

The Elgar Society JOURNAL



January
1985

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

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The Elgar Society Journal

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EDITORIAL January 1985

Vol.4 No. 1

The following letter from the Society's Secretary, Andrew Neill, has been judged so important that it must take the place of the normal editorial on this occasion. Please note that replies should be made direct to the Secretary and NOT to the Journal.

From: 17 Earlsfield Road,
Wandsworth Common,
London, SW18 3DB

With the announcement by EMI that they are to record *The Banner of St. George* with Richard Hickox, it will be appreciated that one substantial gap remains in the catalogue. This is, of course, *King Olaf*.

The General Committee has agreed to devote its resources to raising the substantial sum to assist in the recording of the work and, in support of this, a performance of *King Olaf* will take place on the 30th November 1985 in the Royal Festival Hall in London. The London Philharmonic Orchestra will be conducted by Vernon Handley, and EMI will record the work in the days following, *provided* the necessary funds can be raised.

Sadly the economics of recording a work of this nature means that it cannot be done without subsidy and, even though EMI will invest a large sum in the production of the recording, it will be many years - if ever, before the project would become remotely profitable. It is for these reasons that the Committee has agreed to do everything within its powers to raise the sum necessary to make the project possible.

I am therefore asking every member of the Society to help in some way. Indeed, if each member of the Society could subscribe £10 the problem would be largely solved. However, it is inevitable that we must hope that commercial concerns will interest themselves in such a project and we intend to approach as many such organisations as possible in the next few months. Nevertheless, any subscribers will be duly acknowledged in the project and members feeling able to send a subscription should forward a cheque to be made payable to "The Elgar Society - King Olaf Fund".

Andrew Neill
Secretary, The Elgar Society

NEWS ITEMS

ELGAR SOCIETY MEMBERS are reminded that there is now a GRANVILLE BANTOCK SOCIETY, which may well interest a number of our supporters. A newsletter is issued, and details can be obtained from our own SOUTH WEST Branch Secretary, Ron Bleach, at 54 Clarendon Road, Redland, Bristol, BS6 7ET.

THE SOCIETY publication THE ELGARS OF WORCESTER continues to attract notice. This remarkable piece of original research by K.E.L. and Marion Simmons has added new knowledge to all accounts of the early days of the Elgar family in Worcester, as well as identifying an original Elgar house hitherto overlooked. Copies may be ordered from any bookshop, price £2, but members of the Society may order their copy direct from the Editor of the Journal, 104 Crescent Road, New Barnet, herts, EN4 9RJ, at the special price of £1.50. (Post free). Cheques should be made payable to The Elgar Society.

KING OLAF is to be performed on Sunday, March 10th, at 8.00 p.m. in the Henry Wood Hall, Glasgow. The Good Shepherd Chorus will be conducted by Christopher Seaman, with soloists Una Barry, Gordon Christie and Brian Bannatyne Scott. The concert is in aid of the Musicians Benevolent Fund. Tickets at £2.50 each are obtainable from T. F. Fields, Kalewa, 12 Seafield Avenue, Bearsden, Glasgow, G61 3LB. Cheques payable to: GOOD SHEPHERD CHORUS.

WE REGRET that owing to an error in our May issue we spoke of the Menuhin International Violin Competition as having taken place in 1984. This was incorrect as the competition will be held in April 1985 at Folkestone, Kent, and will include, as an alternative test piece in Stage Two, Elgar's *Five Etudes Caracteristiques*.

NEWS OF ELGAR EVENTS overseas continue to reach us - even if late. The Rev. Jerry Moe has told us of a recorded music 'salute' to Elgar which he helped to organise at the Watseka (Illinois) Public Library, and from the Catalina United Methodist Church, Tucson, Arizona, details of their tribute to Elgar in 1984. Performances of items from *King Olaf*, *The Kingdom*, *Gerontius*, *The Apostles*, the *Organ Sonata no. 1*, and items from *The Light of Life*.

JOHN KNOWLES, former Hon. Treasurer of the Elgar Society, would like to express his sincere thanks to all those who contributed to the gift of a radio/cassette recorder. This was presented at the AGM in June last, and since taking up his new post in Lancashire John has not had an opportunity to thank everyone. He hopes that members will accept this as his 'thank you' note.

Vic Carnall, a member of the Elgar Society, is to lead the orchestra in a performance of *The Coronation Ode* at Cheltenham Town Hall, on March 16th. Details in the Diary column.

Elgar's setting of the Kipling poems called THE FRINGES OF THE FLEET, was a great success in 1917. First performed at the Coliseum in London, and later toured round theatres and provincial music-halls, they struck a chord with the audiences of the time and became extremely popular. Kipling objected however, and further performances were forbidden. A few months ago we heard of the discovery of the original orchestral and performing parts, with annotations by Elgar for the Coliseum production. They had remained 'hidden' in a warehouse for many years and were thought lost. These fascinating items, nineteen parts in all, were then announced for sale at Sotheby's in November. They fetched the impressive sum of £4,200 (plus the auctioneer's commission of a further £420), and were sold to a music bookseller. At the time of writing we do not know where they are destined to go, but it is to be hoped that it will be a public collection where they will be freely available to music scholars. Perhaps by the time this is read an announcement will be in print somewhere.

LSO BIRTHDAY CONCERT

The 80th Birthday Concert of the London Symphony Orchestra was a great success. On June 9th a packed Barbican Concert Hall heard an all-Elgar concert conducted by Andre Previn. It was a moving occasion for orchestra and public, also due to the fact that this was Previn's last official conducting engagement with the orchestra, prior to his taking up an appointment with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Before the concert Dr. Jerrold Northrop Moore gave an excellent talk on the writing of his latest book on Elgar. So great was the demand for seats for this talk that the room had to be 'opened out' to accommodate three times the normal number of visitors. A special stall, run by the Oxford University Press to distribute copies of Dr. Moore's book, was kept very busy.

The whole evening was one more memorable Elgar event in a memorable year.

We regret that this report was omitted from the September issue.

Weekend Visit to Llangranog

London Branch, with the South Wales Branch, is organizing a weekend visit to Llangranog, leaving Swansea by coach on Friday evening 21 June 1985, returning there Sunday 23 June. We hope to persuade a local choir to sing Welsh tunes to us, as Elgar heard them. There will be visits to the coracle museum at Cenarth and to the Dylan Thomas Museum at Laugharne, and chances to bathe. First night at Carmarthen, second at Fishguard. If any members from another branch would like to take up any spare places, write (s.a.e. please) to Diana McVeagh, Ladygrove, The Lee, Great Missenden, Bucks HP16 9NA.

A LETTER FROM THE HON. TREASURER

I would like to thank all those members who have written such friendly letters in response to his recent reminders for unpaid subs. I very much regret that postage costs and the need to follow my principal profession make it impossible for me to respond individually!

The Society's Committee recently approved the implementation of a scheme whereby members who are NOT MEMBERS OF BRANCHES should be allowed and encouraged to pay their annual subscription by Bankers Order. A suitable form will be found with this issue: after completion this should be returned to the Treasurer and NOT directly to your Bankers.

Please consider payment by this method if at all possible: it will save you having to try to remember to pay your sub and will make 'cash flow' for the Society a great deal easier to manage. *Branch members* should note that there is no change in the present method for payment of any part of their subscriptions.

David Morris

ELGAR FIRST DAY COVER

In 1985 a series of stamps is to be issued under the Europa symbol. To mark the 300th Anniversary of Handel's birth, Britain has been allocated stamps with a musical theme - one each for Handel, Delius, Holst and Elgar. The Elgar stamp will be a 34p denomination, and will show an abstract denoting *Sea Pictures*. The stamps will be issued on 14 May.

A special first-day cover, showing a portrait of Elgar and the Birthplace will be issued, franked specially at Worcester. Beneficiaries of the proceeds will be the Birthplace Museum, the Elgar Foundation
These special covers will not be available elsewhere.

Applications should be addressed to the Elgar Birthplace, Crown Lane East, Lower Broadheath, Worcester, enclosing cheque or postal order made payable to The Elgar Birthplace. For all four stamps and cover (17p, 22p, 31p, 34p) the cost is £3. For the Elgar stamp and cover *only* the cost is £1.75. Applications should be sent, with remittance, as quickly as possible.

JOINT MEETING WITH THE DELIUS SOCIETY

On Sunday 14 October 1984 about one hundred members of the two Societies gathered at the Royal College of Music to mark the 50th anniversary year and to note in particular the friendship which developed between Elgar and Delius towards the end of their lives. As Delius lived abroad and rarely came to England it is not surprising that the paths of the two composers did not often cross and it is against this background that the visit which Elgar paid to Delius's home at Grez-sur-Loing on 30 May 1933 takes on a special significance. Elgar, of course, was then in France to conduct his Violin Concerto in Paris with the young Yehudi Menuhin as soloist.

The highlight of the joint meeting was to have been the reminiscences of the two Society Presidents, Mr Menuhin and Dr Eric Fenby, who was Delius's amanuensis in Grez at the time. It was also hoped that the two Presidents would be able to make music together. Owing to illness, however, Dr Fenby was unable to be present and his place in the discussions was taken by Felix Aphrahmanian, a Vice-President of the Delius Society, who had himself visited Delius at Grez not long after the Elgar visit. When Dr Fenby found that he would not be able to take part, he most kindly arranged through Peter Norris, the Director of Music of the Yehudi Menuhin School (Mr Menuhin being abroad at the time) - for three young musicians from the School to appear - Megumi Fujita, piano, Susan Monks, cello, and Kenneth Bradshaw, piano.

After an excellent tea, the Elgar Society Chairman, Michael Pope, welcomed the audience and introduced the Chairman of the Delius Society, Rodney Meadows, who was to share in making the introductions.

Live and recorded music by both composers was heard during the afternoon. First, Yehudi Menuhin and Megumi Fujita gave the slow movement of Elgar's Violin Sonata. After this came a recorded talk about Delius's Violin Sonatas by Dr Fenby, very kindly made available by Rodney Meadows. There followed some fascinating personal reminiscences by Mr Aphrahmanian and Mr Menuhin concerning the two composers. Then the Menuhin/Fenby recording of Delius's Second Violin Sonata was played.

The next music was the Finale of the Elgar Violin Concerto in the historic 1932 recording conducted by the composer. As an introduction to this item Mr Menuhin referred to the enthusiastic reception given to the 1984 Paris performances of the Concerto, contrasting this with the two earlier performances which were less warmly received. He attributed this to the superbly idiomatic contribution of the Orchestre de Paris under Claude Bardou. Finally, Rodney Meadows introduced a live performance of Delius's Cello Sonata by Susan Monks and Kenneth Bradshaw.

At the conclusion Michael Pope thanked all those who had taken part and requested that a message of good wishes should be sent to Dr Fenby on behalf of all Elgar Society members. This concluded the formal proceedings and drinks were served.

Among those present it was good to see Raymond and Cuillin Bantock, the son and grandson of Sir Granville Bantock. Cuillin Bantock is the Chairman of the Bantock Society.



(L. to r.) Rodney Meadows, Felix Aprahamian, Yehudi Menuhin, Michael Pope

We are grateful to our Vice-President, Sir David Willcocks, through whose good offices it was possible to arrange this meeting at the Royal College of Music: Thanks are also due to Dinah Beresford, Domestic Bursar of the College, in particular for arranging to have on display a bust of Delius and also one of the original sketches for the Talbot Hughes 1905 portrait of Elgar.

This meeting was much enjoyed by the members of both Societies present and this indicated that there may well be scope for further co-operation between the Societies in the future. Composer Societies do sometimes tend to err on the side of exclusivity. It is worth remembering that our great composers form part of a common heritage however idiosyncratic their individual outputs might at first seem to be. Moreover, the true value and place of any composer's art cannot be brought fully into perspective without a knowledge of the music of his contemporaries. Successful bridgebuilding events such as this joint meeting are of real value in widening horizons both socially and musically and great credit is due to those who devised it, especially to Michael Pope, our Chairman, who first conceived the idea for such an event some years ago and who has worked tirelessly to bring it about in 1984.

How apt in this context seem the words of Delius, written late in 1933 to Ernest Newman about the revelatory aspects of his meeting with Elgar: 'How I now regret that we were not brought together earlier...'

T.F.J.

ELGAR, A. C. BENSON AND 1914

by David Bury

Arthur Christopher Benson's story has been brilliantly told in David Newsome's biography (*On the Edge of Paradise* - John Murray, 1980), and that of his remarkable family in David Williams's equally fascinating study (*Genesis and Exodus* - Hamish Hamilton, 1979). His father was Edward White Benson, first headmaster of Wellington, first Bishop of Truro and, from 1881-1896, Archbishop of Canterbury, who now clings to an unlikely form of immortality as the originator of the now familiar Christmas Service of Nine Lessons and Carols. Arthur, passed over for the Headmastership of Eton where he had been a successful Housemaster, became Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge. As biographer of his father and Housemaster to Victoria's grandson (the Duke of Albany), he became a familiar figure at Court - "no doubt it was the first time that a schoolmaster pure and simple had ever sat at that (the Queen's) table", he wrote in 1899 - and his literary talents saw Victoria turning increasingly to him, rather than the official Laureate, Austin, whenever she felt the need for poetic, royal statement. Ultimately he came to be editor of the Queen's diary. Benson's literary output, if not talent, was in truth prodigious. Writing was for him a relaxation and he was miserable if he had no task at hand. Poems, memoirs, novels, biographies flowed from his pen with the utmost facility and rapidity, and crowning all was his own diary sustained over almost thirty years and comprising some five million words - a feat surely qualifying him for a mention in *The Guinness Book of Records*. But Arthur's true immortality rests, of course, on his having penned a refrain to be sung at the climax of Edward Elgar's *Coronation Ode*. Benson's verses came to Elgar via Sir Walter Parratt, Master of the King's Musick and organist at St. George's Windsor, a friend of the Eton-based author, ("I need hardly say that I shall be very proud if you decide to set them" wrote Benson to Elgar in March 1901). It was in June 1902 that Clara Butt first sang, in an arrangement for contralto, in advance of the premiere of the *Ode*

"Land of Hope and Glory, Mother of the free,"

to the tune of the trio section of the '*First Pomp and Circumstance March*', and sounded the words which were to become in the first half of the twentieth century, arguably, those most widely known by English-speaking people.

The story of the cancellation of the *Coronation Ode* because of the King's appendicitis, its subsequent success at the Sheffield premiere, and then in London is familiar. When Benson heard it in November 1902, at the Queen's Hall, he was pleased and impressed with the "wizard-like" music, though it was the quieter passages which he liked best. Author and composer met for the first time on this occasion and then, though there were occasional and usually chance meetings in the ensuing years, went their separate ways. However, in 1910 it became necessary to adapt the work in advance of a fresh coronation. Reference to the Boer War ("Peace, Gentle Peace") was deleted, and new verses suited to George V's consort written to replace "Daughter of Ancient Kings". ("I am not sure that the House of Teck lends itself to romantic glorification", Benson wrote to Elgar on November 11th.) A further notion of Elgar's that Benson should provide words for the *Coronation March* (*Opus 65*) which he was to write proved abortive. Benson had memories of the previous



ROYAL ALBERT HALL.

SATURDAY
OCTOBER 10th, 1914.



Under the Immediate Patronage of HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN.

MME.

CLARA BUTT

AND MR.

KENNERLEY RUMFORD'S
CONCERT

IN AID OF THE QUEEN'S "WORK FOR WOMEN" FUND.

Coronation Service at which his setting of Wagner's *Kaiser March* came out as "a feeble moaning", since "the choir was naturally so much occupied in watching the captains and the kings depart", and he does not seem to have been much disappointed when this latest project fell through. Once more the collaborators went their ways and it was the events of August 1914 which were to bring them in touch once more.

Within days of Britain's entry of the war, Elgar was writing to Benson asking for new words, appropriate to the current situation, for *Land of Hope and Glory*. Perhaps some reference to a "scrap of paper" might be made, suggested the composer. At all events "wider still and wider" should come out - "it is liable to be misunderstood now". Elgar enclosed a copy of the American poet John Hay's *God's Vengeance* as an example of the sort of sentiment he had in mind:

"Saith the Lord, 'Vengeance in Mine;
I will repay', saith the Lord,
Ours be the anger divine,
Lit by the flesh of His word.
Right and Wrong; - both cannot live.
Death-grappled which shall we see?
Strike! Only justice can give
Safety to all that shall be.
Shame! to stand faltering thus,
Tricked by the balancing odds.
Strike! God is waiting for us!
Strike! for the vengeance is God's."

At the time of writing the *Coronation Ode* Benson, according to Rosa Burley, had proved a "helpful and considerate collaborator", and indeed his letters to Elgar in 1901-2 indicate as much. "I am quite the least stubborn of librettists", he writes on one occasion, and describes himself as being "as meek as Moses" on another, urging Elgar to be absolutely open in his criticism. But it soon transpired that he was not equally amenable in his attitude towards the new task. A letter of August 25th 1914,

"I'm not strong in the vengeance line, and indeed I don't see what there is to revenge as yet ... we have hemmed in Germany tight all round for years ... and the cork has flown out ... bullying must be stopped - but bullying mustn't be met by bullying."

had Elgar hastily agreeing that "vengeance isn't the issue", and explaining that he took Hay's poem merely to imply that "if it is God's work it is our place to do it".

Notwithstanding his 'establishment' connections, Benson was in some things a radical and always of independent mind. It is, for example, ironic that by the time of the *Coronation Ode* he had developed a marked dislike for Edward VII, the "bourgeois, ungraceful, small-minded, gross (though admittedly "kindly") man" whom he saw as personifying a more vulgar age. On first meeting Edward, when still Prince of Wales, Benson had likened him to "an old, fat fox", and in writing the first movement of the *Ode* ("Crown the King with Life!"), had observed to Elgar that he regarded the piece as symbolic - "indeed there is so little that is romantic or distinguished about the King personally (with all due respect) that one cannot linger on the personal side".

The King's death in 1910 caused Benson further exasperation at "the absurd and ludicrous overstatements in the flood of eulogies that the King's death provoked. He had *no refined tastes*". Though Benson did at least concede that the King had been "a good sort" with "a British sense of fair play".

Benson's regard for a "sense of fair play" and indeed his distaste at the prospect of war - "I am against war in any guise, I think it an anachronism in civilised nations" - did not well accord with the mood of August 1914. He was by no means a politically-involved person and was slow to appreciate where events were leading. It was not until the end of July 1914 that his diary recognises the truth - "it seems as if we might be plunged in war for simply nothing at all". On 2nd August he agreed to sign a petition urging the government not to be "egged into war", though when Germany's declaration of war on Russia and France came later on the same day he accepted the inevitability, and in the circumstances rightness, of Britain's involvement, though continuing to condemn those newspaper editors who sought to present it as a crusade. He was not in fact, when it came to it, a pacifist, though *The Times* listed him as such. He was, though, bold and ill-advised enough to contribute an article in the *Church Family Newspaper* warning readers not to accept hearsay accounts of German atrocities. The *Daily Express* demanded an apology and the *Cambridge Daily News* urged an unequivocal recantation lest he precipitate some public demonstration against himself. "I represent rather an unpopular figure", Benson wistfully observed. It is ironic that in these circumstances the nation was about to take up his words as a veritable second national anthem.

The collaboration with Elgar, however, continued through August and drafts duly arrived at Severn House.

"Dear Land of Hope, our helm of pride
Upon thy brow is set
Thy keen-eyed navies span the tide;
Be strong, be patient yet!
Then let thy thunders' rolling smoke
O'er echoing seas be borne,
To shatter with their lightning stroke
The braggart sons of scorn.

Land of Hope and Glory, Mother of the free,
How shall we uphold thee, who are born of thee?
Gird thee well for battle, bid thy hosts increase;
Stand for faith and honour, smite for truth and peace!

The gage is flung, the secret hosts
Pass out in serried throng,
They gather on the far-seen coasts
To do thy comrades wrong.
Then leap to battle for the right
Rise, haste thee, be not blind!
Heave up thy sword of old
To smite the tyrants of mankind.

Land of Hope and Glory, Mother of the free ... etc".

But suddenly, in a letter of September 9th, Elgar called a halt. There seemed little point in continuing the new version since the nation was so content with the old! Clara Butt was announced to sing all over the place and "on all circulars has printed the old stanzas".

So it was that Elgar (specially released from police duties by permission of one Chief Inspector King of the Hampstead Special Constables) joined with Bridge, Cowen, Stanford, Landon Ronald and Henry Wood at the Grand Patriotic Concert in aid of the Queen's 'Work for Women' Fund at the Royal Albert Hall on October 10th 1914, in order to conduct Clara Butt in the well-loved, familiar version of *Land of Hope and Glory*. Benson's original words, indeed, were quoted at the head of the programme:

"Not that false joy that dreams, content
With what our sires have won;
The blood a hero sire hath spent,
Should serve a hero son".

Two other Elgar works were performed. A "new" Marching Song entitled *Follow the Colours* with words by Captain de Courcey-Stretton:

"Some will return and some remain,
We heed it not, we heed it not.
Something's wrong, to put it right's
The soldier's lot, the soldier's lot".

This militant number was sung, according to the *Daily Telegraph* "with great vigour by the Royal Choral Society under the composer's direction. (It had in fact been performed as long ago as May 1908, at an Empire Concert in the same Hall). It was accompanied by a contralto song *The King's Way* with words by C. Alice Elgar. It transpired that this "militant song in excelsis" (*Daily Telegraph*) also had a previous history. The words were originally written in 1909 and inspired by Alice's recollection of the comparatively mundane occasion of Edward VII's opening of the well-known London thoroughfare some four years' previously. Dr Percy Young has described it as a "stirring, chauvinistic ballad - a proper piece for a Major General's daughter". Boosey could not wait to have it set by Edward, which he did in December 1909. It received its first performance in January 1910 at Alexandra Palace. The inevitable climax of the present Concert was reached when the audience of 12,000, which included Queen Mary, joined in the *Land of Hope and Glory* refrain.

On August 18th 1915, Benson was again in correspondence with Elgar about a possible fresh collaboration, which in the event came to nothing. In passing he recalled that the amended *Land of Hope and Glory* had never appeared - "I think it was just as well that it didn't". One does not doubt his sincerity. How fitting, too, that in due course as the war deepened, Elgar was to transcend the routine setting of jingoistic words and in the elegiac *The Spirit of England* give us a deeply sensitive and moving masterpiece truly worthy of the events of the time and of his genius.

WITHOUT PEDANTRY

In the latter years of the 19th century a number of monthly journals appeared, aimed both to entertain and instruct. Usually run by one of the main publishing houses, they pioneered good illustration and the use of photography in magazines. Today only the Strand Magazine is generally remembered, but others had their time of popularity and among these was the Windsor Magazine. For several years the assistant editor of this publication was Miss Flora Klickmann. She later became known to thousands of girls as the remarkable editor of the Girls Own Paper, but in the late 1890s she was editing and writing for the Windsor. One of the tasks she took on was to report occasional music activities in the provinces, and in May 1897 she had obviously written to Elgar, for on May 27th he wrote to her from Forli, Malvern: 'I was the organist of the Church for a few years. I have studied under no one...' Why she wanted this information we do not know, but over a year later she was preparing an article on the Leeds Festival, and she wrote to Elgar again. Two letters survive from the composer: 'Birchwood Lodge...August 4 (1898). Dear Madam, Since I wrote to you the Queen has accepted the dedication of my new Cantata *Caractacus*, and I shall be so much obliged if you can include this information in your article...' A week earlier he had written enclosing some details of himself, and added: 'I do not know how many lines you will be able to devote to my doings but, if possible, I would be glad if you could refer to the freedom from academic restraint with which all the papers credit me - in distinction, I suppose from the University-organist type of musician which abounds in England.'

When the article finally appeared in the October issue Miss Klickmann spent several pages describing the excellence of the Festival and the artists, and bemoaned the fact that ill-health had prevented Sir Arthur Sullivan from contributing to the music. She also had high praise for Frederic Cowen, and at the very end of the article appeared these words:

"Among other works that have been composed for this Festival, Mr. Edward Elgar's cantata, 'Caractacus' must be mentioned. Mr. Elgar's work belongs to the romantic school and is entirely free from the pedantry that is noticeable at times in the compositions of some of our native musicians. He has recently been elected conductor of the new Worcestershire Philharmonic Society. Her Majesty has graciously accepted the dedication of *Caractacus*."

Above the Elgar paragraph was a much longer one relating to Otto Goldschmidt's setting of Lewis Morris's ode 'Music'. Plainly Miss Klickmann thought that Mr. Goldschmidt deserved the greater attention, but posterity has decreed that Mr. G. is chiefly remembered today as the husband of the Swedish nightingale, Jenny Lind.

[The letters quoted above, and the facsimiles shown on our pages, are the property of Mr. John H. Drew, and we are very grateful to Mr. Drew for making them available to us.]

R.P.T.

North
Malvern

July 27 1878

Dear Madam:

Enclosed I send
some extracts which
I hope may be useful.
I do not know how
many lines you will
be able to devote to
my songs but, if
possible, I would be
glad

Birchwood Lodge
N. Malvern
Aug 4

Dear Madam:

Since I wrote to you
the Queen has accepted
the dedication of my
new Cantata
'Corrections'
and I shall be so much
obliged.

glad if you could refer
to the freedom from
academic restrictions
with which in the
papers credit me
- in distinction I
suppose from the
University-organist
type of musician
which abounds

in England

Heberich

Thank you
W. Olyn

Madame F. Klichmann.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

30 Jan.	Serenade for Strings <i>LSO/Georgiadis</i>	Royal Festival Hall
2 Feb.	Cockaigne Overture <i>Sheffield PO/Penny</i>	St. John's Ch. Ranmoor, Sheffield, 7 p.m.
12 Feb.	Enigma Variations <i>RPO/Menuhin</i>	Barbican Concert Hall, London
2 March	The Starlight Express - Suite <i>Rutland Sinfonia/B. Collett, Elizabeth Lloyd and Peter Weight</i>	Rutland Sixth Form College, Oakham. 7.30 p.m.
16 March	Dream of Gerontius <i>Bristol University Choral Society and Orchestra/Prof. R Warren, with M. Cable, D. Johnston, R. McCann</i>	Colston Hall, Bristol. 7.30 p.m.
16 March	Coronation Ode <i>Combined Choirs of Cheltenham Grammar Schools, Pate's Grammar School and others with Orch/J. Yarnley</i>	Town Hall, Cheltenham. 7.30 p.m.
21 March	Elgar Symposium. Discussion Evening with three guest speakers. Ample time for questions and debate	St. Mary Magdalene Music Society, Westbourne Green, London W2. 7.30 p.m. Admission by ticket. Phone Nicholas Kaye for full details at 01-584 3001
1 April	Cello Concerto <i>Ralph Kirshbaum, BBCSO/Groves</i>	Royal Festival Hall
2 April	Violin Concerto <i>Igor Oistrakh, RPO/Masur</i>	Royal Festival Hall
15 April	Dream of Gerontius <i>Jean Rigby, Robert Tear, John Shirley- Quirk, Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus/Svetlanov</i>	Royal Festival Hall

17 April	Enigma Variations <i>RPO/Cleobury</i>	Fairfield Hall, Croydon
25 April	Part Songs <i>Hatfield Choir</i>	Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank
4 May	Pomp and Circumstance March No. 1 <i>Philharmonia/Wordsworth</i>	Brighton
9 June	In the South; Enigma Variations <i>Forest Philharmonic Orchestra</i>	Royal Festival Hall
25 June	Cockaigne; Cello Concerto; Symphony No. 1 <i>Yo Yo M, RPO/Previn</i>	Royal Festival Hall

AMERICAN ELGARIANS MEET IN MANHATTAN; a report by Frank Be...

U.S. members held their first formal meeting ever in New York City on September 29th. Members from four north-eastern states (New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Maryland) attended a luncheon at the American Stanhope Hotel and found there was much to talk about in this busy commemorative year.

Having just returned from the Three Choirs Festival, Richard Burns of Syracuse, New York provided a full account of the performances in Worcester, which he reported had been televised in the U.K. (any chance of *Gerontius* appearing on video cassette?). In addition, members were treated to some good news on the recording front: William Faulhaber of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania brought word from EMI that the two major Elgar works that remain unavailable on record will be issued in 1985.

As seems to be the case wherever Elgarians meet these days, there was much discussion of Jerrold Moore's biography, which had been published here earlier in September. Other discussion centred on the recent revival of several Elgar works long absent from New York's concert halls; the First Symphony was played by two different orchestras last season and will be heard again this year, and last May Andrew Davis conducted a marvellous performance of *The Kingdom* at Carnegie Hall. Members were very pleased to receive greetings (via telegram from London) from Mr. Michael Pope, the Society's Chairman, who expressed the hope that 'the ensuing introductions may lead to a splendid allegro for the cause of Elgar in the American continent'.

Most important of all, members were finally able to meet one another in person after years of being in touch through the mails or by phone, and it made for a delightful afternoon. U.S. members plan to make an Elgar luncheon a regular event and hope

that next time some of our fellow-members from Canada will be able to join us. (New York-area members will be meeting in November to discuss future plans.)

Any U.S. or Canadian members wishing to know about future gatherings are invited to contact Frank Beck, 520 West 110th Street, 8A, New York 10025



Some of the American Elgarians who gathered in New York. L to r. Matthew Weinberg, Frank Beck, Jeanette Visek, Richard Burns, Sandra Carson, Richard Faulhaber, Dave Stybr and Peter Weinberg. *Front row:* Richard Glassford, David Quakenbush and Ruth Kopf. The unseen photographer: Mona Molarsky.

RECORD REVIEWS

The English Heritage Series (Brass band): EHS 001D 'Enigma Variations' (arr. Ball): Two Interludes from 'Falstaff' (arr. Wiggins): Overture 'Froissart' (arr. Ball). EHS 002D Four movements from 'The Wand of Youth' (arr. Gay): Chanson de Martin' (arr. Wright): Adagio & Allegro Molto from 'Cello Concerto' (arr. Bourgeois for Euphonium and brass band): Prelude 'The Dream of Gerontius' (arr. Ball): 'Imperial March' (arr. Ball): Canto Popolare from 'In the South' (arr. Butterworth): Triumphal March from 'Caractacus' (arr. Bragg).

Robert Childs (euphonium): Desford Colliery Dowty Band and Foden O.T.S. Band conducted by Howard Snell.

[Records available from Polytechnic Reproductions Ltd, 77-79 Dudden Hill Lane, London NW10 1BD. Also available on cassette.]

As the title suggests, these records are (to quote from the sleeve note) the first of a series "which aims to capture the wealth of British music for brass band ... not only the classic originals for band, but ... arrangements of the great orchestral repertoire which characterises the rebirth of British music in the 20th century".

I suspect that due to the snobbery and prejudice which still exists with regard to brass, many (not Elgarians I hope) may dismiss these records out of hand. Others may point to the irretrievable loss of the wonderful orchestration and tone-colour which are so central to an appreciation of Elgar's genius. However, I can promise that those who have ears to hear will not be disappointed with these records.

In the first place, the transcriptions are all very cleverly and tastefully done. Many of them are by that doyen of band composers and arrangers, Eric Ball. Naturally the most outstanding is the *Variations*. The sleeve note refers to it as "a major landmark in the history of brass band music, an achievement to which all other arrangements will be compared". In a quite uncanny way, by subtle use of solo instruments, muted instruments and an unerring sense of balance, Ball has come amazingly close to capturing an orchestral "feel" in the music.

Then Howard Snell, who was formerly principal trumpet in the London Symphony Orchestra, brings a wealth of experience to the rostrum. In every case his interpretation is totally convincing and thoroughly Elgarian. I have seldom if ever heard 'Nimrod' played with such nobility and integrity. *Froissart* is given a thrilling, vibrant performance. The *Imperial March* may be a little slow for some, but the *Caractacus* March is a sheer delight. The weakest item is, perhaps inevitably, the Cello Concerto transcription, for despite wonderful playing, the prominence given to the solo instrument only serves to highlight the difference in technique between brass and strings.

Space prevents me from going into detail about the recording, which is more than adequate, but really the performances (especially of the *Variations* and *Froissart*) are the thing. I urge you most strongly to buy these records. Elgar would have loved them.



Photo by Oswald Edwards

'A Cottage in Wales...'

As Elgar scholarship increases, and new aspects are explored, it is as though one is making up a jig-saw (with no edges!). Each time we fit another piece into the pattern, the picture extends yet again.

The latest piece of the jig-saw to reach us comes via Mr.Oswald Edwards, an organist from St.Meugan's, Ruthin. When he was reading Wulstan Atkins' 'The Elgar-Atkins Friendship' he became interested in the cottage in Bettwys-y-Coed where Elgar composed part of *The Apostles*. The house had belonged to Alfred Rodewald, but details of its exact location were scanty. Following a news item in the Daily Post Mr. Edwards heard from Dr.Charles Chown, the present owner of the 'cottage'. It turns out to be a fairly substantial riverside house, as may be seen from the photograph which Mr.Edwards took when he paid Dr.Chown a visit. It is interesting to discover yet another building, standing intact, which has definite connections with Elgar's work, and we congratulate Mr.Edwards on his 'find', and thank Dr.Chown for allowing his house to be photographed.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Kingdom Elgar Complete Edition: Volume 9. Edited by Robert Anderson, Christopher Kent, Jerrold Northrop Moore

Novello, £45

'Sucht allzeit Gottes Reich, und seine Gerechtigkeit.' An obvious difference between the full scores of *The Apostles* and *The Kingdom* is that the German translation is underlaid in the later work. Otherwise, much of what was said in a lengthy review of *The Apostles* (Journal, May 1984, pp. 30-32) can stand again. Since this work is a sequel to that, both part of the 'biggest endeavour of Elgar's creative life', Jerrold Northrop Moore's long and thoughtful Foreword is the same for this as for that. Then follows a Commentary; then five pages which list every editorial textual change. These are derived from detailed and devoted comparison of the autograph as full and vocal scores, printed orchestral parts, and printed vocal scores with English and German texts. As in *The Apostles* many of these details are not more than a slur added to the first horn, or a diminuendo to the bassoons; but missing clefs, or arco or divisi signs, or accidentals (now all rectified) would be more significant in performance; and cumulatively these 300 or so corrections make for accuracy, confirm Elgar's intentions, and will save hours and hours of rehearsal time.

Then follow full descriptions of the autographs, proofs and other sources. Unlike the majority of Elgar's autographs, which are in the British Library, London, the full score of *The Kingdom* is in the Bodleian, Oxford, a bequest from Elgar's daughter in 1970. It is touching to realise how much of it is in Alice's hand - the page numbering, names of instruments, the notes and text underlay of the vocal parts. A good deal of the Commentary is to do with the German translation, made by Julius Buths. A point that arises is Elgar's insistence on the best word to convey his shade of meaning at the expense, if need be, of the rhythmic notation: 'Patience *must* be in even if we alter the phrasing of the music completely'. Thinking retrospectively, would it not have been useful to add the German to the ECE *Apostles* score?

It is interesting to know that at one time Elgar felt that 'the listeners should stand during the Lord's Prayer'. A printed vocal score at the Birthplace Museum yields even more interesting suggestions. It contains sets of timings, which emphasize the comparative shortness of this oratorio: part 1, about an hour, part 11, about 40 minutes. (This, as everyone knows, was the result of Elgar's many changes of plan, and whether or not there *should* have been a third oratorio it seems likely that not even Elgar himself knew). But - possibly to compensate - in later life he considered several additions to part 11 of *The Apostles*. No music survives, but we might have had a chorus opening and closing 'At The Sign of Healing', and other insertions which would have balanced the length of the two parts.

'At the Sign of Healing' was in fact composed when Elgar was under doctor's orders, resting in North Wales. Much of the work's scoring was done at the Cincinnati Country Club, which perhaps accounts for the inscription on the full score from a New World (Canadian) poet, Bliss Carman - though we are not given his dates nor the poem from which the quotation comes. We are however given the reference to Humperdinck that poor Elgar was afraid his piano reduction at one point would sound like. Two paragraphs show the original and the revised settings of 'and your young

men shall see 'visions...' though their quality is so poor that one needs the textual explanation that Elgar first intended to use the Angel's Farewell from *Gerontius* at this point.

One small niggle. All footnotes are grouped on the final editorial page; but quite a few of them lead back into previous pages (try following the story of John Pointer's additional counterpoint). Also, to grasp the exact chronology of the work's composition and publication one needs to relate various dates and places in Dr Moore's Foreword with the Commentary by Robert Anderson and Christopher Kent. All this needs a good deal of page turning - and these are very big pages! My own copy already has many pencil short-cut cross-references. But that is a small matter compared with all the information and clarification achieved by the editors.

The present team is now joined by Peter Dennison and Brian Trowell, to support the 39 volumes to come.

Diana McVeagh

NEW ELGAR COUNTRY GUIDE

The Worcester journalist Michael Grundy has written a new guide to Elgar's Worcester and Malvern, to be used in conjunction with the well-signposted 'Elgar Route.' Published by the Worcester City and Malvern District Councils, it is an attractive booklet, with an eye-catching coloured cover. Entitled *Elgar's Beloved Country*, it sells at £1.50 and may be obtained from the Birthplace, or from the Information Bureaux in either town, as well as the Cathedral Bookstall in Worcester.

A new edition is already in preparation, and we hope to carry a review in our May issue, with a comment on the many interesting photographs which the book contains.

Michael Toll, of 6 Woodpond Avenue, Hockley, Essex requires copies of the following: Percy Young's *Elgar, O.M.*; Diana McVeagh's *Elgar & his Music*; Rosa Burley's *Memoirs of a Friendship*; and Jerrold Northrop Moore's *Elgar on Record*. Offers direct to Mr. Toll please.

NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES

Attendance records (certainly of recent years) were broken when LONDON BRANCH 'Aspects of Elgar' Symposium got under way again in October with Michael Kennedy's talk 'Elgar the Edwardian'. Expectations were clearly high and certainly fulfilled by a marvellous presentation, meticulously illustrated, which emphasised that Elgar was so much more than simply an Edwardian. Large numbers also heard Professor Brian Trowell continue the series on November 5th when the Violin Concerto was his subject. Professor Trowell disclosed the fruits of his recent detective work and showed how a closer understanding of the background to its composition throws light on this most personal, yet at the same time most universal, work. Certainly this was a talk well worth abandoning bonfires for, and one which surely persuaded many present to get to the Festival Hall to hear the Perlman performance a fortnight later.

The WEST MIDLANDS activities in the summer were dominated as usual by the Three Choirs Festival. However, this year being 1984 is was an even more significant event, and Elgar was a dominant theme throughout, culminating in the splendid 'double' of *The Apostles* and *The Kingdom*, performed on the same day. Instead of the usual Elgar Society tea to open the Festival as a 'fringe' social event, it was decided to have a more ambitious Buffet Supper between the two performances. In the event a success all round. Excellent organisation ensured that the maximum number of people were fed and supplied with liquid refreshment in the shortest possible time, and the weather was superb. To be on the grassy slopes behind the Old Palace looking out over the river, waiting for another excellent evening of fine music was a memorable experience. People sat in little groups on the grass, or more decorously in chairs. Others relaxed indoors, nearer the bar! We owe a debt of gratitude to all those who worked to bring about this very pleasant 'happening.' It made a fitting end to the many summer events of 1984.

The branch Spring programme commences on 2 March at 2.30pm when the AGM will be held at the Stables, Albany Terrace, Worcester. The meeting will be preceded by a live music programme arranged by Margaret Elgar. On March 16th at 7.30 a joint meeting with the Recorded Music Society at the Old Palace, Deansway. Roger Judd, Director of music at St. Michael's College, Tenbury, presents 'Elgar and Hereford.' On May 4th Claude Powell, son of 'Dorabella' talks at St. Andrew's Methodist Church, Pump Street, Worcester. Finally, members may like to note that June 2nd falling on a Sunday this year will enable the wreath-laying and the birthday party to take place on the exact date. We hope for a large attendance.

SOUTH WEST Branch reports the new season off to a wonderful start with two talks. First Dennis Clark gave an audio-visual programme "Elgar in Yorkshire" (with a talk to Bristol Gramophone Society on "Elgar and the Malverns" a few days later). Then Dr. Gareth Lewis on Elgar's Singers - a fascinating trip into a bygone age. In November the meeting concerned Parry, friend of Elgar. We always include other British composers in our season, contemporaries of Elgar, and we hope this will encourage others to become Elgarians.

Next May 25th sees something of a treat for the Branch when the Bristol Chamber Orchestra will perform a programme of British compositions, including *Serenade for Strings*. This is being broadcast to the Bristol Hospitals, and thus we shall enjoy good music and lead support to a very worthy cause.

EAST ANGLIA. Closing a most eventful and memorable year for the Branch, our Autumn meetings, (details of which have already been notified), have continued to be well-attended. Membership, too, continues to increase, - and even if not, indeed, by leaps and bounds, still the trend is upward, and we do feel we may permit ourselves some gratification at having topped the 50 mark for the first time! Nevertheless, we press on, with sights raised, - pleased but not complacent.

1985 will, as usual, begin with the A G M; the meeting concluded, Committee member Brent Palmer will present a short programme of Elgar's own recordings. In February we have our traditional fun-and-fund-raising winter party, and later in the month we meet at the Barbirolli Room, in the Cathedral Close, for another of those enjoyable evenings with Michael Nicholas, Cathedral organist, whose subject this time will be 'Howells and Vaughan Williams, - their debt to Elgar'. In March, April and May, respectively, we shall be welcoming back, with much pleasure, three well-known speakers who have visited our Branch in previous years: Pauline Collett to introduce her 'Elgar Travelogue', Diana McVeagh to speak on 'Elgar now' (this being a joint meeting with the Norwich Gramophone Society), and Dr. Jerrold Northrop Moore to present the Violin Concerto. Thus do we seek to help maintain and build on the 1984 impetus to our Movement!

YORKSHIRE Branch report that in November Pauline Collett gave a delightful talk about her travels at home and abroad for her recent book 'An Elgar Travelogue.' It was clear that she enjoyed both her experiences and talking to us about them - an appreciative audience and the largest for some time.

Earlier in the new season we had a 'Chairman's Evening' by Jim Anderson, using Elgar's, and other, music, followed on Sept.29th by the Annual Dinner at the Falcon Manor in Settle, a Yorkshire town which Elgar knew well. The October meeting provided an opportunity for Philip Scowcroft to talk on 'Elgar Transcriptions and Transcribers,' based on his interesting articles in the Journal. Future meetings include a talk on the *Cello Concerto* by Charles Fletcher, a Request Evening, a talk on Elgar in Yorkshire, Elgar in a Historical Setting, and Elgar in the First World War. Our AGM is in April.

SOUTH WALES report that membership remains the same - several members lost, but an equal number gained, so all remains even. We are pleased that the recent members include David Nevens, Head of Music Dept. the Welsh College of Music, Cardiff. Varied Autumn events got off to a good start, but we could do with a better attendance than we have had. Rodney Baldwin gave a very good talk and organ recital to a small crowd at Penarth, and Secretary Terry Jenkins gave a talk on some of Elgar's lesser-known music at the home of Haydn and Eunice Phillips.

Future meetings include a Record Choice evening, a talk on Havergal Brian, Elgar and Friends, by two members of the Havergal Brian Society, an audio-visual presentation "In the South" - Elgar's Sussex, and an illustrated talk on *The Apostles*.

No news from NORTH WEST, though we know that much is happening. We hope for a full report next time. Details of all branch activities can always be obtained from the appropriate branch secretary. (Addresses on last page of this Journal).

LETTERS

From Raymond Monk

Clearly, there is some confusion over the existence of three Elgar organisations. But, for all practical purposes and considerations, there are really only two active bodies - the Society and the Foundation. Trustees of the Elgar Birthplace (a Trust which came into being in 1934 in order to administer funds raised for the upkeep of the Birthplace) also constitute the governing Directorate of the Foundation which was created in 1973 to enable very much wider aims to be pursued. Yes, the Foundation does indeed have much broader horizons than those which the September Editorial would appear to suggest!

As for co-operation between the Society and the Foundation, well, there is certainly room for improvement. However, Michael Pope, Andrew Neill, and myself, serve as Trustees and as elected Officials of the Society. Of the remaining Trustees, two of the most distinguished have just been made Vice-Presidents of the Society. And most of the remainder are loyal Society members. So, what is the problem? We all love Elgar and co-operation between those who seek to promote and serve him should be as natural and flowing as Malvern water!

From G. Nall

The first song that Elgar wrote, and in fact his reputed earliest dated composition to survive, is called "The Language of Flowers" (1872), dedicated to his sister Lucy. This song, together with others written by Elgar, appeared on record in 1979 sung by Brian Rayner Cook. According to the sleeve notes of this record and also other sources, it is the general opinion that Elgar wrote the words to this song as well as the music, although I am not quite sure how widespread this opinion is.

I would like to take the opportunity, through your columns, to correct this apparent misunderstanding, and state that Elgar only wrote the music, the words coming from a poem entitled "The Language of Flowers" by the American poet James Gates Percival (1795-1856). The poem appears in volume 1 of "The Poetical Works of James Gates Percival, with a biographical sketch", published by Ticknor & Fields, Boston, 1865. (The details are on photostat material sent by the British Library).

I find it puzzling that this misunderstanding over the authorship of the words should have persisted for so long.

**** Editor's note: We have seen the photostats in question and congratulate Mr Nall on discovering the true source of Elgar's first song. Comparison with the song's text reveals slight changes in punctuation, with three word changes. The most important of these is in the fifth verse where the words 'daily shades the grave' should read 'darkly shades' - a reading which makes more sense.*

From Garry Humphreys

On page 76 of *Spirit of England* appears the caption 'The only known photograph of Elgar with his violin'; a similar statement with the same picture appears on page 10 of Simon Mundy's *Elgar: his life and times*.

However, so far as Dr Moore's book is concerned, this is rather puzzling if one turns to page 12 where a photograph of the Elgar children clearly shows Edward holding something which, if not a violin, certainly bears a startling resemblance to one.

I can't believe I'm the first to have noticed this!

From Veronica M. Brown

At last the public library has provided a copy of Dr. J. N. Moore's expensive and expansive book. I should not dare to cross swords with him on musical matters, but perhaps I may be allowed to pick up a few lesser points.

Firstly, Elgar's bicycle. Just 'Phoebus' would have been the sun-god; but 'Mr. Phoebus' is a character in Disraeli's novel 'Lothair'. The interest lies in the fact that 'Lothair' was written at a time when Disraeli was in disagreement with Cardinal Wiseman, and is therefore almost as anti-Catholic as the words of that egregious best-seller of Elgar's lifetime, Joseph Hocking. There, of course, the resemblance ends; and in Disraeli's case the aversion was temporary.

Secondly, 'Redgauntlet' - set some years after Culloden - is about Jacobites and Hanoverians, not Cavaliers and Roundheads. And Nanty Ewart is a character with whom anyone as sensitive as Elgar would naturally sympathise: a former student of divinity who ran away to sea after putting a girl in the family way and being forbidden to marry her; and who, implicitly for that reason, nearly drinks himself to death. In fact, a tragic hero if he had been given a book to himself.

Lastly, in 1932 the Prime Minister was Ramsay Macdonald

From Stennett Kirby

I write to tell you that, either by a happy coincidence or splendid foresight, a new housing development in Deptford has been named Elgar Close, in good time for this Elgarian year. It is part of a unique spot in Deptford. An earlier phase of the development was called Vaughan Williams Close, and directly opposite the entrance is the Lewisham Academy of Music! Even this is not enough: The Albany, a cultural centre of the community, fills the street that borders Vaughan Williams Close.

THE ELGAR SOCIETY

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

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