

# The Elgar Society JOURNAL



MAY  
1984

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*We regret that due to printing error pages 15 & 26 are transposed.*

# The Elgar Society Journal

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**EDITORIAL May 1984**

*Vol. 3, no. 5*

These have been heady times indeed since our last issue. The name of Elgar seems to have occurred with quite astonishing regularity from one end of the country to the other. In all forms of publicity - newspapers, journals, learned and not so learned magazines, recordings, television and film - we have had little to complain of. Concerts and recitals have been very well patronised, and more excellent concerts are to come. Books too have appeared, with Dr. Moore's *magnum opus* still to be published. What a difference to the last Elgar anniversary - 1957. Although there were a number of excellent concerts and recordings then, it was uphill work, and one was conscious that it was a fight to achieve proper recognition for Elgar's greatness. Now all is changed.

In our gratitude for the changed circumstances (with a small congratulation to ourselves for the part we have played), the Society should not overlook the fact that its organisation depends more than ever on the voluntary hard work and enthusiasm of individuals. We have eight branches now, but those branches will not continue to thrive unless more, and new, members take a keen interest, support the branches, and also play their part in the work entailed in running the various activities which go on around the country. There is little point in suggesting that greater efforts should be made overseas if our own nationwide branches do not receive the help and support they deserve. The officers, both nationally and locally, have all worked very hard to ensure the success of events this year. If the years ahead are to be equally successful, then we need more support for the branches, and a willingness to lighten the load of branch officials wherever possible.

The Annual Meeting in Worcester on June 2nd will be but one of a number of occasions when members can judge how much has been done, and equally how much work (and a great deal of musical enjoyment!) remains.

Ronald Taylor

*Editor*



*Flowers placed on Elgar's grave after the Memorial Mass, 25th February. (L to R:) Simon Holt, Mrs. Carol Holt, Paul Grafton, Miss Margaret Elgar. [Acknowledgements to the Malvern Gazette]*

## **NEWS ITEMS**

THE STARLIGHT EXPRESS was given further performances in February, in the production adapted and directed by Therese Kitchin for the Acorn Children's Theatre. This was first seen in 1978, and fully reviewed in the Journal at the time. Regrettably we were not able to advise members of this 1984 production in time for the January issue as the Acorn Theatre organisers failed to tell us that they were putting it on! London Branch were informed, but much too late for our purpose.

'ROSE IMPERIAL', John Hunt's play about Edward Elgar, which produced over £2,000 profit last year for the Elgar Birthplace and the National Trust, is to be sponsored by American Express for the Stratford-upon-Avon Festival this July. The play will be staged in Stratford at Mason's Croft, the former home of the novelist Marie Corelli, which is now the Shakespeare Institute. The house was visited by Elgar when he lived at Tiddington, Stratford. There will be an evening performance of 'Rose Imperial' on Friday July 20th, and a matinee and evening performances on Saturday July 21st. Reserved seats are £3 each evening and £2 for the matinee. Unreserved seats are £2 and £1 respectively. Ticket applications to: Stratford-upon-Avon Festival, Festival Office, 13 Waterside, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, CV37 6DX. Telephone enquiries: 0739 67969.

IN MAY the Toronto radio station CJRT will broadcast all of Sir Adrian Boult's Elgar recordings, including complete performances of the major oratorios. Other stations around the world please copy?

ON JUNE 3RD at 4 p.m. in Worcester Cathedral. The Annual Wreath-Laying Ceremony at the Elgar Window following Evensong. There will be much Elgar music by the choir. Followed by Birthday Cake and Sherry at the Birthplace at Lower Broadheath from about 5.30 p.m. onwards. Members attending the AGM and Dinner on the previous day have an added incentive to stay over for these two events.

THE CURATOR OF THE BIRTHPLACE museum, Jim Bennett, has recently been in hospital having three wisdom teeth removed. We deeply sympathise, but cannot help misquoting Oscar Wilde: 'To lose one may be counted a misfortune, but to lose three sounds like carelessness!' Seriously, we hope that Jim Bennett is by now fully recovered and enjoying his busy life at Broadheath.

BELATED CONGRATULATIONS to our Vice-President, Professor Ian Parrott, on being made an Honorary Fellow of the London College of Music. The news reached us just too late for the last issue.

THE WORCESTER STAMP CENTRE is producing three special covers for this year, one commemorating Elgar's death, one the 900th anniversary of Worcester Cathedral, and one the Worcester Three Choirs Festival. Full details of availability from the Centre at 40 Broad Street, Worcester.

TOURIST OFFICIALS IN MALVERN AND WORCESTER have now devised an 'Elgar Trail' of sites connected with the composer. Brochures are obtainable at the Tourist Office in either location.

A COMMEMORATIVE ELGAR EXHIBITION was mounted by Marion Simmons at Leicester University from Jan. 24th to Feb. 24th and was seen by many people. The material shown (some of it loaned by Raymond Monk) included books, scores, original programmes (including 'The Starlight Express') record sleeves drawings, posters, and many photographs. Included was a section of local interest, including details of Elgar's visit to the city in August 1917 to conduct *The Fringes of the Fleet* at the Palace Theatre.

THE EXHIBIT 'Elgar and London' arranged by David Bury, by kind permission of Robert Tucker, Music Librarian at the Barbican Centre in London, was also a success. Although confined to two display cases there was a wealth of interesting material for visitors.

IN THE 1984 YEHUDI MENUHIN INTERNATIONAL VIOLIN COMPETITION, held at Folkestone in April, contestants were given three of the *Five Etudes Caracteristiques*, op. 24, as an alternative in Stage 2 of the competition.

MALCOLM RUDLAND, FRCO, is to play the Organ Sonata no. 1 at Matyas Templon, Budapest on August 17th.

A Concert of Music of Elgar and his Friends will be given at Eton College, on the 15th September. A number of rarely heard pieces will be performed by the Royalty Singers and the Windsor Sinfonia, conducted by Robert Tucker. Full details in our next issue.

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CENTRAL INDEPENDENT TELEVISION AND THE ELGAR SOCIETY invite you to attend a special private Pre-View of HOPE AND GLORY - a major appraisal of the life and work of Edward Elgar. This will take place in Malvern on the afternoon of Sunday, June 3rd. (time and venue to be announced). The film, which has been produced for Central Television by Jim Berrow, runs for 80 minutes and includes contributions from Elgar's principal biographers. Simon Rattle with the C.B.S.O. and a distinguished list of soloists provide the music for this prestige production which will be transmitted on the ITV Network later in 1984. Admission to this important premiere is by printed invitation which may be obtained from Raymond Monk, 19 Severn Street, LEICESTER LE2 0NN (Tel. 0533 544613). Please enclose a stamped, addressed envelope.

Central Independent Television will also be providing light refreshments after the film and the Society is grateful to them and to Mr. Jim Berrow for making this occasion possible.

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Bill Nicol would like to hear from anyone who knew, or has any information about the mezzo-soprano MURIEL FOSTER, who was born in Sunderland in 1877, and died in London in 1937. His address is West Hall Farm, Cleadon, Sunderland, SR6 7VX.

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# Some Personal Memories of Elgar

*by Sir Percy Hull*

(These memories by the late Sir Percy Hull first appeared in the Summer 1957 issue of "Making Music", the Journal of the Rural Music Schools Association. They are reprinted here, with only slight amendment, by kind permission of Lady Hull, a Vice-President of the the Elgar Society.)

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I must have been about sixteen years old when I first saw Elgar. I had not long become articled pupil to Dr. Sinclair, organist of Hereford Cathedral, and the year must have been 1894. Edward Elgar, his father Mr. W. H. Elgar, and his brother Frank all came over from Worcester to play as professionals at the Herefordshire Philharmonic Society's concerts, Elgar senior playing viola, Frank oboe and Edward violin. I do not think even in those days that Elgar looked very different from the distinguished and somewhat military figure later to become so familiar to music lovers everywhere - his moustache already existed, and a typical item of dress was his "squire's leggings" which he invariably wore at rehearsals. I well remember an incident which must have happened in 1896, the year *King Olaf* was produced at Hanley. At one of the Herefordshire Philharmonic concerts, at which I was playing viola, I was standing at the side of the platform with Frank Elgar and a horn player who asked Frank where his brother was. When told he was at Hanley for the first performance of his *King Olaf*, the horn player remarked "You know, your brother may go far one of these days!" How very far none of the three of us could well have dreamed!

I began to see Elgar frequently about this time as I was always in and out of Dr. Sinclair's house and Elgar often came over from Malvern to visit him. In Dr. Sinclair's visitors' book his signature occurs many times accompanied by short musical quotations which he called *The Moods of Dan*, who was Dr. Sinclair's bulldog, afterwards immortalised in the Xth Variation of *Enigma*. These quotations were headed *Dan Thoughtful*, *Dan Frolicsome*, or wistful, and in these were the germs of themes later appearing in *King Olaf*, *Gerontius* and elsewhere. Elgar was a strange mixture. His military bearing was a thin disguise for his extreme sensitiveness and shyness, and, when he came to consult Dr. Sinclair over his compositions, he was so nervous and excited that he could only with difficulty succeed in playing his own music. I remember one occasion when he and Dr. Sinclair were trying over a duet arrangement of Tchaikowski's *Pathetic Symphony*, then only just published. When they came to the movement in 5/4 time they got into difficulties, Elgar ruefully saying he was no pianist though he could play anything on the fiddle. When one thinks off the constantly changing rhythms that we now take in our stride, one realises how greatly music has altered since the end of the last century. It was in Dr. Sinclair's house that Elgar wrote much of *The Apostles* and I remember seeing a notice on the study door "Incubator is now warming up, hatching is on - please don't disturb the old hen"!

But it was not until the Elgars came to live in Hereford in 1904, that I got to know Sir Edward intimately. (He had been knighted the same year.) It then became a great privilege and joy to me to go for walks and bicycle rides with him in the Herefordshire



country that we both knew and loved so well, and I absorbed his keen power of observation and his quite phenomenal memory of places and events. I was for the first time in my life in contact with a really great personality - a personality outstanding even apart from his musical genius. This greatness, I think, has been felt by all who knew him: he had only to walk into a room and one sensed it before he ever spoke. I have often watched him standing in Hereford Cathedral, listening to one of the performances at a Festival, his tall figure outlined against a pillar, alone and withdrawn, and yet what a feeling of power seemed to emanate from him! He loved to stand where he could see and hear the orchestra and those keen eyes would twinkle and blink with pleasure when some brilliant passage occurred in the brass, or there was a tremendous climax involving all "the kitchen furniture".

During his Hereford days the proof sheets of the piano duet arrangement of the *Enigma Variations* arrived and I was called in to play them at sight with the composer. He was in one of his most joyous moods and together we soon plunged right into the music. When we reached the end of the Troyte Variation (no. 7) I apologised for mis-reading some of the very quick passage in the famous bass part. The immediate reply was "Never mind the right notes in old Troyte - it is the rhythm that matters - and didn't we make the old fellow buzz!" It was something more than a privilege to have been the first person in the world to play these immortal Variations as a duet with the composer.

There is a very beautiful passage in *The Kingdom* where the disciples and friends of Jesus are soliloquising, and the words occur "In the love of neighbours and concord of brethren". Elgar once told me, with his usual twinkle, that when he was setting those words (he wrote *The Kingdom* at his Hereford house Plas Gwyn), he and Lady Elgar were being driven nearly crazy by the raucous shrieks of their neighbour's parrot, and a regrettable feud raged between the two houses, the end of which I never heard. I think his happiest years were spent at Hereford and his greatest music written either there or at Malvern. The immortal spirit of his music was inspired by his love of that country of the Severn and the Wye, and when he went to live in London he had perforce to lead a more artificial existence. Society claimed him, for Lady Elgar was ambitious that they should take what she felt was their rightful place in London society; and though they stayed for short periods in the country, they made no permanent home there.

During the first world war I was a prisoner and was cut off from all my friends, and it was not until I returned home in 1918 to become cathedral organist and conductor of the Three Choirs Festival at Hereford that I met Elgar again. I had had many letters from him showing concern for me; and when I was given the degree of Mus.Doc. (sponsored by him and Sir Walford Davies) he wrote to say that, should there be any difficulty over payment of the necessary fees, I was on no account to let it worry me as it would be a pleasure for him to help me. I mention this to show his thought for his friends, a facet of his character perhaps not always borne enough in mind.

Much - perhaps too much - emphasis has been laid on Elgar's love of practical jokes, or play on words often found in his letters. But surely it was only natural for one who lived on such spiritual heights, as Elgar did for much of his life, to need a little light relief; and it was just this very human love of fun and delight in trivialities that endeared him so much to his friends. Sometimes, towards the end of his life, when he had known the tragedy of the first war and the death of his beloved wife, it was hard

to rouse him from the depths of melancholy and one longed to recall those lighter, happier moods. The person always most able to do this was my old and dear friend "Billy" Reed. Wherever he went Billy seems to radiate cheerfulness; and, though I did not know him intimately until after I was appointed to Hereford in 1918, when he came to all the Three Choirs Festivals as leader of the LSO, he had been a friend and confidant of Elgar's for some time. Some of my happiest memories are of the times when Billy, Elgar and I would get together for a walk or a chat - a chat inevitably about anything but music which Elgar would refuse to discuss seriously.

A typical incident stands out in my memory as it took place in 1933 not long before his fatal illness. At one of our Hereford Festival parties my wife begged him to "dress up for us in his glad rags" or, in other words, his Court dress as Master of the King's Musick. He pooh-pooh'd the idea in his usual jerky abrupt way which never disconcerted us for we knew it was only a mannerism, but that evening, when all our guests were assembled, the door was flung open to reveal him in all the glory of his Court dress and decorations - a truly impressive figure, his eyes blinking and twinkling, obviously delighted at the effect of his "entrance" and still young enough in heart to enjoy dressing up to go to a party!

All these reminiscences may seem trivial to the scholarly musician, but much has been written about Elgar for those who want to make a serious study of his life and works.

Elgar's last public appearance as conductor took place at the Hereford Festival of 1933, when *The Kingdom* was performed. In the following week I took my two boys (the elder, Cedric, being his God-son) over to Marl Bank, Worcester, where we found him in grand form and full of spirits. After giving us tea, the two boys went out into the garden and he played me quite a lot of his *Third Symphony*, which, alas, was never finished. Shortly after this his daughter, Carice, sent me a line to say that her father was far from well, and he had to be moved to a nursing home. From this illness he never recovered and I only saw him once more, just before he was moved back to his home, where he passed away on February 23rd, 1934.

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## **ELGAR and the London Symphony Orchestra**

**by Ronald Taylor**

The London Symphony Orchestra celebrates its 80th birthday on June 9th. In this commemorative year for Elgarians it is right that we should salute Elgar's favourite orchestra, and congratulate them on their birthday.

Born as a result of the breaking up of Henry Wood's original Queen's Hall Orchestra, the LSO gave its first concert on June 9th, 1904, under Hans Richter's baton. That first programme included the newly popular *Enigma Variations*, but Elgar's first direct contact with the orchestra came on March 8th, 1905, with an all-Elgar concert conducted by the composer. (Of course, many of the players were already familiar to him from the the Queen's Hall and other orchestras, and undoubtedly "my friends the members of British Orchestras", as the dedication of the *Cockaigne Overture* has it,

included many LSO players.) For the March concert Elgar had produced two new compositions - the *Introduction and Allegro for Strings* and the *Pomp and Circumstance March no. 3*. This concert, repeated on the following Sunday, was a great success, and in the following November Elgar and the orchestra went on a tour of the Midlands and the North, the first of a number arranged by the Birmingham impresario Percy Harrison. These tours associated Elgar and the LSO in the public mind. W. H. "Billy" Reed, close friend of the composer, was then a violinist in the orchestra, and later its leader. He tells a delightful story of that first tour in his book *Elgar*, pp. 88 & 89:

"The author went on this tour ... and never forgot Elgar's joy in the recounting of a conversation he had with a porter at St. Pancras station upon his arrival to start on the tour. Elgar was in his fur coat and, his luggage being collected and duly placed upon a hand-barrow, he was in the act of striding off up the platform to the reserved carriages, when the porter let go of his luggage and ran after him saying: 'I wouldn't go up there if I were you, sir; there is some sort of a bloomin' band or something, going away up there.' 'That's all right', said Elgar as he continued his progress, 'I'm one of them.' "

The friendship between Elgar and professional musicians was always a close one, and over the years Elgar and the LSO forged a relationship which must surely be unique between composer and players. Other first performances followed that 1905 concert - *Symphony no. 1* (first London performance) (1908); *Crown of India suite* (1912); *Carillon* (1914); *Polonia* (1915); *Spirit of England* (first London performance) (1916); *Cello Concerto* (1919); *Bach Fantasia and Fugue transcription* (1922); *Handel Overture in D minor transcription* (1923); *Pomp and Circumstance no. 5* (1930); *Nursery Suite* (1931); and the orchestral version of the *Severn Suite* (1932).

Additionally the Elgar repertoire given by the orchestra was extensive, particularly as at many festivals the LSO was the 'preferred orchestra', and often Elgar conducted his own music. For the 1911-12 Season Elgar was invited to accept the position of chief conductor, which he agreed to. In fact, the season was shared with other conductors, including Mengelberg and Steinbach. Of course, during this season, and in other short tours, Elgar conducted other composers' works, including Schumann and Brahms. A particularly interesting performance must have been the Brahms B flat piano concerto with Donald Tovey as soloist.

In 1912 the LSO began the first tour of North America by a British orchestra, and here a sour note was struck as far as Elgar's music was concerned. The conductor was to be the great Artur Nikisch and the preliminary programmes naturally included a number of items by Britain's leading composer. But one of the U.S. sponsors, a Mr. Blumenberg, declared that he would withdraw "if any Elgar items were included". The orchestra management gave in, and no Elgar items were performed but extra Bach and Mozart was put in!

In the years before the first world war the LSO players were familiar visitors to the Three Choirs Festivals. When, in 1921, the Festival was revived an unbroken association of orchestra and Festival began which went on until the outbreak of war in 1939. In choral and orchestral works Elgar was on the rostrum to conduct his own music, and an unusual rapport was remarked between the now aging composer and the orchestra. They met too in the recording studios of HMV, the bulk of Elgar's records being made with the London Symphony Orchestra. Even HMV's anonymous

"Symphony Orchestra" usually concealed a majority of LSO players.

When Elgar lay mortally ill at Marl Bank, Worcester, Fred Gaisberg, of HMV, arranged a radio link with the HMV Abbey Road studios in London, so that Elgar could supervise a recording being made by the orchestra conducted by Lawrence Collingwood. Astonishingly Elgar rallied sufficiently to make the whole experiment a decided success. Elgar spoke into the microphone to his friends in the orchestra, and they in turn were able to send him messages of cheer as well as playing to his complete satisfaction. It was to be the last time the players heard his voice - exactly one month later Elgar died.

The orchestra made one last gesture of farewell. At very short notice a memorial service was arranged at Worcester Cathedral on March 2nd, 1934. Without hesitation the players put aside any other engagements and travelled to Worcester, with, of course, the leader Billy Reed. To him it was a great personal loss, and he felt the occasion strongly. The music was conducted by Sir Ivor Atkins, organist of the Cathedral, and another close friend of Elgar, and the Festival and Cathedral choirs joined with the orchestra in a service which contained some of Elgar's finest writing. Three of the *Enigma Variations* were played "to symbolise the love and friendship which he found in life". Astra Desmond and Harold Williams sang two passages from *Gerontius*, and, most moving of all, Elsie Suddaby and the orchestra performed 'The Sun goeth down' from *The Kingdom*, followed by the combined choirs singing Elgar's setting of the Lord's Prayer.

The London Symphony had saluted the man who had given them his heart - no other composer ever took his place in their affections.

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## IN PURSUIT OF A FORGOTTEN OBLIGATO

by *David Bury*

Do readers of the "Journal" know of the counter-melody to the Choral Refrain of *Land of Hope and Glory* which Elgar composed in 1927? It was played by the bells of the Ottawa Peace Carillon as accompaniment to the singing of a massed choir on the occasion of the celebrations which marked the Diamond Jubilee of Confederation on Friday, July 1st, 1927. Dr Jerrold Northrop Moore had not come across it and Diana McVeagh thinks I may have discovered a little piece of unknown Elgar! Certainly I have never seen it included in any catalogue of Elgar's output, nor have I read anything of the occasion in any of the standard biographies. But it did happen! The performance involved 11,000 participants and was heard live by an audience of some 50,000 as well as being broadcast coast to coast across Canada and further afield. The present Dominion Carillonneur, Gordon Slater, has written to me:-

"The Elgar counter-melody does, in fact, exist. I have seen it! Written in Elgar's own hand, it was one of a dozen or so items spread on a table at the small opening ceremony of the Price Collection".

And I now have a photocopy of this document, the notes written by Elgar into a published copy of *Land of Hope and Glory*, as well as a copy of the music in the hand of the 1927 Dominion Carillonneur, Percival Price, forwarded by Stephen Willis, Head of the Manuscript Collection of the Music Division of the National Library of Canada.

# CARILLON

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CHORUS

Land of Hope and Glo - ry, Mo - ther of the

Free, How shall we ex - tol thee, who are born of

ther? Wi - der still and wi - der shall thy bounds be

set; God, who made thee might - - y,

Land of Hope and Glory.

H 8671.

SIR EDWARD ELGAR'S writing of his oblige for carillon to the Choral presentation in front of the Peace Tower at the time of the Jubilee Ceremonies and dedication of the Carillon July 1927.

The story begins in the spring of 1927 with a letter to Elgar from Cyril J. Rickwood, Director of Music for the Dominion Diamond Jubilee Celebrations. It may be seen in Worcester and reads as follows:-

"Dear Sir Edward,

As you may possibly be aware, on July 1st we are celebrating the Diamond Jubilee of Confederation and in connection therewith the new carillon in the tower of the House of Commons is to be opened.

As part of the musical programme, a choir of about 1,000 voices is to perform and the final number will be your *Land of Hope and Glory*. May I suggest that it would be very fitting if you would write a counter-melody to the chorus, in crotchets, to be performed on the carillon during the singing. It seems to me that the chorus would lend itself splendidly to this treatment and if carried out would form a wonderful climax to our programme.

If the idea commends itself to you, would you please advise me, and if possible, enclose the manuscript with your letter.

There are 53 chromatic notes in the carillon so there would be no restriction as to the notes to be used.

Trusting you will see your way clear to grant this favour."

Although in virtual retirement (the only other piece I know of that he composed in 1927 was the *Civic Fanfare* for the Hereford Festival), Elgar complied. He had, after all, experience of this sort of thing with his *Memorial Chimes for a Carillon* performed at the opening of the Loughborough War Memorial in 1923. In a letter of 6th July Rickwood wrote:-

"Dear Sir Edward,

Permit me to thank you for your gracious act in writing a carillon obligato to the chorus of *Land of Hope and Glory*.

It reached here in time and you will be interested to learn that we used it in conjunction with our choir and band at our celebration on July 1st. The performance was a decided success and created a profound impression on the audience of 50,000 souls."

The Ottawa Carillon was installed in the Peace Tower of the Parliament Buildings to commemorate the peace of 1918 and in remembrance of the Canadians who died in the Great War. The Tower and Parliament Buildings, themselves, had been reconstructed as a replacement of those destroyed in the great fire of 3rd February, 1916. The largest bell, the Bourdon, carries the inscription:-

"This Carillon was installed by authority of Parliament to commemorate the Peace of 1918 and to keep in remembrance the service and sacrifice of Canada in the Great War. Anno Domini MCMXXVI. Glory to God in the Highest and on earth peace good will towards men".

As Rickwood indicated in his original letter, there are 53 bells in all, ranging from the Bourdon which weighs 10 tons and sounds E, to the smallest weighing a mere 14lbs and pitched to the A four and a half octaves higher. The total weight of the bells is approximately 54 tons and in 1927 it was the largest carillon on the North American continent possessing, claimed the *Ottawa Journal*, "the greatest tone volume of all the carillons in the world", though at the same time "as delicate and sensitive as a violin". The bells had been cast and tuned in the Gillett and Johnston foundry of Croydon, England.

Preparations for the great day were not without their alarms. Problems beset the arrangements for the projected broadcast to be transmitted by direct telephone wires to all the radio broadcasting stations of the Dominion. One test in the early morning of Thursday, June 30th, revealed that roof microphones on the Parliament Buildings picked up not so much the carillon as the "twitter of innumerable swallows and sparrows as they fluttered about the coping of the buildings". While on the question of synchronizing the Elgar obligato with the singing of the choir Percival Price was sceptical, stating that if this was accomplished successfully, given that the carillonneur was perched 200 ft above the choir and enclosed in an 8ft windowless chamber, it would be for the first time in his experience.

In fact Granville Bantock had composed a setting of Tennyson's *Ring Out Wild Bells* for male-voice choir and the Bournville Carillon in 1924, the choir then standing at the foot of the tower. This had been successful and the Ottawa problem, too, was solved.

"Following preliminary tests in the CWLindsay Co. Ltd showrooms, the telephone was brought forward as the solution, and installation of special apparatus, including a headpiece for the carillonneur, was at once made in the tower. Taking advantage of the radio test of the bells, the carillonneur in the keyboard chamber of the tower was connected with his studio in the Senate side of the House by telephone. the hymn *Land of Hope and Glory* was then played on the piano and Mr Rickwood transferred the beats through the telephone by a prearranged count to Mr Price, who was able to accompany the piano with the obligato on the bells in perfect synchronization. The test was considered so successful by Mr Rickwood and Mr Price that they at once decided to employ the idea on Friday when the telephone will again connect Mr Rickwood on the ground directing the choir to Mr Price in the tower. The combination is most unique, but at the same time a most inspiring one, and will bring an experience into the lives of music lovers within hearing and radio range rarely if ever known before" (*Ottawa Journal*).

The programme for Diamond Jubilee Celebrations was nothing if not ambitious. At noon the Governor General, Viscount Willingdon, was to inaugurate the Carillon which would then play *O Canada*, *The Maple Leaf Forever* and *God Save the King*. After much wreath laying and tree planting, a reception was to be given by the Prime Minister, W L Mackenzie King. At 2.45 p.m. the Ottawa Centenary Choir would take its position and be joined by a choir of 10,000 schoolchildren from Ottawa and Hull crowding the lawns on either side the Parliament Buildings. Speeches from Governor General, Prime Minister, Leader of the Opposition, Senators, etc, would be interspersed with dramatic readings and patriotic songs ranging from *Home Sweet Home* to the climactic *Land of Hope and Glory*. The evening was to be taken up with an Official Dinner, Historical Pageant and a late night Carillon Concert of patriotic airs. Apart from private radio sets (this was the infancy of broadcasting) arrangements were in hand to broadcast the proceedings to open air audiences throughout Canada via public amplifiers. On the following two days there were plans

## RECORD REVIEWS

Enigma Variations, Introduction and Allegro, Serenade for Strings

*London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Vernon Handley*

EMI 'Eminence' EMX 4120111 (disc)  
TC-EMX 4120114 (cassette)

It is surprising that Vernon Handley should not have recorded the *Variations* earlier in his much acclaimed Elgar cycle. Perhaps the fact that Classics for Pleasure still list the old Boult/LPO version (originally released by World Record Club) in their catalogue accounts for this - and the fact that this new version is released not on their CFP label but in the new EMI 'Eminence' series. It is also the first Handley/Elgar recording to have been made digitally.

It goes without saying that it is a superbly satisfying performance of the *Variations*. It is difficult to avoid mention of Boult in discussing Handley's Elgar interpretations, as they so obviously stem from the example of his mentor. Yet these are distinctive interpretations, more strongly characteristic than Boult's later versions, with greater flexibility of tempi and rhythms. As a performance of this much recorded work, this version stands well up amongst the best versions.

*Introduction and Allegro* is given an attractive, bracing performance, which is beautifully paced, a little slow initially, to bring the piece towards a more effective climax, thus making it less 'sectional' than is often the case. The *Serenade* is played 'straight' without undue sentiment. Throughout the LPO players perform for Handley with the commitment which has characterised the whole series. Unfortunately the recorded sound, despite the modern technology, is less appealing. One of the worst faults of digital recording is the fact that it can add a hard steely edge to string tone, and generally reduce the impact of the body of the sound generally. This has been the case here. This is less of a problem on the *Variations* side. The LPO strings in the *Introduction and Allegro*, however, sound much less well integrated than one knows them to be. Although recorded in the same location as the magnificently recorded *2nd Symphony*, (Watford town hall) less natural hall resonance has been caught on this occasion and the spread of sound seems 'flatter' without the sense of layered depth to the orchestral tone, which was such an attractive feature of the earlier recording. The cassette version, which tames some of the hardness and conveys rather more body of tone is more than acceptable and is much more recommendable than the disc.

Cello Concerto, Cockaigne Overture, Introduction and Allegro

*Dresden Staatskapelle, conducted by Neville Marriner*

*Philips 6514 316*

The Dresden Staatskapelle is one of the great romantic orchestras of the present time, and their distinctive, glowing tone colour has contributed outstandingly to



recording directly "off the air" instead of in the studio. I have obtained a copy of this recording, covering some 35 minutes playing time, from the Public Archives of Canada. Unfortunately, though containing excellent reproductions of the choir's singing of *Home Sweet Home*, *The Maple Leaf Forever*, *Vive la Canadienne* and a number of other items, the *Land of Hope and Glory* is missing. I shall try again since it seems probable that a recording reposes somewhere. Meanwhile I do have the the Carillon playing the Elgar melody, though without voices, as a reprise later in the day.

In 1939 the University of Michigan introduced 'Carillon' as a degree subject in Applied Music, and the Dominion Carillonneur, Percival Price, was appointed to take charge of the course. Happily, Professor Price is still alive and resident in Michigan. He was present at Ottawa in July when he fulfilled an ambition of seeing his Collection accepted by the National Library of Canada. As I write, the Collection has not yet been completely catalogued, but, as I have indicated, the Elgar manuscript score has turned up and there may be other items of interest to follow. The pursuit continues.

*Postscript:*

Since writing this article I have learned of at least one Elgar Society member who knew something of the event, and, indeed, had a personal connection. Mr. E. Wulstan Atkins, Chairman of the Elgar Foundation, tells me that he attended a Reception-Recital at the Gillett and Johnston Foundry in Croydon in April 1927 at which the Elgar composition was played on the Ottawa Bells prior to their shipment to Canada. Mr Atkins alludes to the evening in his book, which has been eagerly awaited by all Elgarians, and has been kind enough to let me see a copy of the relevant draft. He writes:- "I was delighted to find Billy Reed amongst the distinguished guests, and we sat together for the Bell Recital, which included as the main work Elgar's composition based on *Land of Hope and Glory*. The bells had been mounted on a temporary steel scaffolding and were due to be crated and sent to Canada the following week."

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LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

80th Birthday Concert

Barbican Centre, London,

June 9th  
1984

A re-hearing of part of the concert conducted by Elgar and performed by the London Symphony Orchestra in 1905. It was at this concert that *Introduction & Allegro for strings*, and the *Third Pomp and Circumstance March* were heard for the first time.

The programme for the 1984 Birthday concert, conducted by Andre Previn, will consist of:

*Cockaigne Overture; Sea Pictures (Soloist: Anne Howells)*  
*Enigma Variations; Pomp & Circumstance no. 3*

Seats: £8.00, £7.00, £6.00, £5.00, £3.50 and £2.50

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## A FEAST OF FESTIVALS.....

The coming months will see a number of Festivals, all of them with events and concerts to interest lovers of Elgar's music.

First the MALVERN FESTIVAL, from the 20th May to the 2nd June. The dramatic side of the Festival does not really concern us here, though good things are promised - but it is the musical side which concerns us. On May 20th the *Serenade for Strings* in a concert including music by Delius, Holst, Mozart and Haydn, given by the Orchestra of St. John's Smith Square. A performance of *The Kingdom* on May 26th, with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Malvern Festival Chorus, Sheila Armstrong, Margaret Cable, Kenneth Bowen, and Brian Rayner Cook. On May 28th the Aldwyn Consort of Voices will perform choral works by Elgar, Delius and Holst. On the 30th the Nash Ensemble will perform the Dvorak and Elgar *Piano Quintets*. In the final concert on Saturday, June 2nd (which unfortunately clashes with the Elgar Society Dinner) the *Enigma Variations* will be given. There are talks on Elgar at the Malvern Winter Gardens during the Festival and full details may be obtained from the Festival Office, Winter Gardens, Grange Road, Malvern, Worcs.

At the same time two very interesting exhibitions will be held. One at the Winter Gardens is called "Elgar's Malvern", and will consist of paintings by local and invited artists inspired by Elgar's works, particularly those with a Malvern association. Additionally there will be an exhibition of colour photographs by John Winsor. In the Malvern Library Art Gallery an exhibition of paintings, drawings, prints and photographs will be held under the title "Elgar's England". These exhibitions will run from May 19th to June 8th, and visitors are strongly urged to attend both. We are greatly indebted to Malvern Festival Artists who have been responsible for this contribution to the commemorative year. There will be further showings of the exhibits during the Three Choirs Festival, at St. Nicholas Church, Worcester, and in September at the Gloucester Elgar Festival, mentioned below. Further particulars from Miss Vivian Cooke, ARCA, Malvern 4074.

Concurrently with the second week of Malvern's Festival there will be the WORCESTERSHIRE ELGAR FESTIVAL, presented by the Philomusica of Gloucester and Worcestershire. Readers will recall earlier festivals by the same organisations and know the tremendous amount of hard work and enthusiasm which goes into their performance and presentation. Profits will be donated to the Elgar Birthplace, and local Worcester churches. An impressive list of performances is headed by *King Olaf* on May 26th at St. George's R.C. Church, Worcester, followed by *Banner of St. George, Polonia, Sea Pictures, Spirit of England, Dream of Gerontius, Light of Life, Sospiri, Great is the Lord*, on other days. On May 30th a performance of *Fringes of the Fleet* at St. John's Parish Church, a Chamber Concert at Worcester College of Higher Education on May 31st. A move to Kidderminster on June 2nd for a Birthday Concert including *The Music Makers, Cello Concerto*, and the *Coronation Ode*. Full details of concerts and tickets available from Music 47, Friar Street, Worcester, or The Elgar Birthplace, Lower Broadheath, Worcester.

Pressure of space forbids more than a mention of the complementary Gloucester Festival in September, although details will appear in our next issue. This will

commence with a repeat performance of *King Olaf*. Details from The Birthplace or from J. Walkley, Craeg Lea, 86 Wells Road, Malvern, Worcs., enclosing an s.a.e. please.

The 1984 THREE CHOIRS FESTIVAL, this year at Worcester, has, as might be expected, far more Elgar performances than for many years past. Delius and Holst too are represented. Brochures for the Three Choirs giving full details of all events from 18th August to 25th August are available now from the Festival Ticket Office, 8 College Yard, Worcester (0905-29024). Details of the Elgar Society buffet supper will be found on another page of this Journal. The Elgar concerts include a performance of *Gerontius* with Dame Janet Baker, Stuart Burrows, and Benjamin Luxon, BBC Welsh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Andrew Davis on August 18th, the *String Quartet* on August 21st (at Hartlebury Castle), on August 22nd *The Black Knight*, and *Sursum Corda* in the same programme, the former work being performed by the BBC Philharmonic, the Cathedral choir and the Festival Chorus, conducted by Donald Hunt. Michael George and Kenneth Bowen are the soloists. Part songs, piano works, and the *Cello Concerto* can all be heard at concerts on August 23rd. On the morning of August 24th Michael Kennedy will give a talk on the oratorios. This is at St. George's R.C. Church, and previous to the talk Adrian Partington will play the *Vesper Voluntaries* and other organ works by Elgar. In the evening *Froissart* and shorter works of Elgar can be heard in the Cathedral. On August 25th a superb ending to the Festival will see the performance of *The Apostles* and *The Kingdom* on the same day. A fine array of soloists will be joined by the RLPO, under the baton of Donald Hunt. The WARWICK ARTS FESTIVAL takes place from 6th to 15th July, but a pre-festival event will be a concert by the Desford Colliery Dowty Band on June 16th at which a new arrangement, by Eric Ball, of the *Enigma Variations* will be performed. On 7th July the Fine Arts Brass Ensemble will play an arrangement of the Powick music. On 10th July James Parsons will play the *Organ Sonata no. 1*. The next day a performance of *La Capriceuse* by Lorraine McAslan (violin), and on the 14th the *Serenade for Strings* by the Orchestra da Camera. On the 15th at evensong the choir of St. Mary's will sing *Great is the Lord*. On the 14th July the Festival will organise a bus trip to Elgar sites around Worcester and Holst sites in Cheltenham. Fuller details from Warwick Arts Society, Northgate, Warwick, CV34 4JL.

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A new record of choral and vocal music by that greatly neglected composer W. G. Whittaker (1876-1944) has just appeared. Sung by the Halle Choir, under Maurice Handford, with solos by John Noble (baritone), this is an excellent recording of some fascinating choral music. Members of the Society may purchase copies of the record direct from Viking Publications, 3 Pembroke Gardens, London, W8 6HS, for £4.90 including postage. Michael Kennedy contributes very informative sleeve-notes.

*An Important New Publication*

THE ELGARS OF WORCESTER

'In the shadow of our dear, dear Cathedral'

by

K.E.L. and Marion Simmons

(with maps & photographs)

Published by the Elgar Society, 1984

This is an outstanding piece of original research, which documents for the first time the precise location of the various members of the Elgar family in Worcester, with the dates of the occupancy of houses in the city and its surroundings. This research, happily completed in time for publication in this commemorative year, also corrects and amplifies information in existing biographies, and will be of the greatest value to all interested in the composer, his early years and antecedents.

The First Edition will have a limited printing, and will be sold to the public at £2 per copy. Members may have their copy at the special price of £1.50 (post included). Orders executed in strict rotation.

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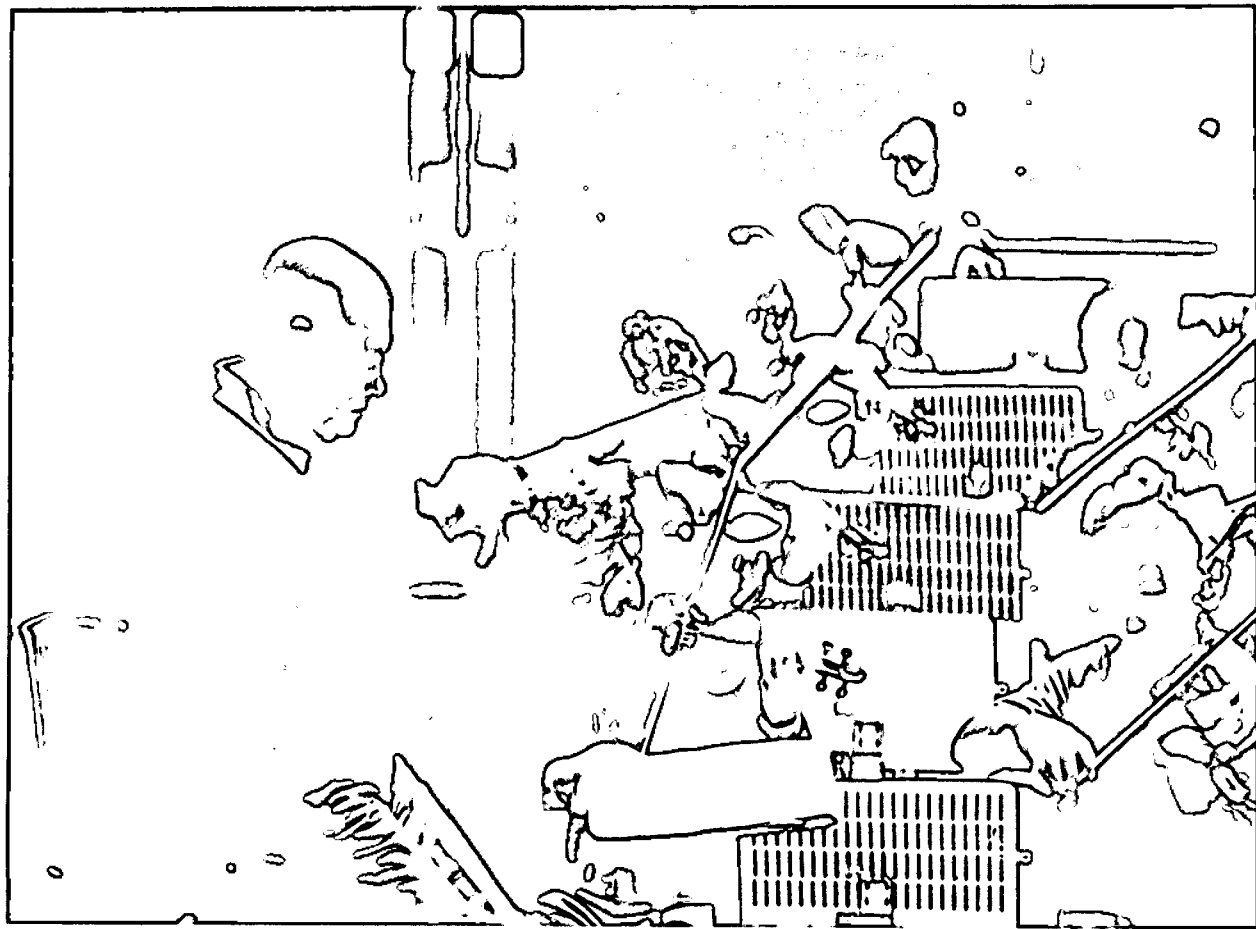
UNVEILING OF LOCOMOTIVE 50007

as the 'Sir Edward Elgar'

A unique ceremony took place at Paddington Station, London, on 25th February, when Simon Rattle unveiled a plaque on the side of British Rail's latest locomotive. A large crowd of invited guests watched as the handsome nameplate appeared from its hiding place under the obligatory curtain. Suitable speeches were made by the Director of Inter-City, the Managing Director of Western Region, and Simon Rattle. British Rail's Western Region Silver Band played appropriate music, and afterwards was conducted by Mr. Rattle in a performance of *Nimrod*.

Following the ceremony, much filmed and photographed, a magnificent repast was put on in the rooms overlooking the station, about to be vacated - alas - by British Rail when they move headquarters of the region to Swindon. Our thanks to British Rail and all concerned who made this day such a memorable one.

Coda: Thanks to a great deal of driving across country by Jack and Vivienne McKenzie, the old GWR nameplate of the original steam locomotive 'Sir Edward Elgar' now reposes in the Birthplace Museum. We are delighted that it will now be housed with so many other Elgar exhibits.



*Vernon Handley & the LPO rehearsing for the RFH concert on 23rd February*

## 1984 - ELGAR SOCIETY COMMEMORATIVE CONCERTS

*Royal Festival Hall, London 23 February 1984*

Two years ago, the Executive Sub-Committee decided that the actual 50th anniversary of Elgar's death, 23 February 1984, should if possible be marked by a major concert in London, preferably at the Royal Festival Hall. At the time this seemed little more than a pipe-dream: the main problem being to find a sponsor, as the funds of the Society were clearly quite inadequate to finance such a project. Dedicated negotiation by the Secretary, Andrew Neill, eventually secured the sponsorship of the Hogg Robinson Group, and the London Philharmonic Orchestra was engaged with their Associate Conductor, Vernon Handley. Dame Janet Baker readily agreed to appear as soloist in *Sea Pictures*. The Society was greatly honoured when Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester accepted the Chairman's invitation to attend the concert.

Graced as it was with the presence of Their Royal Highnesses, the atmosphere and sense of occasion at this concert was quite unique. All seats were sold and the music making was of the highest quality. Programme notes were very kindly provided by Diana McVeagh, Dr Jerrold Northrop Moore, Michael Kennedy and Dr Percy Young. The incidental music to *Grania and Diarmid*, including the noble Funeral March, made an interesting and appropriate beginning and this was followed by the also rarely heard *Wand of Youth Suite No. 2* in a highly effective performance marked by deftness and concentration. Then, to conclude the first half, and with a sensitive and beautifully played contribution from the orchestra and conductor, Dame Janet's matchless interpretation of *Sea Pictures* delighted the rapt audience.

The quality of the orchestral playing in the smaller-scale works augured well for the performance of the *A flat Symphony* in the second half - and so it proved. It was a performance of great power and concentration, bringing out the majestic sweep of the music through all its changing moods. Vernon Handley's close attention to rhythmic precision enhancing the drama without ever putting in jeopardy the warmth and richness of the more relaxed passages in this work. The orchestra responded magnificently to their conductor's inspired direction and the audience's reaction at the conclusion was clear evidence that this concert had been a triumphant success for all the performers, for the Society, and above all, for Elgar's memory.

At a reception after the concert the thanks of the Society to all concerned were expressed by the Chairman, Michael Pope. Then H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester, on behalf of the Society, presented a painting by Mr David Birtwhistle of the Birthplace at Broadheath to the Chairman of the Hogg Robinson Group, Mr Albert Whewy. A token of the Society's great appreciation of the Group's sponsorship of the concert, without which this notable and highly successful event could not have taken place.

*The German School, Petersham, Surrey 27 March 1984*

This concert devoted to Elgar's Chamber Music and jointly sponsored by the Society and Credit Insurance Association Ltd was greatly enjoyed by a packed audience. It formed part of the Richmond Concert Society's 22nd Season and the musicians were the Medici String Quartet and John Bingham, piano.

The concert opened with a committed performance of the *String Quartet*. Then, Paul Robertson, the leader, played *Chanson de Matin*, *Chanson de Nuit* and *Salut d'Amour* with fine artistry to John Bingham's sensitive accompaniment. The concluding item was a superb performance of the *Piano Quintet*. The Medici Quartet have featured Elgar in many programmes in their 11-year career and it is very gratifying to learn that they have recently made recordings of the Quartet and of the Quintet with John Bingham, who is an ideal interpreter of the piano part in this work.

The Society's thanks are due to Mr Howard Greenwood, the Hon. Music Director of the Richmond Concerts Society, and to Mr Terry Bridgeman, Managing Director of Credit Insurance Association Ltd, for their invaluable assistance in arranging this concert. Acknowledgement is also made to the part played by the Secretary, Andrew Neill, both generally, and by providing very informative programme notes.

TCFJ

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### THE VIOLIN CONCERTO IN PARIS THE MARCH 1984 MENUHIN PERFORMANCES

Those sceptics who have concluded that Elgar is likely to be a permanently lost cause in France would have had their hearts warmed if they had been present at the Salle Pleyel in Paris on 21, 22 and 23 March when our President, Yehudi Menuhin, gave with the Orchestre de Paris the 3rd, 4th and 5th performances of the *Concerto* in France. The programme for the three concerts was the same each evening: Bach's *Sixth Brandenburg Concerto*, Debussy's *Symphonic Fragments from Le Martyre de Saint-Sebastian* and the *Violin Concerto* placed last after the interval.

The playing of the Orchestre de Paris, a superb body currently on top form, was notable for precision and tonal warmth. The contribution of the conductor Claude Bardon, a former first violinist in the orchestra recently appointed Associate Conductor under Daniel Barenboim, was clearly an important factor in the success of the concert. When it came to the *Concerto*, the orchestra, under M. Bardon's confident yet supple direction, produced Elgar playing which was absolutely idiomatic. This, in radiant partnership with Mr. Menuhin's magisterial yet sensitive interpretation of the solo part, supremely authoritative throughout, constituted for the writer present at the concert on 22 March a performance *sans pareil* and never to be forgotten.

The reception of the Paris audience in a full house was most enthusiastic and the soloist was not allowed to depart without an encore, a Bach solo violin movement exquisitely executed.

Surely, after such a reception, these performances deserve to mark a major turning-point in attitudes to Elgar in France. The past has been so disappointing that we must, in the event, draw considerable satisfaction from their success and watch with great hope for the further development of more favourable French attitudes towards Elgar's music.

TCFJ

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

[Due to the large number of May concerts listed in our last issue we have decided not to repeat the details. *Additional* May concerts are noted below, and should be read in conjunction with the January issue.]

May 6	Wood Magic. Words and music arr. Michael Kennedy. <i>Medici Quartet and members of the Royal Shakespeare Company</i>	Brighton Festival
May 12	King Olaf <i>Philomusica</i>	Tetbury (Glos) Parish Church 7.30 p.m.
May 13	Pomp and Circumstance nos. 1 and 4 and Nimrod <i>Massed Band Concert</i>	Corn Exchange, Bury St. Edmunds 7.30 p.m.
May 14	Organ Recital, including works by Elgar <i>Brian Swallow</i>	United Reform Church, Haverhill, Suffolk
May 15	Elgar. BBC Monitor film by Ken Russell <i>Public Showing</i>	Theatre Royal, Bury St. Edmunds 7.30 p.m.
May 17	Concert of music by Ian Parrott, including 'Homage to Two Masters' (Bach and Elgar) <i>Jennifer Bate (organ)</i>	St. Georges's, Hanover Square, London 7.30 p.m.
May 18	Cello Concerto <i>Lowri Blake, BBC Scottish SO/Fremaux</i>	Henry Wood Hall, Glasgow
May 19	Introduction and Allegro <i>London Mozart Players/Glover</i>	Theatre Royal, Bury St. Edmunds
May 19	Enigma Variations <i>Orch/Groves</i>	Worcester Cathedral
May 19	Dream of Gerontius <i>Durham and Bishop Auckland Choral Societies/Brice</i>	Durham Cathedral
May 20	The Black Knight, Songs from the Bavarian Highlands, Violin Sonata <i>Terence Nettle, Redruth Choral Society</i> **Previously announced for May 19th	St. Andrews Church, Redruth, Cornwall 7.45 p.m.
May 25/26	Wood Magic, arr. Michael Kennedy	Perth Festival
May 26	Songs from the Bavarian Highlands <i>Collegium Musicum of London/Heltay</i>	St. John's, Smith Square, London SW1 7.30 p.m.



May 26	Symphony no. 1 <i>Rutland Sinfonia/Collett</i> **Previously announced for May 12th	Rutland 6th Form College, Oakham, Rutland 7.30 p.m.
June 2	Recital of music by Elgar, his friends and colleagues: Including Overture in D minor, Gavotte, Prelude from 'Gerontius', 2nd movement of Sonata no. 1, Organ Sonata no. 2, Cantique, Pomp and Circumstance no. 4, and music by Brewer, Blair, Sumison and Day <i>Charles A Myers (organ)</i>	Clitheroe Parish Church, Lancs
June 2/3	Wood Magic, arr. Michael Kennedy	Greenwich Festival
June 8	Wood Magic, arr. Michael Kennedy	Portsmouth Festival
June 9	London Symphony Orchestra Birthday Concert (see details on another page) <i>LSO/Previn</i>	Barbican Centre, London
June 9	Dream of Gerontius <i>Walkley, Johnston, O'Reilley, St. Edmundsbury Bach Choir and Orchestra/Oxley</i>	Cathedral, Bury St. Edmunds
June 16	Enigma Variations. New arrangement for brass band by Eric Ball. First performance <i>Desford Colliery Dowty Band</i>	St. Mary's Church, Warwick
June 17	Violin Concerto <i>K. Page, Birmingham PO/Ayres</i>	Priory Church, Leominster
June 23	The Music Makers <i>Cable, Colchester Choral Society, Colchester Sinfonia/Ray</i>	Moot Hall, Colchester
June 24	Dream of Gerontius <i>Watkinson, Rendall, Shirley-Quirk, Aldeburgh Festival Singers, English SO/Aston</i>	The Maltings, Snape
June 24	Violin Concerto <i>K. Page, Birmingham PO/Ayres</i>	All Saints Parish Church, Kings Heath, Birmingham
June 27	Violin Concerto <i>K. Page, Birmingham PO/Ayres</i>	Town Hall, Walsall

June 29	In the South; Cello Concerto; Enigma Variations <i>Bournemouth SO/Hickox</i>	Truro Cathedral
July 1	The Apostles <i>Armstrong, Walker, Kendall, Roberts, Varcoe, Stalman, Harlow &amp; NELP Chorus, Hatfield Philharmonic Chorus, Alburni SO/Kibblewhite</i>	Harlow Sportscentre, Essex 7.30 p.m.
July 2	In the South, Cello Concerto, Enigma Variations <i>Cohen, RPO/Dorati</i>	Royal Festival Hall
July 5	Violin Concerto, Symphony no. 2 <i>Kennedy, RPO/Dorati</i>	Royal Festival Hall
July 7	Dream of Gerontius <i>Minty, Johnston, Roberts, Huntingdon Philharmonic Society, Oundle Choral Society, St. Neots Choral Society, St. Ives Choral Society/Brown</i>	Ely Cathedral 7.30 p.m.
July 8	The Kingdom <i>Armstrong, Walker, Kendall, Roberts, Varcoe, Stalman, Harlow &amp; NELP Chorus, Hatfield Philharmonic Chorus, Alburni SO/Kibblewhite</i>	Harlow Sportscentre, Essex 7.30 p.m.
July 8	Dream of Gerontius <i>Walker, Rendall, Luxon, Brighton Festival Chorus, Collegium Musicum of London/Dorati</i>	Royal Festival Hall
July 14	The Apostles <i>Armstrong, Walker, Graham-Hall, Herford, Savage, Best, Cambridge Philharmonic Society</i>	Kings College Chapel, Cambridge
July 15	Symphony no. 1 <i>Orch/Groves</i>	Cheltenham
July 20	Wood Magic, arr. Michael Kennedy	Chester Festival
July 22	Wood Magic, arr. Michael Kennedy	Cambridge Festival
July 22	Symphony no. 2 <i>Orch/Downes</i>	Cheltenham
Aug. 25	Enigma Variations, arr. Ball <i>Desford Colliery Dowty Band</i>	Worcester Cathedral 11.00 a.m.

for continued celebration with sports, band concert, dancing on Parliament Hill and in Wellington Street, a National Thanksgiving Service and another Carillon Concert.

All went according to plan - almost! Certainly the *Ottawa Citizen* was ecstatic in its reporting:-

"This was the voice of Canada, the voice of hope, of inspiration, the voice of the new Dominion, of all our aspirations and all our ambitions. - The hands of the clock pointed to the hour. - Far up in the great Victory Tower - there broke out the clear tones of the buglers. The notes rose and fell clear on the ambient air. Then, like a benediction, the great chimes sounded. Tense, the vast gathering stood motionless as the sweet and inspiring opening bars of the glorious melody descended and spread. The great lawns shone a mass of colour - glowing and scintillating in the sunshine of a midsummer Canadian day. Across the azure sky a lone airplane spluttered and swept in circles. *The Maple Leaf Forever* chimed from the great tower. - The greater Canada, - the Canada of our hopes and ambitions had come into being".

In fact, as the first boom of the great bell overhead reverberated, two pigeons darted from the tower in conspicuous alarm. The "lone airplane" was elsewhere described as "a gigantic seaplane" whose "terrific roar" drowned the soft tone of the bells "making it impossible for most of those present on the grounds to hear anything. Even for the guests themselves on the platform most of the effect was lost", and "a strong feeling of indignation swept through the thousands of disappointed people". While the extreme heat proved trying for the vast children's choir. "The heat was intense and to keep the attention of the children under such circumstances for nearly three hours was practically impossible. It was most trying for them to hear so many speeches and some of them far too long to make a musical programme effective, and those who made the arrangements failed to understand the psychological side of child life - the thrill of the music was lost through interruption and fatigue."

But by the time of the Elgar the airplane and the pigeons had alike departed. Rickwood maintained control of his vast choral assemblage and liaison with his three assistant conductors, with the band of the Governor General's footguards, and Price in the tower. The carillon music "floated down from the heavens in limpid drops of gold", and, as the *Ottawa Journal* recalls, "to conclude the programme the sonorous tones of *Land of Hope and Glory* resounded". The choir was "most impressive" in its singing and "perfect unison" prevailed throughout. "The experiment was in every way a success, bell tones of ineffable sweetness and charm adding immeasurably to the effect of the work. "It was a fitting climax to what had in the end been a memorable afternoon.

The broadcast, too, was a great success:- "a triumph of whole-souled nation-wide co-operation - a wholesome stimulation of the patriotic impulse from ocean to ocean - that will survive in the memory of thousands for years to come", claimed the official report of the transmission, publishing numerous letters from delighted listeners testifying to the clarity of reception.

In addition the Compo Company of Lachine, Quebec, under the supervision of Herbert Berliner, successfully recorded 10 gramophone records of the proceedings including choruses sung by the 10,000 schoolchildren. According to Edward B. Moog in his *Roll Back the Years - a History of Canadian Recorded Sound and its Legacy* (National Library of Canada 1975), the Company thus pioneered a technique of

recordings of the symphonies of Bruckner and Brahms (under Jochum and Sanderling respectively) as well as the unsurpassed recordings of Richard Strauss orchestral music conducted by Rudolf Kempe. It goes without saying that their sound is exactly right for the opulent textures of the music Elgar was writing in the first decade of this century.

Neville Marriner is not the most dynamic of Elgar conductors, and this is a somewhat undercharacterised *Cockaigne*, when compared to the recordings by Barbirolli or Handley. Occasional moments of unsteady ensemble, and rhythmic uncertainty near the beginning suggest that the orchestral players took a little while to settle into the unfamiliar idiom. The romantic interludes, however, despite the slowing tempi, are beautifully phrased, never drag, and the sheer beauty of the orchestral sound is a constant joy. For my taste the organ is a little too prominently recorded at the end of the work, drowning the detail of the orchestral textures which throughout are given a pleasantly recessed balance.

*Introduction and Allegro* has never been played with string tone of such yearning beauty. Again the more wistful passages come off best, and tempi are marginally slower than the current most popular versions. Nevertheless it is a version which has given me increasing pleasure over many playings since the record came my way.

I have left the *Cello Concerto* to last, as it is perhaps the most difficult item to write about. Heinrich Schiff is one of the outstanding cellists of the younger generation, and for rich resonant tone is second to none. Indeed his playing of the slow movement is exceptionally beautiful, flexible and romantic in the manner of Jaqueline Du Pre. Again, however, tempi are a little slow, emphasising the melancholy aspects of the music, yet slightly undercharacterising the brisker contrasting sections. I have already mentioned Jaqueline Du Pre. By coincidence, a review copy of the latest reissue of the EMI recording of the Elgar concerto arrived in the same week as the Schiff version (a two disc album of concerti and chamber music, under the title *Impressions*, HMV SLS 1546963). It is still, for me, the supreme interpretation of this concerto, perfectly balancing drama and contemplation. Schiff's version, however, stands high amongst the rivals, and I much preferred it to the last recording of the work I reviewed, the Lynn Harrell version on Decca, which I found slick and superficial.

The sound quality is not quite amongst the best of digital releases, but mercifully lacks the fault of overbright stridency which mars so many digital recordings. It does not, however, have quite the expected clarity of detail. As I have already mentioned, *Cockaigne* and *Introduction and Allegro* are given a pleasantly recessed sound in a resonant acoustic, with plenty of natural perspectives and a well integrated body of tone, which is much more appealing to my ears than many of the artificially close-miked productions we have to put up with these days. In the concerto, however, although Schiff is placed in a natural concert hall ambience, the orchestral detail is less than ideally clear - less so, for example, than on the Du Pre/Barbirolli recording which is now nearly twenty years old. Nevertheless this interesting new Elgar recording can be recommended, mainly for its outstandingly beautiful orchestral playing and for an interesting alternative version of the 'cello concerto. None of the performances would, however, be my first choice recommendation.

G.H.L.

## BOOK REVIEWS

An Elgar Travelogue by Pauline Collett.

Thames Publishing, £7.50

This latest production from the Collett "family workshop" can be fairly termed a sequel to Pauline Collett's *Elgar Lived Here* (1981). That very useful work details Elgar's homes, and seeks to show the influences which the various abodes exercised on the composer. Now, a longer work, in a more permanent format, gives us detail on Elgar's journeys and holidays - at home and abroad. As in the earlier book the subject is well researched, with many maps, illustrations, and music-examples. The early short visit to Stoke Prior begins the work, and through many holidays, foreign tours, journeys for the sake of change (Elgar had a marked streak of restlessness, despite his oft-declared love of Worcestershire), we arrive at the last lengthy trip abroad - the South American tour of 1923. The various conducting tours and engagements are not treated in detail - wisely perhaps, for they were many and would have overweighted the book. As it stands it gives an insight into Elgar the traveller, something which we have not had before in one volume. Again, the influence of the journeys on the music is given prominence.

It is unfortunately necessary to complain (as occasionally in the past) about the reproduction of the many photographs. Some of these are familiar, others new, but all look as though they were taken on a dull winter afternoon or through a dank and dismal mist. Plainly this was not so in the originals, and the author deserves better treatment from her printer. Printing by the offset method is now so common that poor reproduction really should not occur. In all other respects the book is well produced, and Thames Publishing add another welcome title to their interesting list.

R.P.T.

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Boult on Music. A collection of writings on music and musicians by Sir Adrian Boult

*Toccata Press, £9.95 (hardback) £4.95 (paperback)*

In the 1930s Boult contributed occasionally to broadcast programmes previewing the week's music, and several of the pieces for these purposes have found their way into the book. They are generally short introductions, aimed at listeners who were generally rather less well informed than those of the present time, and of necessity these talks were rather superficial - but it is, as always with Boult, the practical matters concerned with presenting the composer's intentions with the greatest fidelity which chiefly concerned him - the opening piece in the book, a 1938 talk on the Bach *B Minor Mass* is absolutely typical.

British composers, and Boult's personal recollections of them, feature prominently, of course. Many are already familiar - such as the personal reminiscences of Elgar already released on record by the Elgar Society. Amongst the longest and most analytical pieces included, however, are a talk on the Elgar 2nd symphony, given at

the Royal College of Organists in 1947, and a broadcast talk on the Vaughan Williams *London* symphony, given during a concert interval in 1965.

Given Boult's long career, and his association with so many of the leading musicians of his time, the articles devoted to fellow conductors such as Toscanini, Nikisch, Walter, Furtwangler and Wood are endlessly fascinating, even if many of the anecdotes are already familiar from Boult's autobiography *My Own Trumpet*. The last section of the book, devoted to reprinting talks and articles on the practicalities of conducting and Boult's personal philosophy on the conductor's role is especially revealing, and is a useful supplement to the bare bones of the short *Handbook on the Technique of Conducting*, originally published in 1920, and which has gone through many reprints (one section of the Handbook is, in fact, slotted into the appropriate place in this new collection).

Some of the reminiscences included are too brief and superficial (such as the tributes to Lehar, Sibelius and Beecham) to be of any real interest, and suggest that the compiler of the collection has needed to scrape the barrel somewhat to produce a reasonably sized volume. Yet even some of these briefer pieces can be surprising. Who would have thought, for example, that Boult would have so much enjoyed listening to rehearsals by the Glenn Miller band, when they and the BBC Symphony Orchestra were sharing the BBC's wartime facilities at Bedford?

An interesting and useful compilation of Boult writing then, although perhaps a shorter collection of just the more substantial pieces would have served as a more consistent memorial. The two introductory articles of reminiscence by Bernard Shore and Vernon Handley will touch the heart of anyone who, like me, revered Boult both as a man and practical musician.

The book, 188 pages, is not a large one, and I cannot help feeling that the price asked by Toccata Press is somewhat high. The production standard is good, but there are no illustrations.

Gareth H. Lewis

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Spirit of England: Edward Elgar in his World by Jerrold Northrop Moore

Heinemann, £10.95

In this commemorative year tributes to Elgar will come from many sources, and it must be confessed that the average music-lover may well wonder if there is need for another popular study of Elgar and his music. Well, in this case the answer must be a decided YES!

Jerrold Northrop Moore has already given us several specialist works on Elgar (with his larger study still to come), and now he presents us with a book showing the influence of England on the composer. The title is well chosen, for in many ways Edward Elgar represented a true English spirit, which transcended class and time. Dr. Moore, as so often, has hit on aspects of Elgar which bear close examination, and which deepen our understanding of both man and music.

The book is not a conventional biography with musical asides, but one which studies Elgar's life, times and music - tracing influences and seeking motives. The inspiration of family, friends, musicians, country, homes, and even hobbies, are dealt with, as well as the importance of historical change and invention. It is often forgotten that Elgar lived through a period of change unparalleled in our history. Even a cursory glance at the world of 1857 and that of 1934 will show how many adjustments had to be made - difficult enough for the ordinary man, but for the artist even more so. Elgar's innermost emotions may have stayed constant, but he *could* adapt with astonishing speed to changes around him. His quick acceptance of the gramophone, and later radio, showed how aware he was of a new and wider audience.

Elgar loved the country of his birth and felt deeply the fortunes and misfortunes which affected the nation. All of this shows in his music - sometimes he even moved ahead of his public, and at other times seemed to echo their enthusiasms. Perhaps it is a little ironic that the author has chosen for his title the name of the work most shamefully neglected of all Elgar's compositions. The power of "*Spirit of England*" rises from a deeply-felt agony of Elgar's spirit - perhaps we cannot quite appreciate that agony at the present time. The loss is ours.

If this seems to be wandering from the point in a brief review, then blame the trains of thought provoked by Dr. Moore's excellent survey. I enjoyed it greatly - it is exceedingly well-written, and is generously illustrated. Many of these illustrations are new to me, and indeed some of them are previously unpublished. If, in this 'Elgarian' year, you feel inclined to give a friend an introduction to Edward Elgar's music, then this book must stand high on any list. (But borrow it back, or buy your own copy first.)

R.P.T.

#### THE APOSTLES Elgar Complete Edition: Volume 8

edited by Robert Anderson, Christopher Kent, Jerrold Northrop Moore

Novello £45.00

After a rehearsal of *The Apostles* in April 1904 Elgar wrote to Jaeger about the newly printed score that there was only one error in it and that it was very good considering the complications. 'If Elgar underestimates the total of errors', the editors of this new edition remark mildly, 'his assessment of the score remains valid'. They then list and correct between three and four hundred misprints. Granted that most of them are slight and that practised musicians would usually perform what was wanted rather than what was written; nevertheless, the cumulative effect is impressive, and the amount of rehearsal time wasted over the years must have been considerable. Now, thanks largely to Robert Anderson, who has conducted Elgar's major choral works from the old scores, and to Christopher Kent, who is expertly familiar with Elgar's sketches, these things have been meticulously set right.

It is perhaps surprising that there were not more misprints and omissions. In their commentary the editors set out the chronology. Elgar's work was overlapping itself the whole way. Before the composition of Part II was complete, he was checking

proofs in vocal score of Part I. Before the vocal score of Part II was in print, choral rehearsals of Part I began. Before the scoring of Part II was complete, he was checking the orchestral sets of Part I. By the time he was reading proofs for the printed full score, he was in Italy composing *In the South*. From there he wrote the delicious letter of thanks to 'Signori l'Occidente, Cacciatore, Cane da Fermo e Ruscello', his Novello team.

What the chronology makes clear is how the two late thoughts, on adding the 'Earthly Kingdom' motif, came to him when he was immersed in the scoring, two whole months after he had completed the vocal score (which moves Jaeger's letter from page 188 of *Letters to Nimrod* to page 196, where the reference to 'the keys' follows naturally).

For their corrections the editors have gone to the autograph mss of full and vocal scores, the printed vocal score and orchestral parts, Elgar's own copy of the full score, and proofs. For each change they give their source; in many cases a double source, of ms and a part. The job of checking must have been diabolical but the final layout is clear and systematic.

There is a separate section concerning the autograph, which gives many of Elgar's original thoughts, his changes, crossings-out and comments. This includes his note of taking his watch to pieces at 'Crucify Him!' (see RA's article in *Musical Times* January 1984) - stopping Time with a vengeance! - and the Earthly Paradise quotation from Morris. The vocal score has the direction that in 'By the Wayside' the stave for Jesus must always be top of the score, and not follow the convention that Mary and John, soprano and tenor, would come above it. From Rodewald's cottage at Bettws-y-Coed, Elgar writes his thanks for proofs in Welsh which the editors do not translate (and this reviewer can't get beyond the first three words).

From a letter to Hamilton Harty and a gloss on a vocal score it can be confirmed that the final chord of 'Iama sabachthani' represents the 'earthquake' in Elgar's mind. The same score contains timings for Elgar's Three Choirs performance in 1921, and also instructions for a semi-chorus of 9 male voices who, with the solo John, Peter and Judas, make up the 12 apostles; these were employed on this occasion for the first time in accordance with Elgar's intentions. At times they sing *with* the soloists, a performing practice that all future conductors will need to consider.

Before the Commentary, Jerrold Northrop Moore contributes a thoughtful and thought-provoking Foreword on 'the *Apostles* project' which he calls the 'biggest endeavour of Elgar's creative life'. He admits the inspiration of *The Ring* on the trilogy, and proposes a cause for Elgar's failure to complete it in his failure to complete the libretto before beginning the music. A reason for Elgar's recourse to Biblical words, suggests Dr Moore, was the anti-Catholic criticism of *Gerontius*. Then he goes on to describe Elgar, at the start of the *Apostles* project, as a man who 'had sought Faith and found only Doubt'. This is earlier than the generally accepted period for Elgar's waning faith, and Dr Moore proposes that 'far below the conscious level of Elgar's thought' he might have been tempting God to prove himself by guiding the *Apostles* subject to its true ending. If so, it is a striking parallel with Elgar's own interpretation of Judas's motive in betrayal, to manipulate Christ into a demonstration of faith.

Dr Moore picks up a point in Elgar's working papers that he took Mary Magdalene as



'the doubter converted' from Longfellow's *The Divine Tragedy*, and considers Elgar's motives for this; he might have added that the scoring benefits from a second woman's voice.

He describes how the format changed as Part III was put off, to become the basis for *The Kingdom*. As for why *The Last Judgement* never arrived, he speculates that the problem was the impossibility of ending Time in the temporal art of music. It did not deter Spohr, or Verdi or Berlioz, or Mahler or Messiaen. (Mellers might reckon that Beethoven in his late quartets and sonatas created Eternity out of that very paradox). But to deal with the end of the world through instrumental music, or through the *Dies irae*, is to do so at one remove. Perhaps, for Elgar, creating his own libretto with his cast of men 'not cleverer' than himself, it did seem impossible. Or perhaps he came to realise that he had already stopped time and achieved one man's last judgement in Part II of *Gerontius*?

DIANA McVEAGH

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EDWARD ELGAR: A Creative Life by Jerrold Northrop Moore.

Oxford University Press, 1984. £35.00

No book has been looked for so eagerly as Dr. Moore's definitive study of the composer. Familiar as we are with his studies over many years, all other researches by Dr. Moore were leading to the major work which is about to be published. We have been privileged to see some advance proofs of this outstanding volume, and can assure readers that this is indeed a book worthy of its subject. The whole of Elgar's life and music is looked at with understanding and scholarship, detailed with Dr Moore's usual meticulous skill. Elgar's creative life is unfolded, and the development of a musical genius revealed. Music examples abound, and the book runs to some 823 pages of text, plus an extensive index. Produced with the customary excellence of the Oxford University Press, in view of the size it is not cheap. But can one really expect in this day and age that any book should be modestly priced. It is without doubt essential reading for anyone who has a serious interest and love for Elgar, and all Elgarians must be grateful that we have a Jerrold Northrop Moore who has made the study of England's great composer a major part of his life's work.

A full review will appear in our September issue, but the book will be published in June. We hope that copies will be on show at the LSO Barbican concert on June 9th.

## NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES

In addition to the many concerts and events which have been taking place in the last few months the Branches of the Elgar Society have been very active, and many interesting and pleasant meetings have been held.

EAST ANGLIA report that in January a brisk and business-like handling of the AGM left ample time for elevation from matters mortal to the immortal, with a presentation on record of the *Serenade* and the *Introduction and Allegro*. The Winter Party, a great success both socially and financially, followed on February 10th and, a fortnight later, Michael Nicholas imparted to members in his own inimitable way a yet deeper insight into the beauties of *The Apostles*. A prelude to a performance of the work under his baton - at which, by the way, plans were already afoot for an Elgar Society promotion 'stand' at the back of the hall. As we go to press the Branch is looking forward to Malcolm Walker's talk on Sir Adrian Boult's interpretations of Elgar's works, and, in April, to an evening with Mrs. Louise Charles-Edwards, a loyal branch member, who is to recall memories shared with her late husband, a former Bishop of Worcester, of the Three Choirs Festivals. On May 25th members will pay their individual tributes to Elgar in words and music of their own choice, and to close the season, on July 7th comes the traditional Strawberry and Wine Social - to be held, as usual, in the Chairman's garden (weather permitting).

LONDON reports that the Branch's two-season symposium 'Aspects of Elgar' is already justifying the hopes of the committee, with attendances varying from 64 (for Stephen Banfield) to 92 (for Lord Briggs), including a substantial number of visitors, several of whom have subsequently enrolled as members. Large audiences, high quality presentations and (almost) trouble-free refreshment provision are welcome signs of what we have been striving to achieve during the last three seasons, but we still cannot afford to relax our efforts in maintaining interest and income. All members can support us by attending meetings and encouraging new members. The London Secretary also gives notice that the AGM of the Branch will be held in the Read Theatre, Imperial College, London, SW7 on Monday, June 4th at 6.30 p.m. Agendas and minutes of last year's AGM will be available on the night. The principal business is to receive reports from the Secretary and Treasurer and to elect officers and committee for the 1984/85 season.

David Bury having served for three years on the committee, retires and is not eligible for re-election to the committee. After four seasons as Secretary (and three seasons before that as a committee member) Garry Humphreys will not be standing for re-election. There will therefore be two vacancies (all other officers and committee are eligible for re-election), and nominations, in writing, signed by two members and counter-signed by the nominee, should be sent to the London Branch Secretary (address on back cover) to arrive not later than June 1st. The AGM will be followed, at 7.30 p.m. by the last programme of 'Aspects of Elgar', part 1, a lecture recital by Brian Rayner Cook (with the pianist Patricia Williams) on 'Elgar's Songs'.

The report on EAST MIDLANDS arrived too late for our last issue, but there was a successful beginning to the Autumn/Winter season at the new venue in 'The County Rooms'. Talks by Pauline Collett, Claude Powell and Lewis Foreman were given to appreciative audiences. After a Winter break the season resumed in March with

Christopher Redwood talking on Delius and Elgar. Talks in May include Stephen Lloyd on Elgar as conductor on May 1st, and on the 22nd Prof. Robert Meikle on Elgar as a Symphonist. Members are urged to support branch meetings, and to bring along friends who may be potential members. Finally, we were most impressed by a young French violinist Isabelle Flory, a pupil of Yehudi Menuhin, who gave a remarkable performance of the *Violin Concerto*, her first public performance of the work, with the Rutland Sinfonia, under Barry Collett, last November. A splendid rendering by all concerned.

YORKSHIRE reports: One of our best talks for some time was given on February 6th by Leed University's Head of Music, Professor Julian Rushton. Our largely non-academic audience greatly appreciated his easy and amiable style of delivery, not altogether expected from a university professor speaking on 'Elgar and the Classical Ideal'. Well illustrated by music from his own record collection, his talk was thoroughly enjoyable and Prof. Rushton will most certainly be invited again. A concert at the University two days later included *The Music Markers*, *Sospiri*, and the *Introduction and Allegro*, in which the excellent University Orchestra was supported by the Allegri Quartet. We left March relatively free of meetings so that members could take in some of the many concerts in Leeds and Bradford and also a re-showing of the famous Ken Russell films on Elgar and Delius. However, our Chairman, Dennis Clark, gave an illustrated talk on the work of Fred Gaisberg, starting with his very early work for Berliner and leading eventually to the famous recordings directed from Elgar's sickroom by telephone landline. Some rare material was used, including the 1927 *Gerontius* recordings made in the Albert Hall and at the Hereford Three Choirs Festival. An Elgar Exhibition mounted by the Branch ran from March 5th to 24th in Bradford Library, and we were grateful to the N. Craven Heritage Trust for the loan of much material relating to Elgar's friendship with Dr. Buck in the 1880's and 90's. Members rallied round with items from their own collections and with the excellent facilities offered by the modern library a very good display was made possible.

After a season of some difficulty we are delighted to inform all members, but particularly those in the NORTH WEST, that the branch has got off to a new start! After a meeting in Manchester, attended by Society officers, it was decided to move activities from a Liverpool base to Manchester. Apart from local musical facilities it was felt that this may be more convenient for many people living in the area. New officers and committee have been elected, and the new Branch Chairman is Dr. J. R. Wray, who until his retirement was Dean of Studies at the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester. Links with Liverpool are being maintained, and the presence of two officials from the Liverpool days - Douglas Carrington and Michael Derbyshire - will be of great help in many ways. The new *secretaries* are John and Gwenan Weir (address on back cover), and they will be pleased to hear from any members interested in joining the branch, and to receive details of the new season's programme being prepared. We wish our friends in the NORTH WEST every success.

SOUTH WALES membership continues to rise steadily, though officials of the Branch are a little disappointed that there is not a higher percentage of members at meetings. A newsletter is distributed to keep members in touch with meetings and events. On March 3rd local students and adults gave a Memorial Concert, choral, vocal and instrumental. This was a great success and greatly enjoyed by a large number of members and friends. It was good to have live performances of Elgar's music for once in a branch programme. On May 5th a recital of English part-songs

will be held at the University College in Swansea, and talks given by Wulstan Atkins and Dr. Percy Young. In June Diana McVeagh is to give her talk on Elgar and Finzi (this will be one of our Swansea meetings), and in July Derek Butler is arranging a Social Afternoon to end the season. This will be held in the Brewroom, Tredegar House, Newport, commencing at 2.30. A small choir will sing a few part-songs, and there will be a quiz. Interested members should write to Mr. Butler, at 13 Highfield Close, Caerleon, Gwent, for full details of what promises to be a most enjoyable day.

SOUTH WEST branch started the new year with a members' 'own choice' of English music, with a good attendance of members and friends. In February we were joined by a large contingent from the Bristol Choral Society to hear Clifford Harker, their conductor and our branch patron, give an illustrated talk on *The Kingdom* - with Choral Society members providing copious extracts from the work. In return branch members attended the performance at the Colston Hall on March 3rd. For the March meeting Kenneth Loveland gave a splendid talk on Elgar, Delius and Holst. On 28th April Prof. Ian Parrott will have presented his programme entitled 'The Enigma Solved'. On May 12th members will be at Bath Abbey for the Bath Choral Society presentation of *Gerontius*, conducted by Clifford Harker. On May 19th branch member Arthur Hicks will give us his talk 'Root and Branch', when works by Elgar and other British composers will be heard. On June 16th our AGM, followed by a concert of *live* music - and a buffet with wine, which will bring out 1983/84 season to a close. At time of writing we understand that a fair number of Society members have applied for the Bristol Day School, with Jerrold Northrop Moore presenting 'Elgar - a biographer's view'. An excellent programme has been arranged for next season, but we need more support from members. In this commemorative year what better than to join your local branch? Details and secretary's address on back cover.

WEST MIDLANDS have, naturally this year, had an exciting and busy time. For the special performance of *Gerontius* on Feb. 23rd, the Cathedral was packed to the doors, and the Festival Chorus was at its very best. The performance was preceded by the Cathedral Choir singing *They are at Rest*, and Michael Kennedy reading *Edward Elgar* by C. Day Lewis. After the concert a bronze plaque, giving a summary of Elgar's life written by Michael Kennedy, was unveiled at the foot of the statue. On the same night there was a well attended Elgar concert in Malvern, given by the English String Orchestra, preceded by a talk given by Dr. Percy Young. On Saturday, Feb. 25th, a hundred members and friends attended a memorial mass at St. Wulstan's, Little Malvern - an event arranged by the branch and splendidly organised by Pat Soper, who throughout the year cares for the Elgar graves. Also present was a man who had been a boy server 50 years previously at the time of Sir Edward's funeral. Apart from the branch's arrangement of flowers (deep red carnations), a small bunch of daffodils was placed anonymously on the grave by the youngest member of the branch. These added to the many left by devotees, including snowdrops and a single red rose. On the following day there was an anniversary Evensong, all the music being by Elgar and Ivor Atkins, in Worcester Cathedral, followed by a reception for all at which Wulstan Atkins presented the boys of the Voluntary Choir a small bust of Elgar each.

Also in February the branch erected a notice-board in Astwood Cemetery, Worcester, giving biographical details of William and Ann Elgar, and Henry and Joe, who are buried there in one inconspicuous plot. Other biographical and historical information has been placed in the window of the Calor Gas showroom in Mealchepen Street,

Worcester, which occupies the ground floor of what was, in 1841, *The Shades Tavern*, where William Elgar first lodged and met Ann Greening. At the AGM on March 5th some 50 members and friends saw the 1977 documentary 'The Malvern Enigma', kindly lent by Central TV.

In Worcester, May 11th to 13th an Elgar Weekend, guided by Michael Pope. Two talks by Michael Pope, and he will also direct two tours, one in the Worcester-Malvern area, and the other in the Hereford area, including a specially arranged Evensong in Hereford Cathedral. The tours include entry to some of Elgar's houses, including Birchwood and Craeg Lea. Members may book for the lectures at £3.50 each, coach tours for £4.50 each, or the whole weekend, by ringing Mrs. Haisman of Piers Plowman Tours (0886-32487).

Our season will recommence after the summer recess (if all the Three Choirs activity can be called that) with a meeting on Sept. 8th at 3 p.m. in The Commandery. Nigel Edwards will speak on 'Elgar's Malvern'.

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#### MISS OLIVE GOSDEN

The death occurred in February of Olive Gosden, one of Malvern's last links with Elgar. The Gosden family came from Winterslow in Wiltshire, Miss Gosden and her three sisters being daughters of the village organist. The family moved to the Malvern area in 1910, and the girls were pupils at Malvern Girls' College. Olive was an accomplished musician, and for over 40 years was music teacher at The Elms School, Colwall. She played in amateur orchestras and ensembles, had played under Elgar's baton, and knew the Fitton family well. Through them she met Elgar, and was a life-long enthusiast for his music. Some of her memories of the Elgar years were published in the Journal in January 1982, and she also contributed to our correspondence pages. She was delighted at the rise and progress of the Elgar Society and took a keen interest in the success of the Birthplace Museum. People in the West Midlands will remember her with affection. She was in her 89th year when she died, and latterly had lived in a retirement home in Ledbury.

The funeral took place at Hollybush Parish Church, attended by a number of friends and her only known surviving relative, a cousin.

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## LETTERS

From DOMINIC GUYVER

I wonder if members of the Society can resolve this problem? In Kennedy's biography of E.E. pp.183-4, we are told of Elgar's interest and admiration for Rudyard Kipling's works, and that he found two of the stories - "The Mark of the Beast" and "Bertram and Bini" (in "Life's Handicap") - "too awful ... excruciatingly horrible". (They are horrible tales, but well written.) If one looks at the titles of some of the other stories in the same book, one finds one called "City of Dread(ful) Night", and if we turn to p.215 of Kennedy's book we find that this was Elgar's subtitle for the proposed second 'Cockaigne' Overture in C minor (1903). Can readers suggest why Elgar should have used this title as Kipling's story concerns India, but presumably Elgar's proposed overture did not.

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From Prof. IAN PARROTT

The answers to Quiz no. 3 in the last issue are: 1. Elgar's First Symphony, second movement (1907-8), and 2. Prokofiev. March from 'Love of the Three Oranges' (1919). N.B. Prokofiev visited London in 1914.

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From R A JONES

I feel I must reply to Howard S. Woolf in the September issue. Sir Adrian Boult conducted the Vaughan Williams 'Sinfonia Antartica' on 12th October 1977. (David Atherton, not Meredith Davies, conducted the 'Sea Symphony'.) But this was not Sir Adrian's last public appearance. On 24th June 1978 he directed Festival Ballet at the London Coliseum in 'The Sanguine Fan'. It was a memorable performance, inspired I am sure by the greatest Elgarian.

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From Dr. MICHAEL K. C. MACMAHON

We celebrated the 50th anniversary of Elgar's death in fine style at Bearsden South (Church of Scotland) Church, just outside Glasgow. At the morning service on 26th February (Sexagesima Sunday), knowing that in the Anglican churches in Britain the Introductory Sentence to be spoken that day would be some of the words that form part of 'The Apostles' - 'The spirit of the Lord is upon me' - we decided to sing the Prologue to 'The Apostles' as our anthem. The organ voluntary at the beginning of the service was the 1st movement from the 1st Organ Sonata; the introit was the first and last verses of 'In the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow', to the tune of 'Land of Hope and Glory' - and very impressive and stirring it was! During the offering, the organist played the 'Sursum Corda', and his final voluntary was the 4th Pomp & Circumstance March

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From GEOFFREY HODGKINS

Some time ago I wrote a letter about the mystery surrounding the place-name "Leyrisch-Turasp" which appears at the end of the song 'The River' (Op. 60, no. 2). You were good enough to publish two of the suggested solutions, which were ingenious but not really convincing. I still feel that Alice Stuart-Wortley is connected with it, but the best anagram that I can come up with is SPRY ALICE HURTS. Her husband Charles is less likely, but you can make CHARLES S. PURITY.

However, I am indebted to my friend Trevor Fenemore-Jones for a brilliant suggestion, which necessitates reversing the letters of "Turasp". Bearing in mind that the name is written after the song, you then get "P.S. A(Alice?) R(are) U(you) T..." Then a straight anagram of "Leyrisch" gives the sentence "P.S. Alice, are you the lyrics?" The somewhat puzzling words of the song are sung to a (female) river which is the border of the country, but which has traitorously allowed a tyrannical foreign power to invade and overrun the country. The song ends: "Wounded and alone I stand, tricked, derided; impotent Rustula!" The insecure Elgar always depended upon the support and encouragement of Alice (and others) especially when he felt rejected and misunderstood by the English musical world. The close mutual affection of his friends was an important element in composition: this thought is probably behind the words written on a sketch of the first movement of the Violin Concerto:- "Where Love (i.e. Elgar's for Alice) and Faith (i.e. her belief in his genius) meet there will be Light (i.e. the inspiration for composition)". Alice's daughter Claire certainly took it to mean that, as Diana McVeagh has pointed out.

\*\* EDITOR'S NOTE: This curious Elgar puzzle may be taken a step further, for if the last word of the song is reversed it can be translated as: "Al(ice) - you tease, you are." With the stress put on "are", the answer is given to Elgar's suggested question.

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From E. W. A. JACKSON

In the aftermath of the recent Elgar Commemorative concert it is fitting to express our very grateful thanks both to the Chairman and Directors of the Hogg Robinson Group and especially to Andrew Neill whose tireless work over a long period ensured such a splendid and memorable occasion and a worthy tribute to the memory of Edward Elgar.

In the wider context of the administration of the Society's affairs, I believe it to be generally accepted that we are singularly fortunate in our present officers. Under the chairmanship of Michael Pope they have given, and continue to give, outstanding service to the Society, particularly those holding the three key appointments. I refer to the Honorary Secretary (Andrew Neill), the Treasurer (John Knowles) and the Editor of the Elgar Society Journal (Ronald Taylor), whose praiseworthy efforts have transformed the Journal into a lively and well-informed publication. By far the Society's most important asset, it provides the vital link for the membership as a whole and especially for those members who, for a variety of reasons, are unable to attend branch meetings. We must remember that the duties of executive officers in a voluntary organisation demand both exceptional qualities and complete dedication to its aims and aspirations if they are effectively to fulfil their purpose. They also

demand tireless energy, bearing in mind that the work usually has to be combined with earning a living and inevitably disrupts family life to some extent.

Over the years I have watched their performance with increasing admiration. None of them sought the appointment to which he has brought considerable distinction; indeed it was only after much persuasion that each of them finally consented to be nominated for election. Furthermore, the choice was governed not least by the knowledge that they all have access to secretarial or other facilities - an important factor. Thus one derives much pleasure from feeling that one has been instrumental in helping to put 'round pegs into round holes'. Selection is not easy; it requires considerable thought and observation.

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From LINDSAY WALLACE

Raymond Monk and Bill Nicol have certainly enlivened your correspondence columns in recent issues. I suspect that sales of Mr. De-la-Noy's now infamous book will have increased enormously as a result. But, how sad that Mr. Nicol can find no place in his 'Age of Realism' for that generosity of spirit which Mr. Monk, myself, and others now find in such short supply - especially in the writing of Michael De-la-Noy on this occasion.

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From DAVID STYBR

After moving to Maryland, I had wondered if I would be able to meet with other members of the Elgar Society as I had with Pastor Jerry Moe, when I lived in Illinois. Thanks to the Correspondence Circle, I have discovered that a member did live relatively nearby. So, I have been able to hold yet another "micro-meeting" of the Elgar Society with Dr. John Huzzard, in Millersville, Pennsylvania.

Naturally, members in North America are widely scattered, but the Correspondence Circle enables us to communicate with one another and even visit, in some cases. I would welcome letters from members in all countries.

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# THE ELGAR SOCIETY

[President: YEHUDI MENUHIN, K.B.E.]

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