music was being performed in Worcestershire than is the case today. Music-lovers locally who now have the advantage of such a full calendar of events owe a good deal to those who worked for this in the past, among whom A.T.S. was a notable example."

Bertie Shaw is survived by his wife Lydia, two sons, and four grandchildren. To them we offer the Society's sincere sympathy.

At the funeral on October 30th, the Society was represented by Frank Greatwich, and the West Midlands branch by Spencer Noble. The Society's wreath bore the inscription: "For A.T.S., to whom they owe so much. From all members of the Elgar Society."

## SOUTH WEST BRANCH WIN RADIO QUIZ

After several weeks of nail-biting suspense for members of the team representing South West Branch, they came out victors in the final of the 1981 BBC Radio Bristol "Words and Music Quiz" held in Colston Hall on Wednesday, 19th August.

This was the second year in which the branch had competed, having been knocked out in the second round in 1980. The same team of Derek Johnstone, Richard Doubleday and Ian Cartwright started the competition this year, and in the first round defeated a team from the Bath Symphony Orchestra. This round included a set of questions on a specialist subject, and it can be reported that the team scored full marks on their Elgar questions, whereas their opponents only answered one of their specialist questions correctly. That proved to be the turning point of the round.

In the second round the branch team were up against the Friends of the Welsh National Opera, whom we had defeated in the first round in 1980. Our opponents were out for revenge, and were leading by 46-28 before they faltered and allowed us to catch up. At the end we each had 53 points, and the tie-breaker was correctly answered by Richard Doubleday, and we went on to the semi-final. The entire team was due to be away for the semi-finals, which had been moved anyway as they had been arranged for the Royal Wedding Day. Some quick recruitment meant that Ricki Wenn and Alan Famill joined Derek Johnstone to make up the team. We were pitted against Yate Choral Society who knocked us out in 1980, and then went on to win. Derek Johnstone travelled back from North Wales to Bristol just to participate, but his journey was worthwhile for the 1980 champions were despatched by what proved to be anything but a reserve team from the Branch. Most of the contest was close, but the team showed its strength by almost monopolizing the last few sets of questions.

That brought the Branch to the final against Rolls Royce Philomusica, who had achieved a record score in one of the earlier rounds. Fortunately, the place and the occasion seemed to affect the Rolls Royce team more than ourselves (the team being Derek Johnstone, Ricki Wenn and Ian Cartwright). The Branch led most of the time, and ended up victors by 57 points to 37. The answer of the final was, however, produced by the captain of the Rolls Royce team who responded to the question "What was Madame Butterfly's son called?" with the answer: "Caterpillar". That brought the house down! Derek Johnstone fortunately knew the right answer: "Trouble."

A cheque for £100 was presented to Ian Cartwright as team captain, by the local area director of the National Westminster Bank, sponsors of the quiz. We also received the impressive Trophy presented by Ron Goodwin, for Radio Bristol.

There can be little doubt that this popular quiz, which has been running for several years, and is broadcast around noon on Sundays, provides a marvellous opportunity for publicity for participating teams. This is especially true if they make the final round, held in the large Colston Hall before an audience of about 2,000, plus the radio audience. There is such competition for places among the 16 teams to get into the first round that we cannot be sure that the South West Branch will even have a chance to defend their title in 1982, but we hope to do so as the publicity is so valuable for Branch and Society.

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Bryan Rayner Cook ---- ELGAR from a Singer's Point of View

A Day School on Saturday, 23 January 1982 at the University Reception Room, Wills Memorial Building, Queens Road, Bristol. 10.15 a.m. to 5.15 p.m. Fee: £3.00 including refreshments. Course no.B81 C03 SE

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This day course is the third to be devoted to some practical aspect of Elgar's art, and is again arranged in conjunction with the South West branch of the Elgar Society. Brian Rayner Cook will be performing a group of Elgar's songs at his recital at 1.15 p.m. in the University Reception Room on the Friday before this course (22 January). He is a well-known exponent of Elgar's music, and recently recorded some of Elgar's songs with Roger Vignoles(piano).

Programme:	10.15 a.m.	Assemble
	10.30 a.m.	1st session - General Introduction & Songs
	12.15 p.m.	Break for lunch (Not provided)
	1.30 p.m.	2nd session - The Oratorios
	3.15 p.m.	Break for Coffee and Biscuits
	3.30 p.m.	3rd session - A workshop session with performances by local singers. Points of style, technique and interpretation will be discussed as they arise.
	5.15 p.m.	End of school

APPLICATIONS MUST ARRIVE BY 15 JANUARY 1982. Fee: £3

Send to J.A.Farnill, 32 Tyndalls Park Road, Bristol BS8 1HR

Cheques & P.O.'s should be made payable to University of Bristol.

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ELGAR BIRTHPLACE MUSEUM. Please note that all enquiries about Books, Records and other sales should be made to the Curator during Museum hours by telephone on Cotheridge(0905-66) 224. Or by letter to Jack McKenzie, Elgar's Birthplace, Crown East Lane, Lower Broadheath, Worcester WR2 6RH

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### SPAIN

In April 1981 a present of 12 recordings of Elgar's music was made to Her Majesty Queen Sofia. The records were chosen by the Society, and presented by a representative of the British Embassy in Madrid. In a letter from the Embassy, Mr. Richard Parsons states "The Queen received them with graciousness and interest, and I am sure that this gesture can only serve to deepen the interest in Spain of British music and in particular that of Elgar."

### U.S.A.

A steady number of new members from the United States, though inevitably widely scattered across that very large country. Several members have expressed interest in corresponding with one another, exchanging information, etc. Full details of this correspondence scheme can be obtained from Ian Lace, 20 Quarry Hill, Haywards Heath, Sussex RH16 1NQ.

### NETHERLANDS

We are pleased to welcome several new Dutch members since our last issue, due largely to the enthusiasm of our member E.N.A.Hoogendijk, of Amersfoort. Some meetings of members have already taken place, and we have seen a special Dutch 'Newsletter' which Mr.Hoogendijk sent to all interested persons that he knew of. We wish our friends in the Netherlands success in their endeavours, and hope they will soon have enough members to form a full and thriving branch.

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### ELGAR, the FIGHT FOR RIGHT Movement, and PARRY'S 'JERUSALEM.'

The BBC, in a programme broadcast at the end of the summer, replied to a listener who had asked for the origins of Parry's *Jerusalem*. In the research that followed both the Society's chairman, Michael Pope, and the editor of the Journal, Ronald Taylor, were able to assist the programme. In fact there is an Elgar connection, long before Elgar's orchestration of Parry's work.

The Fight for Right Movement was a non-denominational movement formed in November 1915, partly as a reply to the strong pacifist movements of the time. It preached the 'rightness' of the Allies' cause in the war, and arose from an idea by Sir Francis Younghusband, taken up by the poet Henry Newbolt. From the beginning it was felt that music had an important part to play at meetings, and the opening meeting on 7th November, 1915 included a specially composed song by Ernest Austin(1874-1947) sung by Geoffrey Gwyther(later to have a very successful career in musical comedy). In order to launch the movement two mass meetings were planned for the Queen's Hall in March, 1916.

*Continued on p.31*

## THE YEAR AT THE BIRTHPLACE

by

*Jack McKenzie*

The trouble with having to do a report for a whole year is that the facts pile up and leave little room for detailed description of happenings at the Birthplace.

Visitors in 1981 - up to mid-November - have topped 6,500, which makes it the third best year in the nine years I have been here. This is most encouraging since in the Spring, during alterations to the old kitchen, the ceiling collapsed and the Museum was closed for nearly three weeks while the 1830 lath, plaster and dirt settled. It took the combined efforts of Mrs. Holden, Rennie, Vivienne and myself to clean up the inches-thick layer of dust that got everywhere. Eventually the shop took shape. Then followed the difficulties of displaying our particular merchandise. These are small compared with the now obvious hazards of handling crowds in the new lay-out, and satisfactorily providing adequate reception, information, sales assistance and supervision within the Museum single-handed. Therefore I am extremely indebted to Rennie Ashton for all her help in times of need. Her ability to fill in at very short notice in any crisis has saved me a great deal of embarrassment, and her willingness and proximity to the Birthplace is a bonus for which the Trustees should be very thankful.

In May the Rt. Hon. Paul Channon, M.P., Minister for the Arts, delighted me by requesting to visit the Birthplace when he came to open the Malvern Museum and Malvern Festival. He is a keen Elgarian and was most complimentary about the Birthplace.

The Elgar Birthday Tea was once again a great success, due entirely to the unflagging help and devotion of Dot and Alan Boon and their team of willing helpers. Not only did the weather do its worst - umbrellas were a must - but tea was served in the garage among the stacks of programmes being stored from last year's London Concerts, and the washing up had to be done at a sink unit temporarily perched over the bath which is devoid of water supply! The Birthday Cakes - three this year - were cut by Miss Olive Gosden, the most senior guest; Mrs. Lambert, Secretary of the Elgar Society 1959-1970; and Miss Dorothy Pembridge, an "almost Founder Member". We are especially glad that Dorothy took some cake to Lydia and Bertie Shaw, who were unable to be with us.

During May, June and July numbers were swollen by Party Visits which happen in the mornings. Among these were our faithful friends from Tillington Manor School, Stafford and Cavendish Close School, Derby. We are very sad that this is Don Henderson's last year as escort for the latter, but look forward to his promised solo visits. The Tillington Manor Children have been most generous again, and raised £50 towards re-thatching the Elgar Summer-House which we hope to have restored and re-erected by next year. As a record breaker, July 18 stands out; we had three coaches from the Elgar Pilgrimage Weekend



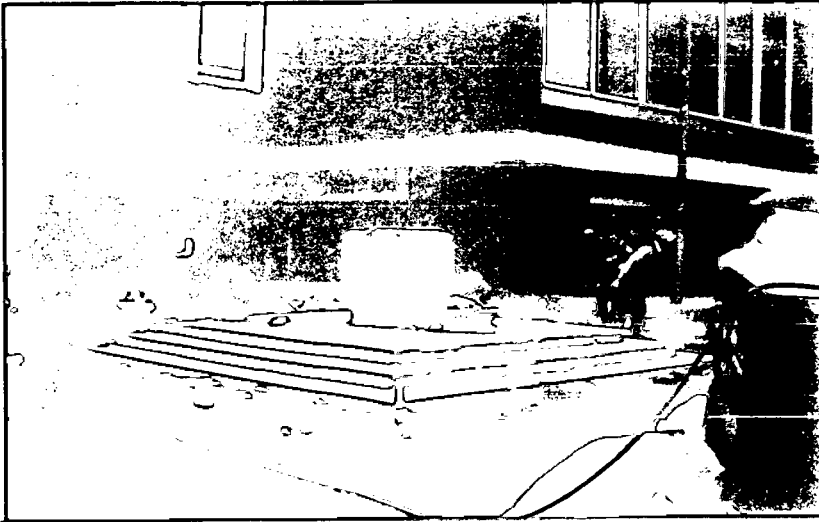
at Aston University, and a double-decker bus full of junior musicians from Birmingham, a total of 129 visitors before lunch.

Other visitors I was glad to see included Ian and Elizabeth Parrott, (the latter kindly giving her expert advice on hanging the picture of her Painting of Plas Gwyn to greater advantage); members of the I.S.M. Conference which was held in Malvern this year; and many Society members, especially those from Leeds, Leicester and Bristol. If our special guests are down in number, the tradition is ably upheld by the great pleasure it gave me to welcome Dr. and Mrs. Herbert Sumsion during Three Choirs Week. As a personal friend of Sir Edward, whose reminiscences were most fascinating, I look forward to his coming again at a less busy time. The other highlights of this year's Three Choirs was quite definitely the task of satisfying the almost insatiable appetite for information of Jerrauld Vaughan, an already well-informed American Elgarian. What made him distinctive is that despite much correspondence having been exchanged, we only discovered on his arrival that Jerrauld is blind, young, active and disconcertingly independent. This made escorting him during his Festival visit and going on an Elgar pilgrimage to Malvern, which included a visit to the Grave and a walk on the Hills, a most challenging but rewarding experience for Vivienne who is most grateful for the help and support of Bruce Burley, who just happened to be up from Truro for the week. They apparently made quite a success of the tour, Jerrauld's only expressed regret being that he hadn't got his tape recorder (but maybe this was just as well as the commentary was very ad lib!)

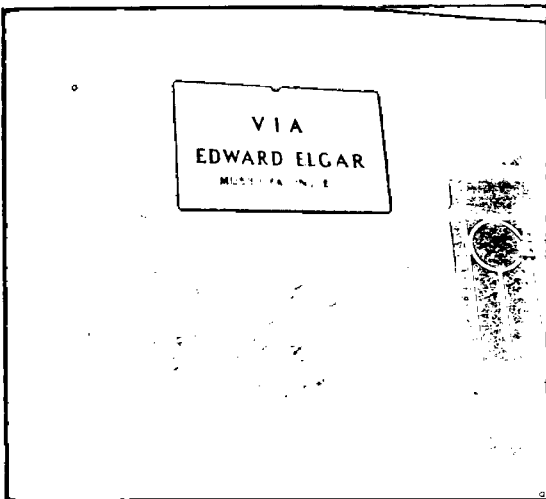
Thanks to the intervention of Miss Olive Gosden we have received a delightful gift for the Museum. Miss Meriel Hodgetts, a friend of Miss Gosden, has recently helped her aunt, Mrs. Florence Stone, to give up her home and move in to Yew Tree House, Hanley Swan. During the move Miss Hodgetts discovered a scroll which when opened revealed two silk programmes. They are one complete and one incomplete silk programme for the Coronation Gala performance at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, for Monday, June 30th, 1902, which never took place due to the illness of King Edward VII. These had come to Mrs. Stone from her companion Miss Edith Davies, who died on Feb. 29th, 1980. Miss Davies' father, Harry Davies, born Jan. 1st, 1863, had worked for Baylis Lewis Ltd. of Silver Street, Worcester as a lithographic printer. These programmes have now been framed and I am delighted with this rare and beautiful gift. The gift of an antique piano-accordion has been received from Mr. Tom Holte of Stratford-on-Avon. Mr. Holte's grandfather, Andrew Brandish, was a great friend of Elgar's father, W.H. Elgar, who gave him this instrument.

Mr. Raymond Monk generously loaned the Museum the silver salver presented to Sir Edward Elgar on his 70th Birthday by the BBC, for display in the Exhibition Room this summer. This, together with a copy of *The Apple Cart* which Shaw gave to Elgar (also belonging to Mr. Monk), caused much interested comment, and demonstrated the advantages of the improved display. Our programme collection is still receiving donations, and the need for updating the catalogue of gifts is becoming acute.

## BEFORE THE STATUE!



*An interesting, and historic scene, as workmen finish off the plinth and surrounding steps, prior to the lifting into place of the Elgar statue in Worcester. This photograph was taken on 27 May, 1981 by Society member P.M.W.Greaves.*



*Several years ago Dr.W.L.Reed, an Elgar Society member, visited Alassio to seek out the places which inspired Elgar to write *IN THE SOUTH*. It was due to his researches that a local interest was aroused and today there is a street named after Elgar, as our photograph shows.*

*The photograph was taken by a member of the Society, H.V. CARTWRIGHT, of Stourbridge, Worcs.*

# THE FITTONS

by

Olive Gosden

I am lucky enough to have been musically acquainted with the Fitton family from the summer of 1910 onwards for a few years. So may I write what I remember of them?

There were five Miss Fittons, with two brothers - Colonel Guy Fitton and Brigadier-General Hugh Fitton, A.D.C. to King George V. In 1910 their father, Edward, died aged 86, leaving the five daughters and two sons. His wife, Mrs. Harriet Margaret Fitton was ten years younger. She had been a very fine pianist and accompanist all her life, and she saw to it that her daughters were all musical and led all the musical life in Malvern!

So, the Fittons in 1910 were:-

Clare	)		
Isabel	)	unmarried.	
Guy	)		
Ethel	)		Mrs. Hickman (1889)
Hilda	)	married.	Mrs. Capel-Cure (1911)
Monica	)		Mrs. Trew (1914)

Hilda Fitton was an accomplished violinist, and ran a small orchestra into which she gathered every possible player who lived near. So, when we came to live in Malvern in the summer of 1910, we were soon 'bidden' to join her orchestra - my sister and I, twins and 15 years old, one cello and one violin. We played in it for a few years. Hilda was young middle-aged, and was nice and great fun.

Her sister, Isabel, played the piano, and had also had viola lessons from Edward Elgar on purpose to play in this orchestra. She was also in all the 'chamber music' which was played so much at their home, *Fairlea*.

Their special cellist was a friend, the Reverend Edward Capel-Cure. The only Fitton who played the cello, unless possibly Ethel, was Monica, the youngest of the family, who later married Mr. Arthur Trew, Music Master at Charterhouse, and a fine cellist.

Miss Fitton's Orchestra played everywhere where 'polite' music was required. There was very little 'recorded' music then, so we made our own, and great fun it was. Hilda led from the front desk, but once we played with Elgar conducting us for a performance of *Comus* - a day I

have never forgotten!

Elgar wrote several small pieces for her orchestra, and dedicated one called *Pastourelle* to Hilda herself. She was so proud of this, that we always had to play it twice at rehearsals. It is very nice and warm and sunny; and is a living picture of Hilda herself (uncanny?). It is recorded now on a Pearl Record, by John Georgiadis and John Parry - a nostalgic memory. Then we heard that Hilda was engaged to be married - a great thrill - and she looked so very happy about it.

I think this was about 1911 - and she had a fancy to be married at 11 o'clock on the 11th day of the 11th month, 1911. Whether this really happened I cannot remember. She, of course, married the Rev. Edward Capel-Cure who had in 1896 provided Elgar with the libretto for his *Lux Christi* (*Light of Life*). I know that subsequently Hilda had a very happy and busy life.

"The years went by" - Then, one day, I was asked to bring my violin and play trios with a visitor who was staying at *Fairlea*. I went, and found a warm sitting room, with a lovely coal and wood fire, an old lady enthroned in an armchair near it, Isabel just finishing dusting the priceless china on the mantelpiece, and a gentleman, ready with his cello - the Music Master from Charterhouse. He was engaged to Monica, who had run off to visit friends in Malvern. She came in presently and looked young and happy, and very pretty!

Mr. Trew was a delightful person to meet - we played for two or three mornings. He played beautifully, and taught me to love Mozart, whom I had always found dull. Once, suddenly, after a *Minuet*: "Trio," he said, "Don't play it like that! Play it like 'Magic Casements opening on Fairy Lands forlorn!'" I have, of course, remembered that - always. Dear Mr. Trew; he was such fun, and it was wonderful playing with him like that. He and Monica were married on July 29th, 1914, at Trinity Church near *Fairlea*. The Rev. Capel-Cure married them. There was a daughter of this marriage, Patricia, now Mrs. Egerton-Smith.

During the 1914 war a lot of us became V.A.D. Red Cross Nurses at the Newtown Hospital, near *Forli*. One of those who joined us was Clare Fitton. She was tall and older, and a darling. She had always been known to her young friends as 'Aunt Clare'. I think she did the cooking at the hospital - wonderful of her.

General Hugh Fitton died of wounds in France in 1916.

To go back to Ethel Fitton. She had married Victor Hickman on August 3rd, 1889, four months after the Elgars' own wedding. They went to her wedding. I never met Ethel, but can remember a girl - Clare Hickman - who often came on visits to Malvern, when she was about 18.

The Elgars were very friendly with the Fittons, with a special affection for Isabel, hence the Variation VI "Ysobel". Isabel was

very graceful and romantic, and fun too, and kind, but rather a tease. For some reason she was always known as 'Biz', just an affectionate form of Isabel I think. I think Isabel had her mother to look after in the First World War - Mrs. Fitton lived till January 26th, 1924. They had a devoted housekeeper, whose grand-daughter is still living.

Isabel played a lot in orchestras, and played in the detached manner of bowing - which opens her Variation - it had rather a 'penetrating' result. She had a reputation in later years for being on every committee in Malvern! She played in Worcester orchestras for many years. She was thus always late for 'orchestra' and wore flimsy scarves and jewellery, which she strewed around her.

The Fittons had many memories of the Elgars at *Forli*, and the tent and flag in the garden, and all the music which came echoing out of the house. They lived near, and Elgar always saluted them courteously when he met them.

One of my sisters, who played the cello in the local orchestra, told us that Elgar was conducting in a bad mood one day over a difficult practise, and presently Isabel said: "We are trying!" "You are!" was the swift reply!

This music went on for years. The last I know about the Fittons is that after the 1914 War Clare, Isabel and Guy lived together at *Fairlea*, with the faithful housekeeper to look after them. I think Colonel Fitton outlived his sisters by three years. He died in 1939.

In the last War, *Fairlea* was divided into two flats; and some of the Radar people moved in. A new era had begun.

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Miss Olive Gosden, who has written this interesting account of the Fitton family for us, is now 86 years of age. She taught music at the Elms School in Colwall, and now lives at Ledbury, Herefordshire. She is a keen member of the Society, and takes an equal interest in the affairs of the Birthplace Museum. We are most grateful to her for her 'memories', a version of which has just appeared in a new book on Malvern "*Malvern between the Wars*" by Frederick Covins.

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BIRTHPLACE REPORT. Continued from p.9

The oil painting commissioned by Music for Pleasure for use on the sleeve of *Pomp & Circumstance Marches & Sea Pictures*, has been kindly loaned by the painter Jeffrey Spedding; although at 2½ by 3ft it does rather dominate the other displays the feeling of a friendly presence is most real. Eddie Williams and Tony Parkes have once again achieved a high standard in the garden, which has received many favourable comments from our visitors. Great interest (and generous donations) have been shown in the proposed restoration of Elgar's summer-house.

## Some Notes from Worcester

by Marjorie Parsons

There were two items in the issue of the Journal for May 1980 of special interest to our family.

Firstly, the excellent obituary of Mrs. Nella Leicester, by Dr. Moore, whom I have met on numerous occasions at *The Homestead*. Nella Leicester was, in fact, a relative of ours, her husband Philip being my mother's first cousin. Over the years *The Homestead* has been very much a part of our lives. Nella was indeed a great character, the last of her generation, and her death meant the loss of a link with so many members of our widespread family.

The Elgar nieces, May and Madeline Grafton, were also my mother's cousins, the relationship being as follows. Elgar's sister, Polly, as we all know, married William Grafton. He was a member of a large family; one of his sisters, Agnes, married Hubert Leicester, and his brother, Francis, was my mother's father. As a child, my mother spent a good deal of time at The Whitstones, the Leicester home in Worcester, so knew her cousins well.

Carice Elgar Blake was well known to us and often visited our home in Worcester, my younger brother in particular, forming a special friendship with her. She was, in fact, a guest at his wedding in 1947. During my father's illness, before he died in 1950, Carice often came to see him. Apart from the fact that they enjoyed each other's company and had long discussions on a variety of subjects, in her kindly way she knew that while she was there my mother could relax her ceaseless vigil, and enjoy an hour or two to herself.

The other matter of great interest to us is the fact that Elgar's first school was at 12, Britannia Square, Worcester. My grandmother moved to this house in 1927, and it remained the Parsons home until 1969 when the youngest and last surviving member of my father's big family suffered a severe stroke and had to move to a nursing home. The house was then sold.

My father, Mr. J.B. Parsons, Mayor of Worcester, 1926-27, was 20 years younger than Elgar and came of a family who had lived in Worcester for several generations. He well remembered the Elgar music shop and, indeed, the Elgar family. He and several of his brothers attended Mr. Reeve's school at Lyttleton House, Lower Wick, and often amused us with tales of that famous establishment. My father was also a member of the Worcester Glee Club, and spent many pleasant evenings at the Crown Hotel, Worcester.

Amongst my father's papers are some programmes of concerts given by St. Cecilia's Musical Society at St. George's Catholic School Room, with accompanying notes written by my grandfather, Mr. J.R. Parsons, who

Continued on p. 31

## Memories of the Birthplace

by

Thomas W. Rowbotham.

IN 1953 I had an article published in the Lloyds Bank Magazine, entitled "The Birthplace of Elgar". It was my second visit and my wife's first pilgrimage. We spent some time in the Cathedral, saw no.10 High Street, where Elgar's father had a music shop, went to the church of St. George where his father and later Edward were organists, and I also discovered the solicitor's office where young Edward had a brief career in the legal profession before deciding that the Law was less exciting than Music.

THE MORNING at Broadheath was wonderful...a lovely sunny day in April, and being out-of-season we were able to potter about the cottage at leisure. The curator then was Mrs. Goodman, and just down the lane lived Mrs. Elgar Blake, daughter of Sir Edward. Mrs. Goodman told us that had we come the day before we would have met Sir Arthur Bliss, a devoted Elgarian who had made several visits to the cottage.

MRS. GOODMAN was a delightful elderly lady, and over cups of tea in the garden she talked very interestingly about Elgar, who she remembered well. "What a pity you have not met Mrs. Blake", she said, as we left to return to Worcester. "Where are you staying?". I told her:- "The Crown Hotel...there is the Worcester Glee Room there and by the reception desk is the large old chair he used to sit in when in later years he re-visited the Glee Club to let his friends know he was still in the Land of the Living...you know, I said to my wife last night, I almost expect to bump into Elgar in the cloak-room!" She laughed and said:- "He may still be walking around in the Worcester he loved."

WITHIN TWO days I penned my article, and you will be pleased to know it was accepted. I thought it would be a nice gesture to write to Mrs. Goodman thanking her for her kindness. There was a splendid aftermath, because about a week later I received a letter from...yes, Mrs. Elgar Blake. Mrs. Goodman had passed over to her my letter, and thus there began a correspondence between Elgar's daughter and myself. We never met, but when I mentioned in one letter that I was giving illustrated lectures on *Falstaff* this great lady went to the trouble to copy from her mother's diaries entries relating to the composition of this noble work; Elgar said he thought it was his best orchestral score. Then at Christmas came a card, then a month later another letter...and I have these in my archives...but we met only in spirit.

THERE WAS also a response to my article. Two or three weeks after publication I had a letter from one of our retired managers, a Mr. Gaydon, then in his 80th year, formerly manager of the Bloomsbury, Birmingham, branch. He complimented me on my article...and did I know that one of Elgar's nephews was employed by Lloyds Bank? He went on to tell me that the name was Mr. Grafton: "We went sailing on the river one weekend. He was transferred to another Branch later, so I am afraid I lost touch with him about 50 years ago!"



## Two of Elgar's 'leading ladies'.

A rarely-seen study of Marie Brema (*right*) and her daughter Tita Brand.

Marie Brema created the part of The Angel in the first performance of *Dream of Gerontius* at Birmingham in 1900.

Tita Brand married the Belgian writer Emil Cammaerts, and translated many of his works into English. When Elgar set Cammaerts' poem *Carillon* for music and reciter it was Tita Brand who first performed the work, with the composer conducting.

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OLD POST-CARDS of Elgar, his Circle and related topics are sought by Mr.J. Rowlands, 11 The Rookery, Lumley, Emsworth, Hants.

THE DOME, for 1897 (containing 'Minuet'(piano solo), wanted by N.J.Alexander, 23 Combury Road, Canons Pk, Edgware,Middx.

PIANO ROLLS (88-note), especially any Elgar compositions, wanted by the Editor. 104 Crescent Road, New Barnet, Herts.

VICTOR BOOK OF THE OPERA. 2nd, 3rd, 8th & 9th editions. Offers to the Editor please.



## Dates for your Diary

Jan	21	Dream of Gerontius <i>Greevy, Tear, Shirley-Quirk, RPO/Hughes</i>	Royal Festival Hall
Jan	30	In the South <i>Scottish Sinfonia/Neil Mantle</i>	Music Hall, George St. Edinburgh
Feb	8	Symphony no.1 <i>LSO</i>	Royal Festival Hall
Feb	17	The Apostles <i>Lott, Walker, Woollam, Shirley-Quirk, Wilson-Johnson, Tomlinson, BBC Singers &amp; SO &amp; Chorus/Rozhdestvensky</i>	Royal Festival Hall
Feb	22	Dream of Gerontius <i>Royal Choral Soc/LPO/Davies, &amp; Hodgson, Collins, Rayner Cook</i>	Royal Festival Hall
Mar	6	Enigma Variations <i>Rutland Sinfonia/Collett</i>	Uppingham School Hall, Rutland. 7.30 p.m.
Mar	14	Music for Wind Quintet <i>No artist details</i>	Purcell Room, South Bank
Mar	19	Introduction & Allegro <i>Hallé Orch.</i>	Royal Festival Hall
Mar	25	Wand of Youth suite, no.1 <i>BBC Scottish SO/Groves</i>	MacRobert Arts Centre, Stirling. 8 p.m.
		Cello Concerto <i>British ORT. No soloist details</i>	Royal Festival Hall
Apr	7	Enigma Variations <i>RPO/Groves</i>	Fairfield Hall, Croydon
Apr	14	Enigma Variations <i>RPO/Bernstein</i>	Royal Festival Hall
Apr	22	Violin Concerto <i>Philharmonia. No soloist details</i>	Royal Festival Hall
Apr	24	Cockaigne Overture <i>Scottish Nat.Orch/Del Mar</i>	City Hall, Glasgow
May	1	Symphony no.1 <i>Huddersfield PO/Butterworth</i>	Huddersfield Town Hall 7.30 p.m.
May	5	Violin Sonata; 8 songs; Piano Quintet <i>Rutland Sinfonia Ensemble, with Barry Collett (piano)</i>	Leicester University. 7.30 p.m.
May	14	Dream of Gerontius <i>E.R.M.A. No further details</i>	Royal Festival Hall
May	15	Overture in D minor; Coronation March <i>Rutland Sinfonia/Collett</i>	Uppingham School Hall Rutland. 7.30 p.m.

# Record Reviews

EVENING SCENE    Partsongs by Edward Elgar.\*\*

Philharmonic Chamber Choir, cond. David Temple

Meridian    E77040

*\*\*Full details of the contents of this record were given in the September issue of the Journal.*

This is an exceptionally interesting and exciting record in that none of its items, with the exception of the two Opus 18 songs, *O Happy Eyes* and *Love*, which appeared on Abbey ABY 821, released a mere month or two previously, have ever been committed to disc. That in itself would be enough to commend this Meridian issue to Elgarians, but additionally the Philharmonic Chamber Choir (32 voices) shows itself to be a singing group of great distinction, full yet flexible in tone, musicianly in phrasing and wellnigh ideally balanced. They are convincing advocates for some rare, sometimes *very* rare, but often more than worthwhile Elgar, and are well recorded in a sympathetic, clear acoustic. For example, the words of their Op.18 songs are more distinct than those on ABY 821, recorded in Worcester Cathedral Chapter House. Temple's tempi are faster too - maybe Donald Hunt's broader view was partly dictated by the resonant acoustics of the Chapter House, but whatever the reason I prefer both songs in the Meridian versions, which sound fresher, more vital, even more musical.

*Weary Wind of the West* and *Evening Scene* give us a taste of Elgar the composer for the annual Morecombe Festivals; they date from 1903 and 1905 respectively. *Evening Scene* is a marvellously sensitive piece of tone painting requiring supremely smooth, sustained singing throughout, while *Weary Wind* erupts in the middle. Both test a choir's technique and musicianship searchingly. *To Her Beneath whose Stedfast Star*, whose, now dated, words celebrated Queen Victoria's 80th birthday, and the brief *Windlass Song*, a hearty ditty suitable for schools and published (in 1915) only in America, are curiosities but enjoyable ones, the former's typical late Victorian partsong illuminated by gentle but characteristic stresses.

It is with *Death on the Hills*, Op.72, with its sensitive word painting and sinister antiphonal passages between the basses, representing Death, and the other voices, and *Serenade*, Op.71, no.1, short but nostalgic and haunting, that we come to the really major Elgar on this record. Choirs all over the country should take up these songs.

The second side is devoted to items of a religious, even hymn-like, character and again there are rarities. The *Credo in E minor*, composed in the 1870's, a rather dramatic, determinedly individual, unfailingly shapely, setting of the text, has a discreet organ accompaniment played by Keith Beniston. There are two 'carols', *Lo! Christ the Lord is Born* (1909), a Christmas hymn based on a musical Christmas card

sent by the Elgars years before, and *Good Morrow*, another simple melody from an earlier hymn tune, produced to celebrate King George V's recovery from illness in 1929. *O Mightiest of the Mighty*, yet another hymn and the disc's only accompanied piece besides the *Credo*, is broader and grander (though still strophic), written as it was for King Edward VII's coronation in 1902 and not surprisingly redolent of parts of the *Coronation Ode* of the same year. *How Calmly the Evening*, though (just) a part-song rather than a hymn, lies well both in lyric and ambience on this 'religious' side.

Though I have long admired the splendid record of Elgar and Delius part-songs by the Louis Halsey Singers (Argo ZK 23), the Donald Hunt Singers on ABY 821 have good points as well as shortcomings, and the Worcester Cathedral Choir cover the church music well on both ABY 822 and the much older CSD 3660, this varied disc seems to me the most satisfying one available of Elgar's smaller scale choral music. It would be difficult to praise it too highly. The (unsigned) sleeve notes are sound; the words appear on an insert.

P.L.S.

#### SYMPHONY NO.2 in E flat

London Philharmonic Orch/Vernon Handley

(Disc - Cassette reviewed in previous issue of the Journal)

Classics for Pleasure CFP 40350

Listening to the disc version of this performance confirms my feeling that not only is this one of the really great Elgar recordings, but the finest *Second Symphony* available. Others will no doubt marginally prefer Boult or Solti: I have no doubt that for me the marvellous spontaneous quality of this performance, coupled with the LPO's wonderfully committed playing places it at the top of the league table. The rivals are all superbly well recorded; the CFP engineers have not captured quite as much inner detail, but the sound is outstandingly natural in balance. The disc and the tape sound similar, but with the different qualities of the two media apparent. The cassette has a warm, rich glow - it is one of the best cassettes I have heard. The disc has a slightly wider frequency range, resulting in a brighter, more forward sound, with the brass in particular having a more brilliant edge. The percussion is slightly better caught, and the excellent bass means that the organ pedal, added for eight bars or so in the last movement, is more clearly audible, although recorded with too much reticence to contribute much to tone colour.

The surfaces on my copy were beautifully silent. At the modest price every Elgar enthusiast should own a copy of this recording, even if he or she already possesses a version by one of the illustrious rivals. Even those who disagree with my ultimate preference for this version will derive a great deal of enjoyment from it.

G.H.L.

FROM THE BAVARIAN HIGHLANDS

Bournemouth Symphony Chorus, Bournemouth Sin-  
fonietta/Del Mar

HMV ASD 4061  
(Cassette TC-ASD 4061)

I have never been able to accept the oft-quoted assertion that the version of the Bavarian Highlands songs with piano accompaniment is the original, and I hope that the appearance of this premiere recording of the orchestral version will lay that ghost forever. There is ample documentary evidence that it was Elgar's practice to conceive his music orchestrally from the outset, rather than begin at the keyboard and only later orchestrate it. Why should this work be any different? Indeed, clear corroborative evidence in this case comes in a letter Elgar wrote to Novello's on 10th April, 1895. At this stage he had just finished the piano score but had not yet started on the orchestral parts, and yet he refers to the set as "six part-songs for Chorus and Orchestra". It is true that they were first performed with piano, and first appeared in print with the piano part, but surely this was a case of expediency rather than design. No one ventures to suggest that *Gerontius* should be performed with keyboard accompaniment because the vocal score was published before the full score.

Certainly the work seems bigger and more important in its orchestral dress. With piano it seems a rather dated, yet pleasing, set of part-songs, eminently suitable for the drawing room, whereas with orchestra it emerges a substantial piece of music to be set alongside the other early choral works. Ever since I first heard the version with orchestra in a concert in Liverpool some 15 years ago, I have found the piano version slightly embarrassing, rather like watching a technicolour cinemascope film on a small black-and-white television!

Fortunately, with very few reservations this is a fine performance, which does ample justice to the music. The first movement seems at times to be rather uneven rhythmically, and the choir's words are none too clear. The beautiful second song *False Love* is, I think, a shade too fast, notably in the exquisite centre section 'Ever true was I to thee'. The performance then seems to really come to life with a finely moulded orchestral introduction to the *Lullaby*, leading into choral singing that is both relaxed and yet perfectly poised. The next two movements go particularly well with telling contrasts between the quiet passages and the full and weighty choral tone at 'Lead Lord our souls today' in *Aspiration*. Del Mar ensures that *The Marksmen* is a fitting and effective conclusion with lively, incisive playing and singing. Those who only know this music in the purely orchestral *Bavarian Dances* guise, will be amazed how much more substantial it seems here in context.

The recorded sound is full-blooded and clear, (I have listened to the tape version), making this an essential addition to all Elgar-

ian's libraries. Now EMI... in recent years you have given us *Caractus*, *Lux Christi*, and now the *Bavarian Highlands*, when can we have the greatest of all these early works, *King Olaf*?

J.G.K.

Mention should be made of a Pickwick record (RL 7555) entitled 'Music for Royal Occasions' as this includes the first digital recordings of Elgar works (excepting a Canadian performance of the *Serenade* only available as a special import). Sir Alexander Gibson and the LSO give a lively and polished account of P & C no.1. Two movements from the *Nursery Suite* are included on side 2. 'Aubade' is rather marred by an excessively slow basic pulse, but the *Serious Doll* is very effective. The recording is first rate, rich yet clear, and industrial sponsorship allows a bargain price tag.

J.G.K.

POMP AND CIRCUMSTANCE MARCHES Nos.1 - 5  
SEA PICTURES

Bernadette Greevy (contralto), London  
Philharmonic Orch/Handley

*Classics for Pleasure CFP 40363*  
(Cassette TC - CFP 40363)

The *Pomp and Circumstance Marches* will always sell records, especially at a cheap price. Choosing a suitable coupling is not easy - and I am not sure that CFP has here come up with a satisfactory answer. Surely one of the popular orchestral pieces would be more likely to make the record appeal to a casual record-shop browser, rather than these less well-known songs. On the other hand, it is the *Sea Pictures* which will be of greatest interest to the Elgar enthusiast, and I can say straight away that this performance is excellent - and well worth the modest price of the record, even for those who already have several recordings of the marches.

Bernadette Greevy's slightly dry-toned voice has not the sensuous smoothness of Yvonne Minton (on CBS 61891) nor the vibrant brilliance of Lauris Elms (RCA 'Gold Seal' GL 40749). There is some lack of weight at the top of the voice which disappoints slightly at the big climaxes, such as the ending of 'Sabbath Morning at Sea', where she is less able to compete against the large orchestra and organ than her rivals on bargain-price labels. Where she scores, however, is in her excellent diction and her sensitive feeling for the meaning of the words. They are not great poetry - but neither were most of the verses set by Schubert. They obviously meant something to Elgar, and deserve to be treated with respect. Neither of the other two singers regard the words as anything more than pegs on which to hang the notes.

She also copes well with some of the surprisingly slow tempi adopted by Vernon Handley - his 'Sabbath Morning' takes a full minute longer than the version conducted by the splendid John Hopkins for Lauris Elms, and is almost identical to the speed chosen by



## NEWS

### from the BRANCHES

Six of our seven branches have sent us news of their activities. LONDON celebrated its 10th Anniversary in the Autumn, and the excellent programmes this year reflect the strength of that branch. In February (1st) Claud Powell will talk on 'Dorabella', and in March Michael Pope gives a talk on Elgar and Walton. The NORTH WEST Branch has settled its 1982 programme. March 27: Peter Waddington, Librarian of the Halle Concerts Society will talk on his work and his favourite music. April 24: A local guitarist, Peter White, will give a recital of British Guitar Music. May 8, the Society will attend the performance of The Kingdom at the Philharmonic Hall, Liverpool. On June 19, Andrew Burn, Administrator of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Society will talk on his work. July 10: Joint meeting with the Yorkshire branch in Liverpool. A tour of the city and dinner will be followed by Dennis Clark's "Elgar's Yorkshire" presentation. Sept.11: Ian Lace on "Elgar's London". Further details in our next issue of other meetings.

YORKSHIRE has some very interesting meetings coming. Jan.11: John Spink presents "The Elgar I Love". Feb.8: Lance Tufnell on "Elgar and Sterndale Bennett. March 8: The Bradford City Music Librarian, Derek Bell, talks about "Gerontius", and on April 5: Dennis Clark on "Caractacus - a Leeds Premiere." This latter should be particularly interesting for Mr.Clark is an indefatigable researcher into local matters - witness his splendid work on Dr.Buck and Settle. EAST MIDLANDS (meeting in Leicester) start on January 28th with Diana McVeagh on "Elgar's Concert Overtures and their Associations." Feb.23: "Elgar's Musical Style" by Barry Collett. March 30:"Music in the Air all around Us(Elgar & the BBC)" by Ronald Taylor, and on May 5th a musical programme presented by Barry Collett and friends in the Belvoir Room, Charles Wilson Building, at Leicester University.

At the Annual General Meeting of the WEST MIDLANDS branch on 6th March, a video-tape will be shown of the statue-unveiling ceremony last June, the wreath-laying by Prince Charles, and some of the music of that evening. If any other branch would like the loan of the tape, please contact the West Midlands Branch Secretary, Alan Boon, for details. On May 1st at 7.30 p.m. in the Common Room of Malvern Girl's College, Margaret Elgar has arranged "An Evening of Part Songs and Instrumental Music, by Elgar and his contemporaries. The programme will be such as might have been provided by a music loving family of the 1860's or 70's. With wine and cheese the evening will cost about £2. A charming idea.

SOUTH WEST will also have the pleasure of hearing Diana McVeagh on Elgar's Concert Overtures, on Feb.27th. March 27: A Quiz Evening, and on May 22nd Ian Lace's talk on "Elgar's London". June 26: AGM, followed

by a live music recital.

Regrettably, there is still no report from our EAST ANGLIAN branch, but we assume their season is doing well. We hope for news for our issue in May.

Looking back.....

The LONDON branch held a social evening on 5th Oct. 1981, with music, wine and cheese - a fitting occasion to mark and celebrate the 10th anniversary of the branch. It was actually on the 9th October, 1971, following Evensong in Westminster Abbey, during which music by Elgar was heard, that a meeting to which all London area members had been invited took place in the Central Hall, with the then Chairman of the Society, A.T.Shaw, in the chair. About 30 members attended and the decision was unanimously taken to form the branch. A steering committee was set up under Douglas Guest, Organist and Master of Choristers at Westminster Abbey. The first regular meeting was on 1st Dec. 1971, when Douglas Pudney presented the new EMI recordings of the *Violin Sonata* and the *String Quartet*. *Ten years later...* the music consisted, appropriately enough of an excellent performance of the *Piano Quintet* by Helen Pitstow and Jonathan Josephs (violins), Susan Young (viola), Caroline Sayers (cello) and Maureen Parrington (piano). Later, after refreshments, the branch chairman, Diana McVeagh, welcomed the chairman of the Society, Michael Pope, who recalled the background to the formation of the branch, and paid tribute, in particular, to Douglas Guest, to Bill Jackson, and to the late Douglas Pudney for their devoted work in establishing the branch. He thanked all members for their loyalty and support during the branch's first decade, and conveyed the warm good wishes of the Society for the future. About 100 members and guests attended this very successful meeting.

EAST MIDLANDS opened their season on 29th Sept. with a talk by E. Wulstan Atkins on "The Writing of The Apostles". The talk was presented in a lively and interesting manner, using many excerpts. Members were especially interested to hear the personal reminiscences when Mr. Atkins mentioned his father's association with Elgar during the writing of the work. It was a rare experience to meet someone who had a direct line with Elgar himself.

Then, on 27th Oct., we were privileged to hear Eric Fenby speak about Delius "as I knew him". Once again we met someone with living experience of a composer. We were particularly interested to hear Mr. Fenby's comments about the meeting of Elgar and Delius. The large attendance included guests from the Delius Society. There was an opportunity to purchase signed copies of Eric Fenby's book recently reprinted in paperback, as well as copies of recent issues of Delius music on the Unicorn label.

The SOUTH WEST branch got under-way with its new season on 19th Sept. with a most informative talk by Geoffrey Hodgkins "Providence and Art, being a study of Elgar's Religious Beliefs. A most enthralling evening, showing how much research and effort had been put in to produce



a first-class talk. Our Oct. 31st meeting was a talk by our chairman Clifford Harker on *The Dream of Gerontius*, prior to a performance at the Colston Hall. A good turnout of members, plus a contingent from the Bristol Choral Society, totalled 64 people. We were sure that Clifford would make it interesting, and in the event we were quite spell-bound. Clifford played the piano, sang, talked, and introduced excerpts from a complete recording, leaving no doubt in anyone's mind that this was a wonderful work. The performance, to a capacity audience, turned out to be one of the best heard in Bristol. In December our meeting was billed as "Bring along a British Record (British music that is!)" An interesting idea which enabled us to hear a wide variety of music.

NORTH WEST started their season of Autumn meetings with Barry Collett on "The Lesser-known Elgar". Mr. Collett played us recordings of many Elgar works, unknown to most of us. He interspersed these with comments on the origin and background to the works. Among other items he played *Gavotte* (1884), *Sevillana* (1883), the first piece of Elgar's music played in London, under Manns, *The Snow, Fly Singing Bird* (1894) *Fugue for Trombone & Double Bass* (1883), *Griffinesque* (1884), *In Moonlight* (*Canto Popolare*), *Five Intermezzi* (1878) from the Wind Quintet music, *Owls* (1907), and *Polonia* (1915). Particularly interesting were Mr. Collett's private tapes of so far unrecorded Elgar songs: *Arabian Serenade* (1914), *A Child Asleep* (1909) *The Chariots of the Lord* (1914), and *Dry those Fair those Crystal Eyes* (1899).

On Oct. 10th, Bill Jackson related his "Musical Pilgrim's Progress". Bill told us of his life and his developing love of music, and said how Elgar had made an early impression. He went to school in Sussex, close to 'Brinkwells', at the time the Elgars were living there. The school orchestra included *Pomp & Circumstance no. 4* in their Christmas concert one year. At college he heard Vaughan Williams' *London Symphony*, and first heard the *Enigma Variations* on a pair of headphones connected to a crystal set. It was played by the LSO under Coates, who is not generally regarded as an Elgarian. Bill took an instant liking to it. There followed a fascinating account of meeting the elderly Elgar at Marl Bank.

The speaker became 'hooked' on Wagner as a young man, travelling to Birmingham to see the British National Opera Company in *Tristan*, conducted by Beecham; *Parsifal* conducted by Boult. In 1932 he had the privilege of seeing Elgar conduct *Gerontius* for the last time in Worcester at the Three Choirs Festival. During the talk Bill played appropriate records to illustrate his "Progress", ending with Dennis Brain playing the finale to Strauss's *Second Horn Concerto*.

On November 7th Ian Hare spoke on the Major Choral Works of Elgar. Mr. Hare is on the staff of the Music Dept. of Lancaster University, and naturally concentrated on *Gerontius*, *The Apostles*, and *The Kingdom*, all of which he has had a hand in preparing for performance. He told us that the oratorio form dated back to the Congregation of the Oratory in Rome in the 16th century. Handel was a great exponent, and to a lesser extent Mendelssohn. Elgar employed a freer form, influenced by

Wagner. A mixture of recitative and aria, as the text flows on in an uninhibited manner. The fugal form was still pursued, as in the Demons' Chorus, to please the conservative tastes of the audience. A great deal of chromatic harmony was employed in *Gerontius* with vast changes of key. Mr. Hare also played considerable extracts from *The Apostles* and *The Kingdom*, emphasising Elgar's style of writing.

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## THE STARLIGHT EXPRESS

The short run of this play, at the Kingsway Theatre, in Gt. Queen Street, from 29th December 1915, has meant that very little survives about the original production. Our natural interest in the music has made us forget that it was a 'musical play' with a cast of actors, and that only two of the principals actually sing!

*The Times* for 30th December, 1915, printed a review, luke-warm in its praise, which gave a complete cast list, but which unaccountably completely omitted the name of Clytie Hine as 'The Laughter'. Since the cast-list is difficult to find in any other source we reprint it here for the information of readers.

Daddy .....	O.B. Clarence
Mother.....	Ruth Maitland
Grannie.....	Una O'Connor
Jimbo.....	Ronald Hammond
Monkey.....	Elsie Hall
Jane Anne.....	Mercia Cameron
Cousin Henry.....	Owen Roughwood
Mme. Jequier.....	Juliette Mylo
Miss Waghorn.....	Mary Barton
Tramp.....	Charles Mott
Laughter.....	Clytie Hine

O.B. Clarence was a distinguished actor who had a very long career, his last performances being made when he was greatly advanced in age. He appeared as 'Aged Parent' in David Lean's film of *Great Expectations*. Una O'Connor went to America, appeared frequently on Broadway, and graced many a Hollywood film in character parts. She is best remembered as the maid in *The Barretts of Wimpole Street*, and in the 1935 film of *David Copperfield*. Mercia Cameron made a number of appearances on the West End stage.

Does anyone possess a copy of the original programme for this production?

# Letters

From DR. CHRISTOPHER KENT

I should like to endorse Michael Rostron's views on the future of the Society (vol. 2, no. 3, p. 31). However, members should be aware that a bibliography by Diana McVeagh has recently appeared in the NEW GROVE Elgar article, and that I have prepared a ms. index in connection with my own research. This index will be incorporated into the forthcoming ELGAR THEMATIC CATALOGUE currently being prepared for publication.

\*\*\* Dr. Kent's reminder of the Grove bibliography is timely, but obviously few members are likely to be able to afford a set of the work. Will the publisher perhaps consider issuing some of the valuable bibliographies in the form of an off-print?

EDITOR

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From JAN KRAGH NICOLAJSEN, of Odense, Denmark

As a Danish Elgarian I take a special interest in Elgar's position (prestige if you wish) among Danish lovers of music. It may be interesting for English Elgarians to know a little about how popular Elgar actually is in Denmark.

Elgar really is becoming more known and appreciated among Danes, but this was not the case five or ten years ago. It is my impression that earlier most people in this country did not associate Elgar with anything except for the name Pomp and Circumstance, which they did not believe to be more than the title of the first march, i.e. the one including 'Land of Hope and Glory'. Or, if people knew about him they simply ignored him, considering him an eccentric composer of little character. But owing to the fact that many Danes have become much more aware of the qualities of 20th century British music over the past ten years, Elgar has finally been discovered - and will, I am sure, gain a still growing respect for what he represents in post-Wagnerian music. The increasing popularity can be seen when going to a comparatively well-equipped gramophone shop where, besides the compulsory Pomp and Circumstance Marches, often the Cello and Violin Concertos, the Enigma Variations, and one of his symphonies, usually no. 2, or perhaps both, can be purchased.

Another sign of greater interest is found in the many performances in public of Elgar's works, and this is an even more significant sign than the former because the concert itself establishes a personal contact between the music and the listener, and it gives a much more vivid impression than any record. Besides, attending a concert is a cheaper experience than buying records, and thus many people are given the possibility of getting to know a composer, which is the main reason, I think, why Elgar has avoided the fate of oblivion in Denmark. Finally, I should like to list some of the works by Elgar performed in Denmark this season. I have chosen the three major towns: Copenhagen (in eastern Denmark), Odense (in the middle of the country) and Aarhus (in the west). Though this selection

of towns does not show the total number of concerts, it does, however, cover the situation reasonably well.

The Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Copenhagen

Oct. 1	Dream of Gerontius	) These concerts will be broadcast on the day of performance
Mar. 4	Cello Concerto	

N.B. Last season: Sea Pictures was broadcast

Aarhus Symphony Orchestra

Nov. 1 Dream of Gerontius  
4 Cello Concerto  
11 Serenade in E minor

Odense Symphony Orchestra

Nov. 10 Cello Concerto (Played by Ralph Kirshbaum, and conducted by Frank Shipway who also conducts Walton's 1st Symphony on this occasion)  
24 Enigma Variations

I hope my fellow Elgarians in Britain will feel encouraged to get this brief account of 'the state of things in Denmark'. If only the hopeful prospects of this country could go for Germany and France as well.

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From DAVID BURY

In September 1977 Dr. John Buttrey contributed an interesting article concerning Edward J. Dent's unflattering article on Elgar in Adler's "Handbuch der Musikgeschichte" in 1930, and the ensuing protest by Elgarians.

Although Michael Kennedy, in "Portrait of Elgar" p.262, alludes to it briefly, it is less well-known that this was not the first time that Prof. Dent had taken opportunity to denigrate Elgar abroad. In June 1931 Robert Lorenz, musicologist and critic, drew attention in "The Musical Times" to Dent's article entitled "Musica Inglese Moderna" in "La Musica Contemporanea in Europa" (1925). Dent contributed a page on Stanford and more on Boughton, but his sole reference to Elgar was as follows:- "In England the best musicians have a real horror of him (Liszt). The only composer who shows traces of his influence is Elgar, and Elgar, despite his brilliant style, is repugnant to many English musicians, by reason precisely of that chevaleresque rhetoric which badly covers up his intrinsic vulgarity."

Though not as sweeping as the German attack ("many English musicians" replaces "To English ears"), Lorenz found this article equally offensive and replied with the following Limerick:

"Our public to misrepresent  
Is the aim of a critic named Dent,  
What he daren't say at home,  
Is foisted on Rome,  
As accepted by common consent"

Readers of the Journal will doubtless be with Lorenz, and I am certain they will sense a kindred spirit in some words he subsequently wrote in an article on Elgar's "Falstaff" (November 1932):- "The genesis of this article was little other than a desire to express deepest gratitude to a composer who, - began to bring into my life a new beauty, so different from any I had experienced before, that its ultimate effect was to produce a revolution in my musical outlook. The least I can do in return is to try now and again to infect others with my own love and enthusiasm." ("An Amateur's Study of Elgar's 'Falstaff' " - Musical Times, Nov.1932)

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From BEN KINGDON

Geoffrey Hodgkins has rightly drawn attention to the minor 'enigma' connected with Elgar's two Op.60 songs, "The Torch" and "The River". No doubt the English words were by Elgar himself rather than by Pietro d'Alba (who would otherwise have been a most remarkable rabbit!), but were the texts original or did Elgar indeed paraphrase them from East European folk-songs? Diana McVeagh ('Edward Elgar', p.42) mentions copy-right difficulties, and it would be good to know the full story. The words of "Owls" (apparently Elgar's own) were not credited to Pietro, as Geoffrey Hodgkins suggests, but the part-song was dedicated to him. Strangely, one can argue that both "Owls" and "The River" may have links with the 'Enigma' Variations.

The location of the supposed river (Rustula) seems as elusive as that of Leyrisch-Turasp. If the latter is indeed an anagram then one might look for a more precise date in it than the appended '1909', since Elgar would hardly have worked on this song throughout the year. The only month to be found is April; the other letters yield the name of Elgar's great friend Schuster, while the remaining letter Y might indicate the 25th of the month, or (more probably) stand for 'Yvonne', the supposed dedicatee of "The Torch". Percy Young in 'Elgar, O.M.' p.424, comments that the name is "probably fictitious". Alternatively, if it can be shown that Elgar met the mysterious Yvonne on a ship named the S.S. Paul Richter, then the search could be over.

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From MICHAEL TROTT

The name 'Leyrisch-Turasp', which appears mysteriously at the end of the ms. of "The River". is clearly an anagram. (A ' -rasp' is unlikely to be found beyond our shores!) As Geoffrey Hodgkins suggested in the September Journal, 'Tupsley' can be found in the name. Indeed, Elgar lived in that parish of Hereford when the song was written. I suggest that the composer, in not untypically quirky mood, started with

TUPSLEY, SIRRAH:

the latter defiant archaism being somewhat popular with him. This was transmogrified to LEYRISCH-TURASP in which a 'c' was finally inserted in a crude attempt at verisimilitude (Garmisch-Partenkirchen?)

May I put here a connected mystery to readers? Concerning the influence for "Polonia", Elgar described his Anglo-Polish friend, Count

Lubienski Bodenham, as "...the Squire of Bodenham while I lived in the adjoining parish..." Did he mean Bodenham village by Dinmore Hill, which is several parishes away from Tupsley, or just nearby Bodenham Road, and what has happened to the reputedly ancient family?

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From VERONICA BROWN

With regard to Michael Rostron's letter (Sept. 1981), it occurs to me that the Elgar Society could perhaps broaden its scope. Our own great man is no longer a neglected genius, but neglect, alas, lives on.

Among other areas of neglect, the 19th century is now cared for by the Wesley Society of Great Britain, and the Arthur Sullivan Society; only the once-proposed Cipriani Potter Society is lacking. A glance at a current record catalogue will show how improvements are coming. But what of the 20th century? The record companies and others show very patchy interest indeed; one need not look beyond Three Choirs country to find composers whose work is sadly under-represented on record.

What do other members feel about extending our scope?

(Perhaps, as there has been some confusion enslewhere, I should make it clear that I am NOT the musical Veronica Brown, but merely an obscure literary namesake.)

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From GEOFFREY PRENTICE

In the Journal dated May, 1980, Michael Trott added to his "Guide to Places of Elgarian Interest..." At the end of his list he stated that Troyte Griffith's house was 'Fairview' in Old Wyche Road. Although he is quite correct in this statement, I discovered on a recent visit that a situation has arisen which may have caused some confusion to other Elgarians visiting Troyte's house.

During Troyte's lifetime his house was indeed called 'Fairview' and, according to the owners is the present no.18, Old Wyche Road. They also told me that he was looked on as rather an eccentric in his lifetime. He never married, and tried to isolate himself by planting trees and bushes around his house. I was also told that Troyte insisted on the gate and front door of his house being painted cherry red, and they still are to this day. Just how true these stories are I am unable to say. Perhaps another reader might be able to add to this information.

At some time after Troyte left the house, the name plate was removed. However, further up Old Wyche Road stands a large cottage called 'Fairview'. As far as I was able to discover from local people, this 'Fairview' has nothing to do with Troyte or Elgar. Troyte's 'Fairview' is the present no.18, but there is now no visible record on the house to show that this was once its name.

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ELGAR & THE FIGHT FOR RIGHT MOVEMENT. *Continued from p. 7*

It was announced that Sir Edward Elgar had composed a song for the movement entitled *Fight for the Right*, and this was to be sung by Ger-vase Elwes at both meetings. (Incidentally, the movement did not use the definite article before 'Right' in its title.) An advertisement for this meeting mentions that Muriel Foster was also to sing.

The second and more successful meeting on March 28th was fully reported in *The Times* the next day. The Chairman was the distinguished poet Robert Bridges, and a choir of 300 (all volunteers from the major choral societies) was conducted by Walford Davies. One of the choral items was Parry's setting of Blake's poem, with organ accompaniment. Bridges claimed to have suggested the setting to Parry, and it was well received by the audience, though, according to the report, not as enthusiastically as some other music in the programme. Elgar's song was again sung, but Elwes was not present and the soloist was John Adams. The musical part of the programme ended with the finale of Parry's *Voces Clamantium*.

The Fight for Right Movement seems to have temporarily flourished and then withered away - perhaps it proved unnecessary as the horrors of the war and universal conscription pulled everyone into the conflict.

The BBC made broadcasting history in a small way by giving a performance of the song, with piano accompaniment. We trust that it may be possible to obtain a tape of the performance for the archives. The song is hardly the best of Elgar, and it must be said that it makes little impact today.

R.P.T.

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SOME NOTES FROM WORCESTER. *Continued from p.14*

was a member of the Committee of that Society. The conductor at these concerts was Mr.W.H. Elgar. The Society was established in 1869 and in the later concerts the name of 'Master Elgar' appears for the instrumental items. My grandfather's notes for the concert given on 3rd May, 1870, "The whole of the programme was gone through in a very spirited manner and was much applauded. The instrumental items in particular gave great satisfaction."

Apparently entrance to these concerts was free to members of the congregation of St. George's Catholic Church, but the last of the programmes is of a concert given on 22nd June, 1870, when a charge for admission was made, "this being decided upon for the purpose of paying the expenses of the other free concerts. The price of the tickets was fixed at 6d. and 3d; they were eagerly bought by the congregation. As on former occasions the Programme was appreciated, the instrumental pieces always being much applauded." There the notes end.

[EDITORIAL NOTE: We regret the delay in publishing these brief memoirs]

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We regret that all other issues are now out of print.