

# The Elgar Society JOURNAL



SEPTEMBER  
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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### ANDREW NEILL PRESENTATION

As members will have read on another page, Andrew Neill has now relinquished the post of Secretary of the Society, even though he continues to hold office while a new secretary is appointed. Mr Neill's tenure of office has been distinguished, and it has coincided with the greatest activity and upsurge of interest which the Society has known in all the years of its existence. We all owe a great debt to Andrew Neill's enthusiasm and dedication to the Society, and it has therefore been decided to request those members, who would like to make a more tangible demonstration of their gratitude, to contribute to the presentation of some suitable gift. All those members who would like to contribute are therefore asked to send, as soon as convenient, cheques made payable to The Elgar Society, making clear to the Treasurer that this is for the Andrew Neill Presentation. The Hon. Treasurer is David Morris, 125 Cleveland Road, Ealing, London W13 0EN.

# The Elgar Society Journal

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01-440 2651

## EDITORIAL

Vol.4, no.3  
September 1985

Regular readers of these editorials (and I like to think there are a few!) will recall that I have several times drawn attention to the need and desirability of a closer link with the Elgar Foundation, and through them with the Birthplace Trust. Accordingly I was delighted at the invitation to our members to attend the Birthplace on June 2nd, to observe the handing over of the two Elgar manuscript scores to the Museum. We are grateful to the Chairman of the Foundation, E. Wulstan Atkins, and the Birthplace Trustees for including the Society members on this occasion, and we hope it may be the first of many joint gatherings of interest to both parties.

The committee of the Elgar Society has recently made approaches to the Foundation on just these lines, because we are sure that closer co-operation between both organisations can only be of benefit to the cause of the propagation of Elgar's music, and improve the opportunities to study his life and works. Members of the Elgar Society can assist also by supporting the Birthplace, and by ordering books and recordings through the Curator Jim Bennett. Although the Birthplace in recent years has made great strides, and attracted record numbers of visitors, it constantly needs money for maintenance and development. The Society may also be able to assist in suggesting items for inclusion in the Museum from time to time, where such items become available.

I hope that we can look forward to a constructive relationship between Society and Foundation to our mutual benefit, and I am sure that members of the Society will welcome any movement in that direction.

RONALD TAYLOR  
*Editor*

## NEWS ITEMS

KENNETH LOVELAND, the music critic whose Elgar weekends have proved so popular at a number of adult residential colleges, is giving another at West Dean College, nr. Chichester, from September 6-8. There will be eight illustrated sessions in his weekend entitled "Elgar: the Man and his Music". He will also be presenting one at Maryland College, Woburn, Beds, from April 25-26 1986. Addresses: West Dean College, West Dean, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 0QZ (0243-63-301); Maryland College, Woburn, Beds MK17 9JD (052-525-688).

A showing of the Elgar film *HOPE AND GLORY* will take place at the Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, on Sunday 22nd September, at 8.30 p.m. Admission is by Complimentary Ticket, obtainable in advance from Tewkesbury Festival Administration, Eboracum, Bredon, Tewkesbury, Glos. GL20 7EJ (SAE please). There will be a collection afterwards to help defray expenses. This is another opportunity to see this most interesting film. Early application is advised.

AMPHION RECORDS have recently issued a catalogue of records, CD's, and cassettes devoted entirely to British Music. This enterprise, listing only British composers, seems to be unique, and the company hopes at a later stage to issue records under their own label. Members interested in obtaining a copy of the catalogue should send to Amphion, 3 Norton Lodge, 109 Beverley Road, Norton-on-Derwent, Malton, N.Yorks.

JACK MCKENZIE'S MANY FRIENDS will be glad to know that he is making a good recovery from a car accident which he sustained a few months back. Jack's injuries were serious, but you can't keep a good man down for long, and he is well on the mend. We send our very best wishes for a prompt return to full health.

INDRA OPERA are giving two performances of "An Indian Evening" at the Rosslyn Hill Chapel in Hampstead, N.W.3 on 23 & 24 October. The concert will explore the influence India has had on the work of Holst and Maurice Delage. It is hoped that a successful outcome will enable the concert to be given at other venues around the country. Further details from Susannah Self, Artistic Director, Basement Flat, 16d Hampstead Hill Gardens, London, NW3 2PL.

A FEW PLACES ARE LEFT for those wishing to join the "Elgar Pilgrimage" around Worcester and Malvern, arranged by Mrs. Jane Moyle, Heart of England Tours, Yew Tree House, Ombersley, Worcs. WR9 0JX. Cost is £12.00 per person, or £17.00 including lunch at the Abbey Hotel, Malvern. The date is Saturday 5th October. Full details from Mrs. Moyle.

THE REVISED EDITION of *An Elgar Discography* by John Knowles will be published by Thames Publishing in October at £7.50. This edition is so extensively rewritten and enlarged that it is virtually a new work. There are also reproductions of publicity material, reviews and catalogue entries. This is a vitally important work for the study of recordings of Elgar's music, and we urge all members to obtain a copy.

## ELGAR SOCIETY 1985 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The thirty fifth Annual General Meeting was held at St. Andrew's Methodist Hall, Pump Street, Worcester on Saturday 1st June 1985 at 2.30 p.m. Forty-eight members were in attendance. The Chairman warmly welcomed members to whom he passed a message of greeting from the President, who had sent his apologies to the meeting. The Secretary was able to confirm the continued growth in the membership of the Society which now stood at approximately 1,260 members.

The President and existing Vice President were re-elected and the following officers and committee were elected; Margaret Benselin and Raymond Monk retiring by rotation:

Chairman: Michael Pope  
Vice Chairman: Trevor Fenemore-Jones  
Treasurer: David Morris  
Journal Editor: Ronald Taylor

Committee: Michael Rostron, David Michell, Garry Humphreys, Bill Kemp, John Warren and Andrew Neill.

The Secretary advised that as no member of the Society had volunteered to accept nomination as Secretary at the time of the meeting, he would accept temporary appointment to the position until such time as a substitute could be found. He had, therefore, been appointed by the Committee and it was hoped that an alternative Secretary would be found in the not too distant future.

During the meeting, the Treasurer advised that, sadly, the Society had run into a loss during 1984 but that it was hoped that members would appreciate that this was the result of the number of events and undertakings which had been supported during the Commemorative Year. The Committee was determined to improve further the quality of the journal as well as support such undertakings as the revised edition of John Knowles's *Discography* and be in a position to fund future undertaking of a similar nature. Increases in the subscription were therefore inevitable; these were passed unanimously by those present at the meeting. From January 1st 1986 subscriptions will be as follows:

For all U.K. members, excluding registered students - £6.00

U.K. registered students - £5.00

Overseas members - U.S.\$10.00

The usual family membership of a basic subscription plus £1.00 for each additional member, on the assumption that only one copy of the *Society Journal* is sent is continued.

In concluding the meeting, the Chairman advised that he had been in correspondence with Lady Boulton, who had expressed a wish to assist the Society. It had been the unanimous view of the committee that she should be invited to accept nomination as an honorary member, which he was delighted to confirm she had accepted. She was duly elected unanimously as an honorary member as was Andrew Neill, the retiring Secretary.

Members requiring a copy of The Minutes of the Thirty Fourth Annual General Meeting, and income and expenditure account for the year ended the 31st December 1984, should send a stamped addressed envelope to the Secretary.

A.H.A. Neill  
Acting Secretary

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## KING OLAF

The long-awaited performance by the London Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus, conducted by Vernon Handley, soloists Teresa Cahill and Anthony Rolfe Johnson, will take place at the Royal Festival Hall, London, on

**Sunday 3rd November 1985**

This concert, which will prelude the recording by EMI with the same artists, deserves our strongest support. By a generous arrangement from the LPO special rates will apply if enough members attend, and we can therefore offer

**£7.00 tickets at £4.00**

**£3.50 tickets at £1.50**

Members belonging to branches should send remittances to their Branch Secretary, who has full information. Those not in Branches should send directly to Andrew Neill, 17 Earlsfield Road, Wandsworth Common, London, SW18 3DB. *Please note that cheques should be made out to the LPO, and application should be made without delay.*

The references to the recording made above, which we all desire, should remind members the King Olaf Recording Fund is still very much open. In fact we urgently need more donations NOW. Many members have already contributed, some generously, but we do need donations from *everyone*. Please send a donation TODAY, to Andrew Neill marked for the King Olaf Fund.

\*\*\* The King Olaf concert was previously announced for Nov. 30th, but the date has been changed to Nov. 3rd.

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**Note: The Delius Society is holding a meeting on Tuesday 17 September, 7.30 p.m., at Mary Ward House, 5-7 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9SS, when Patricia Cleveland-Peck will speak and it is hoped that Margaret Harrison will also be present. All Elgar Society members are welcome.**

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## BERNARD WARD: AN APPRECIATION

I last saw Bernard Ward shortly before Christmas; he had been ill and I nearly cancelled the visit. Now I am glad that I did not, for that last occasion gave me great joy; not a leave-taking of a dear friend, but a time for reminiscing - of the memorable 1984 Three Choirs Festival and the Elgar 50th Anniversary Concerts which Bernard and his wife Jeannie had attended as stewards, of our favourite Elgar music, and of the future plans of the Branch. Far into the night we talked and laughed, I with the occasional anxious look towards Jeannie to see if Bernard were finding it all too much, she urging me on as she saw the old spark of enthusiasm for his 'hero' revive. When at last I retired to bed it was with yet another Elgar book from Bernard's vast collection.

Bernard Ward was not a practising musician, nor a music scholar, but he was always interested in other people, and for that reason, understood Elgar the man before any kind of musical analysis came along. Whether he was giving the vote of thanks, or collecting our subscriptions, or chairing a meeting, East Anglian Branch members, visitors and guest speakers instantly warmed to that gentle smile of welcome.

Bernard would never hear a single word spoken against Elgar; on one occasion a famous musicologist was politely but firmly taken to task at the end of the lecture; what followed was not a diatribe, but a skilful summary of all that had gone before complete with a very persuasive reminder of Sir Edward's genius!

Now he has gone from us and the East Anglian Branch has lost a dedicated Elgarian as well as a true friend. When the history of the Society comes to be written I hope that among the list of those who never wavered in their support of our 'hero' Bernard Ward's name will be found.

*"Go Forth Upon Thy Journey, Christian Soul..."*

BARRY MARSH.

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Leicestershire County Council decided to celebrate European Music Year with an Elgar Exhibition in the Central Library, Leicester. Raymond Monk made available many important items from his collection and the Exhibition was a great success. On public view, for the first time, was the Beethoven Life Mask (a copy by Franz Klein of his original 1812 Mask) which was presented to Elgar by Julius Butts after the second Dusseldorf performance of Gerontius in 1902. Of particular local interest was the fascinating material, kindly loaned by Marion Simmons, relating to Elgar's week-long stay in Leicester during the 1917 tour of FRINGES OF THE FLEET. Details of the Society and Foundation were available to the many Visitors.

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Anne Marshall, 17 Highbury Crescent, Kelburn, Wellington, New Zealand. (phone 757-899) is very interested in contacting the other N.Z. members of the Elgar Society, and also the Australian ones. Letters direct to Miss Marshall please.

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## NATIONAL BRASS BAND FESTIVAL

Royal Albert Hall

5th October 1985

The National Brass Band Festival has been held annually at the Royal Albert Hall for almost 40 years, and the highlight of the event is always the Gala Concert, featuring three massed bands (a "whirlpool of sound" as Sir Henry Wood once described it). Previous conductors have included Sir Adrian Boult and Sir Malcolm Sargent. To attend one of these concerts is an unforgettable musical experience.

As a finale to this year's concert the organisers, Boosey and Hawkes, have selected Eric Ball's brilliant arrangement of the *Enigma Variations*. Members will recall that this was heard at the 1984 Three Choirs Festival, at the Warwick Arts Festival, and that the recording was reviewed enthusiastically in our columns.

Boosey & Hawkes have generously agreed special ticket prices for Elgar Society members as follows:

Stalls £5.00 (normally £6.50)

Arena £4.00 (normally £5.00)

Applications should be made by the 21st September please, direct to Boosey & Hawkes. Cheques should be made payable to Boosey & Hawkes Band Festivals Ltd, and sent to Mrs. Jamieson, Boosey & Hawkes, 295 Regent Street, London, W1R 8JH, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope for reply. Please note to inform Mrs. Jamieson that you are an Elgar Society member.

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Siegfried Sassoon's Diaries, volume 3, was published recently by Faber price £12.95, and some of the entries may well cause raised eyebrows among Elgarians. Sassoon heard a lot of Elgar's music during the 1920's, met Elgar often, and had friendships in common with the composer. A controversial entry appears in September 1925, when, after a Three Choirs performance, Sassoon first mis-spells Billy Reed's name, and then goes on: "... when Boult and I were waiting for Schuster outside the Cathedral (Gloucester), B.(oult) said he is losing faith in all Elgar's works except *The Kingdom*, the *Second Symphony*, *The Enigma Variations*, and 'the Fiddle Concerto'. "I thought *The Apostles* sounded awful last night!" he added ...

If this is an accurate account then "B" certainly changed his mind in later years, and made handsome amends! The Diaries contain much fascinating material on the literary and artistic life of this country. Other people's diaries often give a different view of events from those commonly expressed!

R.P.T.



## A WELSH WEEKEND, with choral accompaniment.

The long awaited London Branch pilgrimage to Llangranog took place in June. Some 25 members, including some from outside the London area, gathered at the Royal Ivy Bush Hotel for a pleasant dinner, and an interesting talk from Kenneth Loveland on "Elgar and Wales". It would be nice to say that we approached the ancient town of Carmarthen in welcoming sunshine. It would not be true - there was undoubtedly a welcome, but it was seen through fairly heavy rain. But the company was good, the talk was of many things (shoes, ships, etc), and tomorrow (the day for Llangranog) would undoubtedly be fine. So it was, at 6.30 a.m., but by the time of departure at 9.15 it was raining again. Our helpful and very friendly coach-driver made light of it though and we were soon on our way, first visiting the derelict station at Henllen where Elgar changed train for pony and trap. Now a miniature railway is being constructed on the old station site. Then on to Cenarth, for a sight of real coracles, and Welsh 'elevenses'. Several of us succumbed to the lure of souvenir jars of Welsh jams and honey, and one or two even ate scones filled with cream and jam. (All this in the *middle* of the morning). Then on to Llangranog, and at just the spot where Elgar had decided to abandon his pony and trap down the steep hill into the village, our coach came to rest almost jammed on a hairpin bend. With the aid of some of the party the coach was backed up the hill while the rest made their way to the Pentre Arms on the tiny promenade. Thoughts of lunch on the beach disappeared under the rain showers, and Mrs. Derby, the landlady, allowed us to crowd into the small rooms of the pub which Elgar visited during *his* long weekend in 1901. The weather sufficiently improved in the afternoon for some walks in the neighbourhood, and something of the fine coast scenery could be seen when the clouds lifted. Then back to the pub for a splendid tea. It was here that the first stirrings of a local myth were heard - told in good faith - of how Elgar had come into the pub, sat at the bar, and had written down his music. The truth is that until Geoffrey Hodgkins followed the trail to Llangranog some years ago, no-one locally had any idea that Elgar visited there, even including the otherwise very knowledgable local historian. Now that they know that 'the Welsh tune' was incorporated into the *Introduction and Allegro for strings*, it is possible that we shall yet see The Old Elgar Tea Rooms, or even the Elgar Antique Shop. One hopes not.

Following Elgar's footsteps we hoped that the local choir might sing to us from the beach, but again the weather mocked our plans, so the local chapel was opened up as a concert hall, and a number of residents came in to hear the choir sing. Afterwards an impromptu concert was performed in the pub, where it was rumoured that the voices seemed wonderfully improved by the local ales. A reporter/photographer from the nearby Welsh-language newspaper was on hand to photograph us, and an account was to appear (in Welsh) the following week. Then back to Carmarthen, where an excellent buffet supper awaited us.

The next morning a visit to the historic town of Laugharne where we were greeted by the Portreeve (whose office dates back to the 13th century), and taken to the Dylan Thomas Museum on the water's edge. Back to the ancient town hall for a fascinating piece of Welsh social history told, with many an amusing anecdote, by the Portreeve (now in his splendid robes). Then back to Carmarthen to retrieve luggage, cars, etc, and a date for lunch in Swansea at the Dragon Hotel. A first-class lunch, and after, for those who could remain, dramatic readings from the works of Dylan Thomas.

Despite the damp weather it was a fascinating and informative weekend, and the social atmosphere (as with most Elgarian gatherings) could not have been better. Diana McVeagh had planned it all, and had worked hard and long to make it a success. Our heartfelt applause at the Swansea lunch was an inadequate 'Thank you' for arranging a splendid visit.

R.P.T.

## **Edward Elgar and Edward German**

by

**Dominic Guyver**

### **Part II**

As the years brought with them more honours for Elgar, German was always quick to send his congratulations. The first known letter of their later correspondence was written on just such an occasion:

5 Biddulph Road, Elgin Avenue, W.9  
May 5th, 1924

My dear Elgar,

I have read that you have accepted the appointment of Master of the King's Musick. Will you please accept my warmest congratulations! I missed your companionship at Bournemouth this year. I have not forgotten how kind you were to me at last year's Festival when I had that bad attack of lumbago.

Believe me to be yours ever sincerely,

Edward German

To which Elgar replied:

St. James's Place, S.W.1  
May 7th, 1924

My dear German,

Very many thanks for your kind letter about the Mastership. I was sorry I could not manage B'mouth this year - I thought of you to send about your appearance there and hoped you had no lumbago.

Always most sincerely yours,

Edward Elgar

Elgar was himself prone to recurrent health problems, and German's sympathy was always apparent. For example, a letter to Elgar in 1926 brought this reply:



Some of the Llangranog Pilgrims, apparently just after being landed from the lifeboat. On the right the coach-driver has a knowing look, whilst on the left the Editor looks as though he disapproves of the whole affair. (Photo by Emyr Rhys Williams)

Napleton Grange, Kempsey, Worcester  
Feb. 17th, 1926

My dear German,

It was most kind of you to write so sympathetically about my gastric trouble; I am getting on alright but some fine weather would help matters hugely.

I look forward to hearing you tonight - and I will applaud you myself. I am going to Bournemouth this time and I hope we may meet.

Best regards - yours ever,

Edward Elgar

It was not only at Bournemouth Festivals that the two met for conducting engagements. Hastings was another place. It seems that Elgar missed German or his music on one occasion:

Albany Hotel, Hastings  
7/4/27

My dear German,

I am so sorry: I went up to my room about 9.30 to look for a few visiting cards, being overtired I suppose from the morning's exertions, went fast asleep - and did not wake until 11.30. Too late.

I am just hoping we may meet again. My love to you -

Ever yours - most sincerely,

Edward Elgar

Two months later came Elgar's 70th Birthday: It brought the following tribute from the 65-year old German, writing from his home:

5 Biddulph Road, Elgin Avenue, W.9  
June 4th, 1927

My dear Elgar,

I suppose 70 is an "occasion"! - and so I send you my greetings - also my thanks for the pleasure your music has given me these many years.

I need not say more.

Yours ever sincerely,

Edward German

P.S. I listened in on your birthday. <sup>6</sup>

Elgar replied:

Napleton Grange, Kempsey, Worcester  
5th June 1927

My dear German:

Thank you: but my music cannot possibly have given you one-hundredth part of the joy your music has given me.

Yours ever,

Edward Elgar

An incident which closely parallels this letter was once recalled by Thomas Dunhill: "I think ... that his firm favourite amongst British Composers was Edward German. I remember how on one occasion, when German had expressed his admiration for some work of his, Elgar turned to him and said, very simply, "However much you like my music you cannot possibly like it as much as I love yours!"<sup>7</sup>

Less than four years after Elgar's elevation to Mastership of the King's Musick, recognition of German's services to music came in the New Year's Honours List of 1928. Many thought that the honour of a Knighthood had been too long delayed. It is quite probable that Elgar originated the suggestion of the Knighthood, and certainly he would have favoured it. He telegraphed on 2nd January: "Warmest and loving congratulations from your affectionate friend."

A few days later he sent this letter:

Memorandum from Sir Edward Elgar, O.M.,  
Master of the King's Musick, Lord Chamberlain's Office,  
St. James's Palace, S.W.1  
22nd January 1928

My dear German,

You may have received a notice about the Investiture; there are two, 14th and 16th of February. I am due on the 14th and I should like to have the honour and pleasure to accompany\* you to the Palace, etc. if you are bidden on that day. Let me know.

Kindest regards - yours very sincerely,

Edward Elgar

\*I mean take you; see you through and bring you back.

In the event, German was asked for the 16th:

5 Biddulph Road, Elgin Avenue, W.9.  
Jany. 23rd 1928

My dear Elgar,

How very unfortunate! I am called for the 16th. It would have been so delightful to me for us

to have gone together, as you suggest. Well, we must bow to Fate: but I shall always think it nice of you to have written to me.

My kindest regards -

Yours very sincerely,

Edward German

Elgar and German came together at the dinner given to celebrate the latter's Knighthood, which took place at the Mayfair Hotel in March 1928. Sir Alexander Mackenzie, who acted as Chairman for the proceedings, proposed the toast "Our Guest". It was then that the toast of the evening was spoken by none other than Elgar, who, as reported later, "described German's works as the highest and most beautiful of the higher forms of music; and said he had always regarded him as a genius, and paid warm tribute to his friend's achievements in serious orchestral compositions."<sup>8</sup>

German's reply "gave feeling expression to his regard for the sympathetic friendship of both the Chairman and Sir Edward Elgar..."

Elgar had taken over the responsibility of sending German's new honour's insignia - and so he wrote to him:

Tiddington House, nr Stratford-on-Avon

May 2nd 1928

My dear German,

At last I am settled - for a moment. This is the last address I have of yours, and the Insignia of the Knight-Bachelors is sending (sic) for you so I want to know if this is the proper place to send it to?

My love to you, Yours ever,

Edward Elgar

When German replied in the affirmative, Elgar wrote:

Tiddington House, Stratford-on-Avon

May 7th 1928

My dear German,

The insignia should reach you in a day or two: please accept it with my love: may you live very many years to wear it.

Yours ever

Edward Elgar

On 30th January 1930, Elgar conducted a concert of his own works at the Queen's Hall.<sup>9</sup> Afterwards German, who had been in the audience, and who had by now lost the sight of his right eye, managed to talk to Elgar. A few days later he sent the following note to his friend:

5 Biddulph Road, Elgin Avenue, W.9  
Feb. 1st 1930

My dear Elgar,

I did enjoy your concert on Thursday. What wonderful music!

I seldom go out at night now-a-day(sic): (that sounds a bit Irish!) but it was nice to see you again if only for a few minutes. Do you remember the last time we met in the Queen's Hall Artists' Room? The rehearsal of your Cello Concerto to be produced the same night was held up by Coates until nearly 1 o'clock. I have never quite forgiven him for that. However, all things find their level.

Of course, don't reply to this: I only wanted to tell you of my appreciation.

Yours as always,

Edward German

But Elgar did reply:

Worcester.  
3rd Feb. 1930

My dear German,

It was the greatest pleasure to see you on Thursday and I was very proud to know you were there. I wish you had a better account of your health to give me. I was greatly concerned to learn of your sight and without knowledge of such things but with a deep affection for you and your work I cannot but hope I can see you very soon and that things will have improved. My love to you dear German,

Ever yours

E.E.

A request to Elgar came from another quarter soon after this. It was from W. Herbert Scott, who was preparing his biography. He wanted Elgar's permission to quote from some manuscripts:

"...among the letters preserved are one or two from you which I know German prizes highly, and from these I should like to make brief extracts if you have no objection...German asks me to say he trusts this course will be agreeable to you, and I do hope you will say "yes"."

The letters Scott wanted to quote were those in which Elgar expressed his appreciation for German's music, and he was only too pleased to help Scott in preparing the book.

German's bad eyesight had begun to worsen. "It seems to many of us," Scott explained to Elgar, "that the time is opportune for a full and authentic story of his career." It was also about this time that Basil Maine began his biography of Elgar.

By now Elgar had moved to what was to be his final home. From there he sent this letter to his friend:

4th Dec. 1930

My dear German,

Our letters crossed and yours went to my old address: I am now fixed here: - Marl Bank, Rainbow Hill, Worcester. - I quite thought I had sent you a card at Christmas and here it is!

Bless you, Yours ever,

E.E.

German later received this note about a report in the national press:

Marl Bank, Worcester  
29th July 1932

My dear German,

I read with great concern a paragraph in the D.Tel: - I trust the report is exaggerated and that your eyes will still serve you and us well for long years.

Be assured, dear German, of my best wishes, love and sympathy.

Ever yours,

Edward Elgar

Unfortunately, German completed no new works after the early 1920s.

On the occasion of the award to Elgar of the G.C.V.O., German wrote a letter of congratulation:

5 Biddulph Road, Elgin Avenue, W.9

My dear Elgar,

I did not think you would care to be bothered with my congratulations on your new honour; but I saw our mutual friend Mackenzie and he said he had sent you a message. So I decided I would do likewise. Therefore, my dear Elgar, will you please accept my heartfelt congratulations. That is all!

Yours as ever,

Edward German

Back came a scribbled reply:

Marl Bank, Rainbow Hill, Worcester  
(P.C.) 9th June 1933

All thanks for your very kind letter - I am very glad to hear - excuse p.c - I am snowed under!

My love to you,

E.E.



It was the last reply he wrote before the final terrible illness which overtook him in the autumn of 1933.

The Christmas card which arrived for Elgar from German, at the South Bank Nursing Home, elicited this reply from the dying composer, whose shaky signature was inscribed at the bottom of an otherwise dictated post-card:

Nursing Home, Worcester  
23rd December, 1933

DICTATED.

Many thanks dear German for your very kind card. I hope you are well. The announcement that I had gone home is unfortunately not true. Messages like yours make the dull moments more bearable.

My love to you,

Edward Elgar

Exactly two months later Elgar was dead.

In his time German was hailed as the natural successor to Arthur Sullivan. His music, always possessed of melodic charm and great invention, is never less than beautifully crafted, and always highly polished. But time has been rather unkind to this gentle unassuming man, and to his music. Many of his best works were either never recorded, nor kept in the catalogue if they were recorded.

This sad neglect of German's music today, must be placed beside Elgar's affection and admiration for Edward German above all other British composers of his time.

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#### Notes.

6. German is referring to the broadcast concert which Elgar conducted at the Queen's Hall on his birthday.
7. Thomas F. Dunhill: "Sir Edward Elgar". (Blackie, 1938) p.204
8. Scott: p.195
9. The programme was: In the South; Violin Concerto (soloist Albert Sammons); Symphony no.1.

I would like to thank Mrs Winifred German for her very kind help and friendly encouragement whilst preparing this article, as well as her permission to quote from the manuscripts in her possession; the Trustees of the Elgar Will for permission to quote from Sir Edward Elgar's letters; and to Dr Jerrold Northrop Moore for his very generous assistance and advice.

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# A WALK ROUND THE ELGARS' WORCESTER

by K.E.L. Simmons and Marion Simmons

## Part II

### 2. CORN MARKET TO HIGH STREET

Moving on across the end of Sansome Street, where it now meets the traffic nightmare of the City Walls Road, which cut a swath of destruction through old Worcester only a few years ago, we next came to Corn Market. Here, close to St. Martin's Church, once stood the Public Hall where Elgar conducted the first performance of *Froissart* and *The Black Knight*, the former in 1890 during the Meeting of the Three Choirs - shortly before the birth of his nephew and godson William Henry Elgar Jr whose baptism he was able to attend.

The original hall was built in 1848-49 as a corn exchange but the farmers preferred a rival building erected at the same time in Angel Street so the other was soon sold, at a considerable loss, and passed into use as a concert hall. Called the Music Hall - and not to be confused with the Concert Hall, a place of lowlier entertainment in nearby Lowesmoor - it was large and imposing with a pillared frontage. Inside, the main chamber was exceptionally well lighted by a dome, a striking feature of the original structure that was later removed, and had a fine-toned organ built by the local firm of Nicholson. The building later passed into the ownership of the corporation, on whose land it had been erected, and served the needs of the City for many years, becoming known as the Public Hall. It was eventually destroyed by fire and the hall that replaced it on the same site has also gone, demolished in 1966.

The Corn Market area of Worcester is rich in historical associations with the Elgars and their relatives, though to what an extent only became clear later, after our visit this day stimulated us to initiate deeper enquiries. These ranged far afield - to Kent, Herefordshire, Gloucestershire, Northamptonshire, and Surrey - and have opened up new perspectives on Elgar's immediate origins, especially on his mother's side.

Turning into Mealcheapen Street, we checked No. 16 - now the local showroom for Calor Gas - where the 19-year-old W.H. Elgar had lodged on migrating to Worcester from Dover. Then an eating house and commercial inn, the building was once a principal bank of the City<sup>7</sup> and dates from the earlier decades of the 18th century. Called *The Shades* in William Elgar's time, it bore that name throughout Edward's life and for many years after, being known latterly, when a public house, as *The Shades Tavern*. William Elgar evidently chose *The Shades* because it was cheap and only a short walk from the places of business, in High Street and The Cross, of his employer Thomas Nicholls Stratford.

Elgar Brothers later gave 1841 as the year of the founding of their business in Worcester but when exactly in 1841 young William Elgar arrived there from Kent is uncertain. It must, however, have been after Sunday 6 June, the day the national census was taken, for on that date he was still living in Dover where - at the Elgar family home, no 33 High Street, Charlton - he was listed along with his father Henry Elgar (a carpenter, then aged about 50), his mother Susanna (aged about 44), brothers Thomas (an apprentice printer, 14), Edward (12) and Henry (8), and sisters Susanna (aged about 23) and Ann Elizabeth (6).<sup>8</sup> The Elgars had been married in Charlton, at the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, on 23 November

■ 1816. Like his mother (originally Susanna Hogbin) and most of the family, William was born (on 21 September 1821) in Charlton, but his father's place of birth was Dymchurch and his sister Susanna's Hougham - though she, like the rest of the children, was christened at the Church of St. Mary the Virgin in Dover. We have seen no reference in any Elgar biography to Edward Elgar of Dover though he is listed on the chart at Elgar's Birthplace headed 'Pedigree of Elgar'<sup>9</sup>; he died in 1850, aged only 20. It is also clear, from the 1841 and 1851 census returns and from the baptismal records, that Ann Elgar of Dover was the youngest member of the family not the elder sister as has been stated. Henry Elgar Jr, of course, joined his brother in Worcester eventually, as did Tom and Susanna for while (see below).

We doubt if W.H. Elgar had come up from Dover and returned again before census day that year for the journey then was still long and difficult, made wholly or partly by stage-coach as neither town was yet served directly by the railway. Until 1850, for instance, Worcester train passengers had to travel by horse-drawn omnibus to and from the halt out at Spetchley.

It would now seem that when William first went to *The Shades* the proprietor was not Francis Simmonds, as previously supposed, but still the same William Carter who, we noted in our booklet *The Elgars of Worcester*, had taken over *The Shades* early in 1841. Before moving to *The Shades*, Francis Simmonds had run another eating house at No. 22 a few doors further west where he was listed in 1837 and 1840. He was still there in 1842 when he also had a carpentry and joinery business in nearby Silver Street - which in those days ran between Lowesmoor and Corn Market but which now has been almost entirely obliterated by the new City Walls Road. On census day 1841, the household at No. 22 consisted of Simmonds himself (described as a builder, aged about 30), his wife Elizabeth (aged about 33), her sister Ann Greening (19), Emma Apperley (the family servant, aged between 15 and 19), and two of Simmonds's young carpenter apprentices.

Ann Greening was, of course, the girl who later married W.H. Elgar and became the mother of Edward Elgar; whether the two first met in 1841, or not until the Simmondses moved to *The Shades*, remains uncertain. Emma Apperley was, presumably, a cousin of the two Greening women on their mother's side (see further, below).

Francis Simmonds and Elizabeth Greening had been married on 16 June 1834 at St. Swithin's Church, Worcester, only a short distance from Mealcheapen Street. Both were then residents of that parish, though neither were natives of Worcestershire and we have not yet been able to discover from where Simmonds came. Elizabeth Greening, the eldest child of Joseph and Esther Greening, was born in Weston-under-Penyard, Herefordshire, in about 1808, her brother John in about 1815, her sister Ann in 1821, and her brother William in 1827.<sup>10</sup> During the 1830s, the three older Greening children all migrated to Worcester where John became a boot-and-shoe maker, presumably after serving an apprenticeship there. On 4 April 1841, while still a journeyman, he married Maria Kelly at the Church of St. John the Baptist, Claines, and he and his wife (a maker of straw hats by trade) then set themselves up in business in Silver Street, Worcester, where they were listed on census day 1841 and in Pigot's directory for 1842, possibly sharing a workshop with Francis Simmonds. Maria - the daughter of James Kelly, a Worcester leather stainer - had earlier conducted her business from her father's shop in nearby New Street. Between 1841 and 1845, John and Maria had three children, all christened at St. Martin's, Worcester - Clara and James both on 19 November 1843 and Charles Francis on 13 April 1845. By 1847, however, these two Greenings had disappeared from the current Worcester trade directory and we understand (but have not yet confirmed) that they emigrated. Later entries in Ann Elgar's scrapbook, now

kept at the Birthplace, mention two of their children: Charlie (C.F. Greening) and another daughter, Amelia (who married a Mr L.C. Oulmonn). It seems unlikely, therefore, that Elgar ever knew his Uncle John and Aunt Maria or any of his Greening cousins.

Little is known about Francis Simmonds - carpenter, victualler, and remover of pianofortes - apart from the information given in *Elgar O.M.* and in our booklet. Just when he took over *The Shades* is not clear, but it was probably in 1843.

According to Dr Young, Simmonds formed a durable liaison with Susanna Elgar, William's sister, when she came to Worcester - probably in 1845, the year that their brother Tom Elgar did. Be this as it may, Simmonds was already married to Elizabeth Greening and, after he died in December 1862 (aged only 50), she continued to run *The Shades* until her own death in September 1863 (aged 55)<sup>11</sup>, when her sister Ann was carrying her last child (Ellen Agnes). The business was then taken over by John Crumbie. Both Simmonds were buried from St. Martin's Church in Corn Market.

When in Worcester, Tom Elgar as a printer may have found work with his brother's employer Thomas Stratford - who, at his premises at 5 The Cross, included printing among his several business interests - or with one of the other printing firms in the City, perhaps with Ann Dighton at 53 High Street, Thomas Eaton and Son in College Street, or the Leicesters.

By 1847, however, Susanna at least was back in Charlton, Dover, where on 12 June she gave birth to a son who she named James Henry Elgar. Tom returned home too; there, on census day 1851, he was listed with his parents, sisters Susanna and Ann, and nephew James (now aged three). After the death of Henry Elgar Sr in 1860, at the age of 70, the Elgars left the High Street address. His widow Susanna went to live with her daughter Ann and her husband Charles T. Goodall, a solicitor's general clerk, at 82 Buckland Street (now part of London Road) in Buckland, Dover, where she and her grandson, the 13-year old James Elgar, were listed as lodgers on census day 1861. She died there in 1865 (aged 68) and was buried in the churchyard back at Charlton with her husband. Who James's father was remains a mystery, though one can perhaps guess! Neither have we discovered what happened to James's mother, Susanna Elgar. She was listed as a dressmaker in Charlton in 1851 and an advertisement, purportedly hers, appeared that year in the *Dover News* - the newsletter sent to Worcester from time to time by that irrepressible humorist Tom Elgar. If he is to be believed, Susanna had moved temporarily to 3 Peter Street, Deal, where she had assembled 'an extensive assortment of millinery and lace' after a visit to Paris. When a baby, James too had featured in one of Tom's pieces, his 'heroic conduct during the late gales at Charlton' in 1849 being praised and his 'trade' given as 'general dealer' supplying 'the very best prices for white and coloured rags'!<sup>12</sup>

Elgar's uncle Thomas was to return to Worcester at least once more. On 15 June 1858, at St. Martin's, aged 32, he married Maria Ann Holbert a 22-year-old local girl, the daughter of Edwart Holbert (a shoe-maker) and his wife Charlotte of Pheasant Street, just off Lowesmoor.<sup>13</sup>

Tom was then working as a printer in Kettering, Northamptonshire, but the subsequent history of these Elgars eludes us. Tom died in 1911 when well into his eighties and was buried at Croydon, Surrey. Whether he - or his nephew James - left any male descendants to carry on the Elgar name seems not to be known.

Another puzzle concerns the identity of the other members of Ann Greening's family who were living in the Worcester area in the 1840s. We believe that the 'Mr and Mrs Greening' referred to in most Elgar biographies were not Ann's unnamed brother and his wife, as usually stated or implied, but really her parents Joseph and Esther Greening.

They were then supposed still to be at Weston-under-Penyard in Herefordshire, where Joseph was already living at the time of their marriage - at Westbury-on-Severn, Gloucestershire, in 1806 - and where all their children had been born, as we have seen. In fact, the old Greenings were already established near Worcester by census day 1841, when the household consisted of Joseph (aged 61, described as an agricultural labourer), Esther (aged about 52), and a girl Martha (aged between 15 and 19 whose identity is uncertain). Indeed, Joseph had been a witness, along with Francis and Elizabeth Simmonds, at his son John's marriage in April of that year.

The Greenings did not live in Mealcheapen Street, as some writers on Elgar seem to think, but 'beyond Claines' - where W.H. Elgar is said to have lodged with them later for the years preceding his marriage to Ann Greening in Islington on 19 January 1848.

When preparing our booklet, we had been unable to discover exactly where in Claines the Greenings did live, having then failed to locate the sketch map that W.H. Elgar drew in 1845 from 'Worcester Cross to Mrs. Greenings' (see *Elgar O.M.*, p. 23), another difficulty being that the designation 'Claines' was used in a number of senses in those days - not only for the village just north of Worcester but also for the parish, district, and ward of that name (which extended into what is now the centre of Worcester, including The Tything and Britannia Square). From the 1841 census, however, it is clear that the Greenings lived between Northwick and Claines village - in one of a group of five or six dwellings, probably workmen's cottages, on the Ombersley Road. They may have moved subsequently for William's map showed them living further east, out at Chatley Green.

We now doubt if W.H. Elgar ever did lodge with Joseph and Esther so far outside Worcester. It seems much more likely that he remained in Worcester itself, either with the Simmondses at The Shades or above Ann Perkes's bakery at 7 High Street - from where he advertised in 1845 and where he was listed in 1847. The old Greenings themselves later moved into the City, Joseph (now retired) being described as a 'gentleman' on his daughter Ann's marriage certificate.

Elgar's grandfather Joseph Greening died in Worcester on 24 October 1848, aged 68, only nine days after the birth of Ann's first child (Henry John). The burial register gives his place of death as Lowesmoor (not 'Lowersmoor' as has been stated) but the exact address is not known for the death was not registered. He was the fourth of seven children born to William Greening and his wife Martha (maiden name Salcomb) between about 1768 and 1788, his parents having married at Elmore, Gloucestershire, in 1765. An entry in Ann Elgar's scrapbook commemorating his centenary shows that he had been born at Elmore on 22 August 1780. Elgar's grandmother Esther Greening died at the Elgars' home in College Precincts on 27 February 1852, aged 63, while her daughter Ann was carrying her second baby (Lucy Ann); the death was registered by an Elizabeth Woollons who had witnessed it.<sup>14</sup> Esther Greening had been born Hester Apperley in Westbury-on-Severn in about 1785, the second of five children and second daughter of John Apperley and his wife Ann (maiden name probably Mann) - 'Ester' being a further spelling of her christian name, as shown for example by her signature on her marriage entry. The Greenings were buried together in the graveyard of the Church of St. John the Baptist at Claines, where their headstone can still be seen bearing this verse, perhaps selected or even composed by Ann herself:

'Servant of God farewell, farewell/ Thy day of toil on earth is done/ The crown of glory won/ But thou sleepest in the dust/ Dear is the memory of the just'.

Joseph Greening seems never to have been a gentleman or yeoman farmer as implied by some writers on Elgar. Even though his widow described herself as a former farmer's wife in the 1851 Worcester census, he was still designated as a labourer towards the end of his life - both on the census, as we have seen, and on his son's marriage certificate.

He had been just a labourer in Herefordshire, as shown by the entries in the church registers when his children were christened - his daughter Ann in February 1822 at Hope Mansell, Herefordshire,<sup>15</sup> when the Greenings were living temporarily near by at Lea Bailey just across the border in Gloucestershire, and the others between 1808 and 1827 at Weston-under-Penyard, near the farm at Handley where Joseph worked for most of those years and where his children were all born. His marriage registration shows that, unlike his bride, he was then illiterate and could only make his mark.

There were other Greenings living in Worcester in those days but their relationship, if any, to Ann Elgar remains to be established. They included another John Greening, listed as a surgeon in Bridge Street from at least 1837 and later in The Tything until 1855, who also worked at the Worcester Dispensary in Bank Street. The presence in Worcester of kinfolk - even if only distantly related - may have been one reason why the family of Joseph and Esther Greening moved into the district in the first place, probably in the late 1820s or early 1830s.

Whether the whole family came together or the parents followed their three surviving children later is uncertain but it seems very likely that the old Greenings left Weston soon after the death of their youngest child William (aged only one year and nine months) in April 1829 - for the death of baby, Dr Eickhoff tells us, often acts as a strong inducement for the mother to move home. These Greenings had not been the only family of that name living in Herefordshire at the time; at Aston Ingham adjacent to Weston-under-Penyard, for example, a Daniel Greening (also a labourer) and his wife Esther produced three sons - Abraham, William, and Joseph - between 1808 and 1812. It is possible that this family then migrated to the Worcester area, where a later Daniel Greening was known to be living in the 1840s (see below). Examination of the Elmore church records by Dr Eickhoff suggests the older Daniel (of Aston Ingham) was either Joseph Greening's cousin or, more probably, his younger brother (born about 1782).

Indeed, there were Greenings in the Worcester area long before Joseph Greening and his family appeared there: a Frances Greening, for example, acted as a Catholic baptismal sponsor way back in 1808. Though Ann's parents were Anglicans, the names of four other Greenings appear in the contemporary Catholic archives as well as hers which raises the possibility that the origin of Elgar's Catholicism was due to more than an isolated act of conversion on the part of his mother.

They were: Daniel and Catherine Greening, whose daughter Charlotte was born in January 1845; Elizabeth Greening, married to Samuel Price, whose daughter Elizabeth was born in February 1842; and Joan Greening, married to John McCabe, whose six children were born between 1849 and 1862. All had their offspring baptised as Catholics. Like Ann Elgar, Joan McCabe was certainly a convert, being baptised conditionally at St. George's in 1850, and the baptismal evidence suggests that Elizabeth Price and perhaps Daniel or Catherine Greening were converts also. Were any of these other Greenings related to Ann Elgar and, if so (as Dr Eickhoff has suggested to us), was it through their influence that William Elgar obtained his position as Organist at St. George's? Possible - though there is as yet no conclusive evidence and, as we showed in our booklet, the role of the Leicester family in the appointment was paramount. One of Joan McCabe's four daughters (Mary Ann) did share a Joseph Thompson as baptismal sponsor with Lucy Ann Elgar, however, so it may be that Joan McCabe and perhaps Elizabeth Price too were cousins of Ann Elgar - though we have found no archive sources that definitely identify these other Worcester Greenings as Elgar relatives.

At No. 5 Mealcheapen Street - on the opposite side of the road to *The Shades* and next door to where the Austin's music shop was later - the schoolmaster and musician Samuel Benoni Brewer, another figure on the periphery of our story, had his second academy in the late 1860s. This was before he went to No. 2 Edgar Street, the former

home of the Elgars' old neighbours the Benbows (who we mentioned a number of times in our booklet).

The Brewers were yet another musical family of Worcester about which we would like to know more. S.B. Brewer (born about 1826), whose first school had been in Bransford Road in St John's, was for a time Organist of the Anglican chapel in the village of Whittington just south-east of Worcester. One of his sons, Benoni Brewer, studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London and established himself as a professor of music at his home town in the 1890s.

Cutting west through the north end of the Shambles and along Church Street, past St. Swithin's, we next hurried, with morning refreshments in mind, to High Street, its pedestrian precinct thronged with people. Here, we paused to look at the sites, on the west side, of two buildings with strong Elgar connections - No. 84 (the shop of William Weaver, boot-and-shoe maker) and No. 90 (the music salon of Thomas Stratford) - and to admire the nearby Guildhall, its frontage now fully restored and resplendent in the bright sunshine.

It was at 90 High Street that the Elgar story may be said really to have begun in Worcester, for Stratford was the man who had brought the young W.H. Elgar to the City in 1841 to work as his piano-tuner. His shop at No. 90 later became part of a large ironmongers but was demolished in the 1870s when the Guildhall was renovated, the site now being occupied by its north wing. William Weaver was the father of Helen and Frank Weaver (see part 1). The Weaver's shop, which Frank took over after his father's death in 1880, still survives and is now a modern boutique; as with many of the old buildings in High Street that have been converted to modern usages, the upper storeys remain much as they were in earlier times. It was here, in 1861, that Helen Weaver was born.

Across the road, at No. 46 High Street, was the establishment of James Marsden, another Worcester tradesman connected with W.H. Elgar during his earlier years in the City. After his marriage to Ann Greening in 1848, William had given Marsden's address, as well as his own and that of the Leicesters, as a place where he could be contacted by his tuning customers.

James Marsden had taken over the business, but not the premises, of James D'Egville in the mid-1840s. As well as selling books, stationery, and prints, and running a lending library, he had a comprehensive music department with 'an immense stock of all the favourite productions of ancient and modern masters' and musical 'instruments and requisites of all kinds ... sold at fair prices, and liberal discount allowed to professors'. He ceased trading between 1851 and 1855, so offered no later competition for Elgar Brothers. In his last years in Worcester, Elgar would have known the shop as a tea-room.

Further north from No. 46 High Street, at No. 54 (now Barclay's Bank) on the corner with Church Street, was the music shop and piano 'warehouse' of Edward J. Spark who had set up his business there by the early 1870s.

We did not mention Spark in our booklet as he came into prominence in Worcester musical circles only after the main years (1841-1866) covered there. Of Elgar's biographers, only Dr Moore mentions him. Born in about 1830 at Exeter in Devon, Spark appears to have been remarkably active, not only running an increasingly prosperous music business and concert agency, which seriously competed with Elgar Brothers (even on the piano-tuning side), but engaging in many other musical pursuits. He was a professor of singing and the pianoforte, for example, and, at one time or another in the 1870s and 80s when the young Elgar was finding his own musical feet, Honorary Musical Director of the Worcester Amateur Vocal

Union (founded 1873, for male voices only), on the management committees of the Worcester Musical Society and the Worcester Amateur Dramatic and Musical Association, Agent for the Worcester Church Choral Society, Secretary of the Church Extension Society, Organist and Choirmaster of Holy Trinity Church (Shrub Hill) and later of St. Martin's Church (Corn Market), and Manager of the Music Hall - where his 'high class subscription concerts' featured 'some of the most eminent vocal and instrumental artistes of the day'. He lodged for a while at No. 1 College Yard before moving, in the late 1870s, to 20 The Tything and, many years later, to Bromwich Lane in St John's. The business, as Spark & Co. also moved eventually (in the present century) to 89 High Street next to the Guildhall; later (and now) an electricity showroom, this shop will be remembered as the Ticket Office of the Three Choirs in Worcester into the late 1920s or 30s, long after Spark himself had died.

Much further south along High Street, we settled ourselves in the window of Hodson's cafe nearly opposite where the Elgar Brothers' music shop at No. 10 used to be. Like that of the Leicester's shop at No. 6, and the whole block of old buildings (Nos 1-21) on that side of the road between the former Lich Street and Pump Street, the site of No 10 is now occupied by a modern shopping and hotel precinct, including the greatly extended store of Russell and Dorrell - an old Worcester firm, founded by George Russell at No. 18 in about 1840, which has confined for many years just to Nos 17-19. On census day 1881, the Elgar household at No. 10 consisted of: William Elgar then aged 59, 'professor of music'; his wife Ann (58); daughter Lucy (28), still living at home but soon to be married; son Frank (19), 'musician'; and daughter Dott (17) - also Karl Bammert (21), a watchmaker born at Baden, Germany, who was either visiting or boarding there, and the family servant Mathilda Knott (35). Four doors along at the Leicester's that same evening were: William Leicester (74), now retired as a printer; his wife Emma (57); and his three grown-up and still unmarried children - William Bernard (27) a master printer, Alphonsa Mary (29) who worked as a stationery assistant in the shop, and Hubert Aloysius (26) a chartered accountant.

The two Leicester brothers, along with Frank and Edward Elgar and Frank Exton (about whom we have as yet discovered little) were members of the quintet of Catholic young men for which Elgar wrote his early wind pieces. The band seems not to have had a name though one of Elgar's biographers refers to them as the 'Waits'. This, however, was the name originally given to the municipal musicians that used to perform on civic occasions, being later transferred, after their disbandment, to those private individuals who played from door to door in the streets at Christmas time. Together with Charlie Pipe, Frank Exton, Frank Weaver, the Leicesters, and other friends, the young Elgar was a member of such a band of players for which he chose the music - 'Intermezzo or whatnot from Hymn of Praise, without parts', the Elgar ledger notes tell us.<sup>16</sup> The music stands caused problems as they had to be as light as possible for carrying; when a extra gust of wind blew them over one night on the top of Rainbow Hill, only the 'real musicians' could continue. Playing at 2 a.m. another night by appointment 'for some ladies who admired E. in Henwick Road, they evidently 'gave satisfaction as ladies went later to the WHE's shop'. A cornet was introduced to the band but was found too loud for the combination - so 'E. slipped a cork in unbeknownst'. There appear, then, to have been two groups with which Elgar was associated. Neither should be confused with a third: 'The Brothers Wind', a trio consisting of Frank Elgar and his friends Fred Griffiths and C. Singleton Graves, whose photograph is to be seen at The Birthplace. Frank, a gifted oboist and a respected musician and teacher in Worcester for most of his active life, later also formed and conducted the Worcester Civic Military Band as well as taking an instrumental class at the Victoria Institute in Sansome Walk for some years.

The Leicester's business at 6 High Street was already well-established when W.H. Elgar came to Worcester. Old William Leicester (born about 1785, died 1860) then lived over the shop, the family also consisting of his wife Charlotte (born about 1784, died 1860) and four children - William (born 1806), Charlotte (born 1808, died 1865), John Harvey



(born 1822), and Emma Mary (born about 1830); two other children, both girls (born 1813 and 1817), died in infancy.

On the death of their father, the two brothers ran the business together for a while; William, the father of William Bernard and Hubert, took over the printing side and John (W.H. Elgar's friend) the book side until their partnership was dissolved in 1865. John, in whom we are particularly interested, seems to have left Worcester soon after. In 1857, William and his sister Charlotte - not his mother as we supposed - had been the baptismal sponsors or godparents of Edward Elgar. The business at 6 High Street came finally into the hands of W.B. Leicester who went on living above the shop for some years, even after his marriage to Rose Munn in 1886, moving later to Bromwich Road in St John's. His brother Hubert, however, trained as an accountant and eventually set up his own thriving business in Worcester where he became a distinguished civic figure as well as playing a prominent part in the musical life of the City. For many years, he was Choirmaster at St. George's. His youngest son Edward Dering Leicester (born in 1902) had Elgar as his godfather.

Hodson's restaurant is on or near the site of the original No. 101 High Street where, as we described in our booklet, the Elgars' rival Charles Baldwyn had his business. The whole street frontage at this point, however, is now a modern one and little if anything of the old buildings remain. Nos 98 and 98½, a little further north along the road towards Fish Street, where the Baldwins has their business earlier, have survived however. On census day 1851, old John Baldwyn, then aged 70 and described as a music seller, still lived over No. 98½ with his wife Ann (60) and two of their three sons - George Clifford (32), 'musician', and Henry (20), 'harpist'. We assume that the eldest son, Charles - born in Droitwich in about 1812 and W.H. Elgar's predecessor as Organist and Choirmaster at Saint George's - was then abroad in America making his fortune (see *The Elgars*), and the daughters Louisa (born 1814), Maria (1815), Fanny (1821), and Emma (1823) all married and gone from home.

When John Baldwyn retired, it was his eldest son George - not Charles as we stated in our booklet - who first took over the business at no 98½ High Street, where he was listed in 1854, 1855, and 1860. Charles succeeded him in 1860 and continued until about 1880, first at No. 98½ and then at No. 101 - where he was living on census day 1871, looked after by his housekeeper Emma Oates; he died of poisoning on Jersey in 1883. The business passed next into the hands of William Orme who appointed Walter W. Harris as his manager. Harris lived above the shop for many years and eventually took over in his own right. Together with E.J. Spark and the Austins, Harris provided Elgar Brothers with their main competition throughout the rest of the century and into the next. Incidentally, it may not have been until Harris took over that No. 101 High Street became known as Cecilia House and the alley between the shop and *The Stationer's Arms* next door called, retrospectively, Baldwyn's Passage. It would appear that Henry Baldwyn ceased to have anything to do with the shops at 98½ and 101 High Street after Charles took over, setting himself up elsewhere in a series of temporary shops. For a while, Henry conducted his business from No. 10 High Street where he was listed in 1863 (see *The Elgars*); we had thought that Elgar Brothers had merely provided him with working accommodation at their shop but his diary<sup>17</sup> records that, after returning from a visit to Dover on 13 November 1862, he and his family went to live at the 'back of 10 High Street' - presumably in the cottage there.

(To be continued)

7 See Hubert Leicester, *Forgotten Worcester*, 1930.

8 Details from the Dover censuses were kindly supplied by Mrs Joan Brailsford.

9 This chart was compiled by Richard C. Powell and Dora M. Powell ('Dorabella') and drawn by their son Claud Powell.

10 Information from the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire church records was kindly supplied by Dr L.F.W. Eickhoff who also drew our attention to the Greening entries in the Roman Catholic records for Worcester. We also consulted *The International Genealogical Index*, 1981, for these and other counties.

11 The dates of death of Francis and Elizabeth Simmonds were kindly supplied by Mr A.E. Daniels. Mr Daniels has been making his own enquiries into the genealogy of the Elgar and Greening families.

12 All this taken as certain fact in the article by Stanley Godman mentioned in Part 1 (see Note 1).

13 The details of Thomas Elgar's marriage were kindly checked for us by Mr Daniels.

14 The dates given in *Elgar O.M.* (footnote, p. 253) - 29 October 1848 for Joseph Greening and 2 March 1852 for Esther - are those of burial.

15 See also *Edward Elgar: His Life and Music* by Diana M. McVeagh, 1955, p.2.

16 Details of these notes are given in *The Elgars of Worcester*, written by Carice Elgar Blake, they were probably an early draft of material obtained from Hubert Leicester and other sources (see also *Moore's Life*).

17 Henry Baldwyn's diary is now in the possession of Rodney Baldwyn who has kindly sent us extracts.

. . .

The Editor regrets that owing to a setting error, for which he takes full responsibility, and which was not the fault of the authors, the last pages of part I of their article (JOURNAL, May 1985) were incorrectly assembled. The sequence starting with the last section on p.9 (about the Austins) and ending with the second section on p.11 (St. George's Church) should have followed the first section on p.13 (Arboretum Road). My apologies to all readers, and especially to the authors.

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

8 Sept.	Elegy for Strings <i>Rutland Sinfonia/Collett</i>	Oakham Church, Rutland, 7.30 p.m.
21 Sept.	All English Concert, including the Coronation Ode <i>Somerset Youth Choir and Concert Band/Meredith Davies</i>	Wells Cathedral
13 Oct.	Cello Concerto <i>Orch/C Phelps, and Caroline Dale</i>	Thaxted Church, Essex, 7.30 p.m.
15 Oct.	Cockaigne Overture; Violin Concerto; Enigma Variations <i>YMSO/Blair, with B Griffiths</i>	Royal Festival Hall, South Bank
20 Oct.	Violin Concerto <i>LPO/Handley, and Ernst Kovacic</i>	St. Andrews Hall, Norwich, 5.30 p.m.
21 Oct.	The Kingdom <i>London Choral Society/Groves</i>	Royal Festival Hall, South Bank

2 Nov.	Sanguine Fan Ballet Music <i>Rutland Sinfonia/Collett</i>	Uppingham School Hall, Rutland, 7.30 p.m.
3 Nov.	King Olaf <i>Full details on another page</i>	Royal Festival Hall, South Bank, 7.30 p.m.
4 Nov.	The Apostles <i>Bach Choir/Willcocks</i>	Royal Festival Hall, South Bank
9 Nov.	Enigma Variations <i>Guildford PO/Handley</i>	Guildford Civic Hall, Surrey, 7.45 p.m. Fuller details and ticket information from R A Farrow (Guildford 575274)
14 Nov.	The Music Makers; Coronation Ode <i>Philomusica of Gloucestershire and Worcester (500th concert)</i>	Gloucester Cathedral, 7.30 p.m.
16 Nov.	The Dream of Gerontius <i>Tewkesbury and Kidderminster Choral Societies, Gloucester Concert Orchestra/Fox</i>	Tewkesbury Abbey, 7.30 p.m.
20 Nov.	The Spirit of England <i>NELP Chorus/M Kibblewhite</i>	Royal Festival Hall, South Bank
22 Nov.	In the South <i>SNO/Seaman</i>	Usher Hall, Edinburgh
23 Nov.	In the South <i>SNO/Seaman</i>	City Hall, Glasgow
23 Nov.	The Dream of Gerontius <i>Kidderminster Choral Society/Worcester Sinfonia/Millington, B Rayner Cook, J Minchinson, Maureen Guy</i>	Kidderminster Town Hall, 7.30 p.m.
28 Nov.	Symphony No 1 <i>Bournemouth SO/Bryden Thomson</i>	Colston Hall, Bristol, 7.30 p.m.
4 Dec.	Introduction and Allegro; Cello Concerto; Serenade for Strings; Enigma Variations <i>Philharmonia/Sinopoli, and Lyn Harrell</i>	Royal Festival Hall, South Bank

7 Dec.	The Dream of Gerontius <i>Wells Cathedral Choir, Oratorio Choir and Orchestra/Crossland, Ian Caddy, David Johnston, Margaret Kingsley</i>	Wells Cathedral
13 Dec.	Symphony No 1 and Beethoven's Violin Concerto <i>Birmingham School of Music/Seaman, and Nigel Kennedy</i>	Adrian Boult Hall, Birmingham, 7.30 p.m.

We suggest that readers check all times and details which we believe to be correct at time of going to press. Concerts often suffer from changes! We appreciate receiving all concert information and thank those who continue to keep us informed.

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## BOOK REVIEW

Cleveland-Peck, Patricia, *ed.*, *The Cello and the Nightingales: the autobiography of Beatrice Harrison.*

*John Murray, 1985. £10.95*

Beatrice Harrison is best known to Elgarians as an early performer of the *Cello Concerto* (which of course she twice recorded with the composer), and to the world at large as the lady who played her cello to the nightingales and was broadcast doing it by the BBC.

Patricia Cleveland-Peck intended to write her own biography of Beatrice and her three sisters (the violinists May and Margaret and the singer Monica) when the script of this autobiography was produced as evidence. Patricia Cleveland-Peck courageously decided that this narrative was too important to be broken up and incorporated into something larger, and should be allowed to stand on its own. So she has carefully edited it and filled in lacunae with her own explanations and with entries from Beatrice's diary and other sources, such as letters (these additions being in a different typeface).

The result is highly successful. One is hardly conscious of the editor at all and Beatrice's lively prose is startlingly evocative of a era now past. What pervades the whole book is the remarkable unity of the family; the sisters worked together frequently, never married, and Beatrice at least was visibly affected for the rest of her life by the death of her mother ('The inspiration of my music and all things beautiful.')

Beatrice's future was sealed when, at the age of seventeen, and to the disgust of the Kaiser ('An English girl, never. For golf perhaps, but music, no!'), she won the coveted Mendelssohn Prize in Berlin, and during her early career was, with May, afforded almost pop-star status - not least because of their self-evident attractiveness. Beatrice received (but, for the sake of her music, declined) many offers of marriage from both total strangers to the much-married Eugen d'Albert (to the glee of Nikisch, see page 87!), and the photographs of Beatrice as a young woman leave no doubt as to why!

There are many interesting revelations: the rehabilitation, c.1910 (with May) of the then virtually unknown Brahms Double Concerto (59 performances on tour in Europe), the last-minute decision not to return from the U.S.A. on the 'Lusitania', life in Europe and Russia before the First World War, the friendship with Princess Victoria, the affection engendered by the nightingale broadcasts (and the open-houses which followed) - and by her cello, the magnificent 1739 Pietro Guarneri. 'Glorious Pietro' assumes the persona of another member of the family - along with the sixteen scotties (from which came Elgar's Juno), several other dogs and Margaret's menagerie of tortoises, fish and birds.

Though Beatrice Harrison wrote this autobiography towards the end of her life (she died in 1965) there is a schoolgirlish zest and naivety which vividly captures the events she recalls and the people she meets. Elgar and Delius feature prominently and, Patricia Cleveland-Peck records, after her first Queen's Hall performance of the Elgar, with the composer conducting, she always considered that it brought her luck if (as on that occasion) she wore blue knickers when playing that Concerto!

G.P.H

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## AN ELGAR SOCIETY PUBLICATION

The Elgars of Worcester, by K.E.L. and Marion Simmons

A remarkable piece of original Elgar research which has added new knowledge to all accounts of the early days of the Elgar family in Worcester, together with details, and a photograph, of an Elgar house which had previously been overlooked.

Price to members: £1.50 *post free*

Obtainable from the Editor of the JOURNAL. Cheques should be made payable to The Elgar Society.

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## RECORD REVIEWS

Elgar: Symphony No 1 in A flat

*BBC Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Sir Colin Davis*  
RCA RL 70748

Despite his persuasive advocacy of certain of the larger works of Britten and Tippett, Colin Davis has recorded comparatively few British works, and his only previous major Elgar recording was his very fine *Variations*, made twenty years ago, which I remember Jerrold Northrop Moore picked as his favourite version on a Saturday morning Radio Three record review programme some years ago.

This new recording of the First Symphony is therefore most welcome. It stands apart from all other versions, having been made at a live performance at the Royal Albert Hall in May this year. The occasion was a concert in aid of Ethiopian and Sudanese famine relief, and the record is also being sold in aid of these charities. Direct comparison with rival versions would therefore be invidious. Suffice it to say that no one buying this record will be disappointed. Davis gives the symphony a dramatic, vivid colourful interpretation, at times a trifle hard-driven, but not lacking in flexibility or natural Elgarian 'ebb and flow'. My only slight quibble is that some of the moments of repose in the music might have been left to speak for themselves, with rather less 'underlining'.

The orchestral playing is magnificent: there are occasional moments of uncertain ensemble which more rehearsal time would have eliminated - but the involvement and spontaneity which comes with a live performance is splendidly conveyed. The recording was made by BBC engineers, and it has all the richness and atmosphere we have come to expect from live broadcasts from this hall. The audience is reasonably unobtrusive - although in some quiet moments, such as the magical end to the slow movement, there is plenty of evidence that this year the winter bronchial infections were with us much longer than usual.

A record which should be in the collection of any Elgar lover - as an excellent alternative version of the First Symphony, as a souvenir of a special occasion - and as our own small contribution to the relief of one of the most catastrophic human tragedies of modern times.

G.H.L.

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Elgar: Cello Concerto, opus 85  
Walton: Concerto for Cello and Orchestra

*Yo-Yo Ma, cello, with the London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Andre Previn  
CBS 'Masterworks' IM 39541*

Yo-Yo Ma won the hearts of all lovers of British music with his recording of the Finzi concerto a few years ago. The promise of that early excursion into the world of British music is more than fulfilled by this new disc of our two best known cello concerti.

These two works have more in common than is immediately apparent. The composers were of similar age at the time of the first performances (Elgar was 62, Walton 55), and despite occasional bursts of the old aggressive energy, one can see in retrospect that Walton, too, was entering a gentler 'autumnal' creative phase. Yo-Yo Ma is a superb technician (his rhythmic clarity in the scherzo of the Elgar concerto matches that of Tortelier - although still not equalling that of the unique Jacqueline du Pre), but above all he is a wonderfully sensitive musician. He seems to have acquired an unusual degree of understanding of the meaning of both these apparently straightforward but elusive works and, better than most, Yo-Yo Ma knows when it is inappropriate to dominate the texture of the music, being willing to take a subsidiary role when appropriate in a manner rare amongst instrumental virtuosi.

On the other hand, his playing has great intensity - but it all comes naturally from within

the music, without a trace of exaggeration, by the subtlest changes of tone colour. Take, for example, the slow movement of the Elgar concerto. This he plays with complete simplicity and directness, without a trace of sentimentality. The result is far more moving than many more openly 'expressive' interpretations. My only interpretative quibble as far as the Elgar is concerned involves the first movement, where perhaps the first and second subjects might have been a little more strongly contrasted, thus avoiding a slight feeling of blandness (once again, du Pre and Barbirolli illustrate exactly what I mean).

Nevertheless I feel sure that this is destined to become a 'classic' amongst Elgar recordings. The Walton is equally fine. Andre Previn is already respected as perhaps the supreme Walton interpreter of modern times. His Elgar track has not been so impressive (his *Variations* for HMV, issued five years ago, was disappointingly undercharacterised). Here he more than makes amends, handling the orchestral work with sensitivity and genuine understanding of the idiom. His moulding of the phrasing and other interpretative detail to match the soloist is a joy to hear. He is helped by outstandingly fine recorded sound (engineered at Walthamstow Town Hall by a Decca team). The balance is ideal and there is no rival version where the orchestral detail is so clearly revealed.

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**WANTED**, for archival purposes, a good copy of the 1955 Argo recording of the *Violin Sonata and String Quartet* (RG 49). Also, a copy of Lalla Vandervelde's book *Monarchs and Millionaires*. Details to Raymond Monk, 19 Severn Street, Leicester LE2 0NN. Tel: (0533) 544613. Please help!

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## NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES...

LONDON BRANCH reports that despite a variety of alarums ranging from a broken stylus to a threat of there being no audio equipment at all at the final meeting, we moved triumphantly to the end of the 'Aspects of Elgar' symposium via three superb contributions. Michael Oliver's "Elgar's Legacy" in March, Jerrold Northrop Moore's "Elgar the Executant" in May, and Diana McVeagh's "Recapitulation and Finale" in June. The project conceived over three years ago had, despite all forebodings, gone almost precisely as planned. All our eminent speakers fulfilled their engagements and our debt to them is enormous. Sixteen Elgarian aspects have been looked at in a broadly chronological sequence and it has been an enriching experience. But there is still plenty to say, since Elgar's fascination is inexhaustible, and the Branch is determined to press on next season in no mood of anti-climax.

Diana McVeagh's talk was preceded by the AGM, at which Michael Plant was elected to the committee as replacement for Martin Passande whose turn it was to retire. Meetings recommence at Imperial College on October 14th when Garry Humphreys will sing, among other items, "The Fringes of the Fleet". A social get-together, followed by an auction of Elgariana, will ensue.

The YORKSHIRE BRANCH continues to hold its own, reports their Hon. Secretary. Not being the biggest branch we have, to coin a phrase from the advertising world, to try

harder! This we certainly do. Although (writing in mid-July) our next Season's programme still needs its finishing touches, we already have positive arrangements for visits from Diana McVeagh, Barry Sterndale Bennett and Delius Society Chairman, Rodney Meadows. The new season will commence on September 16th with a talk on "Elgar and Bantock" by Ron Bleach, Secretary of both the Bantock Society and our own SW branch. (Wearing his *third* hat, as secretary of Bristol Gramophone Society, Ron will talk to Horsforth Gramophone Society on September 18th on Sir Thomas Beecham.) On September 30th the Yorkshire Branch sponsors another recital on the Schultze organ at St. Bartholomew's Church, Leeds, when the organist will be Linda Carrington, of Lytham St. Annes.

The 1984/5 Season concluded in good style with well-researched talks by our own members, Robert Seager and Lance Tufnell, and finally, the Annual Dinner, when twenty-two members - more than three quarters of our strength - met at the Falcon Manor Hotel in Settle, a town well-known to Elgar. The same number are expected to attend a summer social evening on July 29th at the Secretary's home.

WEST MIDLANDS Branch reports that the leaflet to accompany the extension of the Elgar Trail to Hereford will *not* now be published until 1986, due to lack of funds. The leaflet will eventually be available from the Hereford Tourist Office. Pat Soper, who cares for the Elgar graves, reports that the signposts indicating the graves have now been renovated and repainted. Members may like to be reminded that the Society pays for such work to be done.

The Branch Autumn programme begins on Sept. 14th at 2.30 p.m. when Margaret Elgar & John Warren will be presenting a light-hearted quiz interspersed with live music at the Stables, Albany Terrace, Worcester. On Oct. 26th at 7.30 p.m. Sir Vivian Dunn will talk on 'The Elgar I and Others Knew'. This will be held in the Beacon Room, Malvern Centre for Adult Education, Albert Road North. Nov. 16th sees a visit by Tony Cross and George Wallis to present 'Elgar Country' at the Primary School, Martley, at 2.30 p.m.

EAST ANGLIA. It was with great sorrow that Branch members learned that their genial and much respected former Chairman, Bernard Ward, died on May 3rd after a long illness. A founder member of the Branch, and ever a staunch and devoted champion of Elgar's music, he will long be remembered with affection - and the effects of his kindly hand on the tiller of Branch affairs, with gratitude. (An appreciation of Bernard by former Branch Secretary Barry Marsh appears on another page in this Journal.)

Illustrated talks by Diana McVeagh (on "Elgar Now") and Dr. Jerrold Northrop Moore, with his personal analysis and interpretation of the meaning of the *Violin Concerto*, took place in April and May, respectively; they were gratifyingly well attended and, as always with these speakers, highly enjoyable. (*The Violin Concerto*, incidentally, features in the final concert of this year's Norfolk and Norwich Triennial Festival, and the Branch will be well represented.) Informality ruled at the June "Members' Evening", when favourite snippets from records and tapes were presented and played, and biographical passages read, by individual members (all strictly Elgar only, of course!)

With the approach of Autumn, the Branch looks forward to a visit from Dr. Percy Young in September, at a joint meeting with the Norwich Gramophone Society, to speak on "Elgar's Operatic Aspirations", and in October to Jack and Vivienne McKenzie's reminiscences of their curatorship at the Birthplace. Another Members' Evening follows in November (transferred, experimentally, from a Summer slot), and the year ends with the traditional Christmas dinner.



SOUTH WALES was still making final arrangements when we went to press but tentatively the programme is October: Ian Parrott on 'Elgar and Wales', January: A Joint Meeting with the Cardiff Gramophone Society. February: AGM in Swansea. March: Lecture/recital of Elgar's Violin Music in Llanelli. May: An Elgar Day-School in Swansea. It has been decided to hold the bulk of future meetings in Swansea as this seems to bring the larger attendances. Further details of meetings and any extra events will be in the branch newsletter in due course, and new members are welcome. Secretary's address on the back cover.

SOUTH WEST Branch, which meets at Bristol, has a full programme of meetings. We learn from Ron Bleach that the branch continues to flourish, with a loyal membership and occasional visitors all helping to make meetings a success. Last season ended with the AGM at which the present officers and committee were re-elected for a further year. After a food and wine social members listened to the Groves recording of *The Black Knight*. There was a good turn-out for the Bristol Chamber Orchestra concert, which was relayed to all the hospitals in the area. Thus we were able to enjoy the music while others less fortunate were able to share the experience.

We recommence on Sept. 21st when Dennis Clark, of the Yorkshire Branch, gives an illustrated talk on Fred Gaisberg, the HMV record producer friend of Elgar. On October 26th Terry Barfoot will talk about the Elgar Symphonies. Our Journal editor, Ronald Taylor, makes a very welcome return on November 23rd, with an illustrated talk about Elgar and Shaw. In addition we have assembled an interesting series of monthly programmes from January to June 1986. We have arranged a joint meeting with the Delius Society to be held in the Octagon, Frenchay, Bristol, on either the 19th or 26th April 1986, when Stephen Lloyd will talk on Elgar and Delius. The Delius Society hope to start a branch here in Bristol, which will serve the South West, just as we do. Any Society member is welcome at any of our meetings, but of course we would really like you to join the branch!

NORTH WEST. The 1985-6 season will be starting on Saturday, October 5th, with a talk by Charles Myers of Clitheroe. By this time members should have received cyclo-styled copies of the programme. The printed cards will be available to members at the first meeting.

May we remind you that John and Gwenan Weir will be resigning the Branch Secretaryship at the 1986 AGM. They will be continuing in office until the end of that season, and hope to have most if not all of the 1986-87 programme ready at that time, so as to make the take over for the new secretary as smooth as possible. There has not been any reaction to the request for offers. It would be a tragedy if, now the Branch is settling in Manchester, it would be forced to close for lack of a Secretary. Please think carefully whether you could fulfil the need, and get in touch.

## LETTERS

From W. Nicol

*Without wishing to offend the sensibilities of Elgar Society members, something all too easily done I've discovered, may I suggest the scope of the JOURNAL should be widened to cover other musical subjects, while of course retaining the life and work of Elgar himself as central.*

There must surely be a limit to the number of people whose association with Elgar warrants an article - perhaps someone one day will write an article "Elgar and the man who collected tickets at Worcester Railway Station" - or the number of nature rambles through Elgar country we can be subjected to. My love of Elgar's music is not to the exclusion of all else. There are other English composers - Finzi, Bridge, Ireland, or Coleridge-Taylor who are part of a tradition, at the head of which stands Elgar himself. The Elgar Society has many foreign members who might like to submit articles on their national composers. It would take time, but that shouldn't prevent us trying.

\*\*\*Editor's note: Mr. Nicol's letter has some provocative points, but we are the Elgar Society and at the moment we are hard put to it to get in all the information on Elgar's life and times, as well as his music(!), which is sent in. We do reject articles which have only a slight bearing on our central interest, just as we also reject articles which merely repeat what is already available in printed form. However, a glance back at our issues over eight years will show that other composers have had frequent mention and study.

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From Francis O'Gorman

In your article Elgar's Little Joke you quote a rather formidable-looking equation. In actual fact it really is very simple. Dr Young informs us in Elgar O.M. that Elgar's chemistry experiments usually resulted in noisome smells & untoward explosions. Well, if Elgar's chemistry was bad then his mathematics are worse.

You will note first of all that the quantity  $(1-b^2)/4a$  does not possess a numerator (a number above) and this automatically means that the result would be infinity for you are attempting to divide nothing by something. If this is not enough to drive the equation into a cul-de-sac then the next quantity certainly will be:  $b^2 + 2a^2$  divided by itself will result in the same as dividing, say, 10 by 10, or 168 by 168, i.e. 1. Elgar's equation therefore involves the multiplication of infinity by one - a ludicrous concept.

Thus the equation is completely unworkable even before any numbers are substituted for "X". Perhaps Elgar should have stuck to metronome markings!

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From A.E. Daniels

I have enjoyed reading your recent publication 'The Elgars of Worcester' by K.E.L. and Marion Simmons, which is the result of much patient investigation.

The Elgar story has produced several co-incidences in my own life. Firstly, I lived next door to Lucy and her husband Charles Pipe about 1916-20 and I have pleasant memories of them. Lucy was deaf and seldom ventured out of the house. Charles was a little round man who liked his cigar but he always left the unfinished end on the window-sill before entering his home.

When looking through the log-book of the school where I was headmaster for 25 years I came upon many entries by Winifred Norbury (Variation no.8); she lived at Leigh and I was at Leigh School. She was school correspondent 1912-1916, a liaison officer with the Education Authority. I once took French conversation lessons at no.11 Britannia Square, not knowing that Edward had many years before attended there at Miss

Walsh's school and received violin lessons. The daughter of the house - Ann - was to become the wife of the sculptor of the Elgar statue. Quite a string of coincidences! Now I live within sight of the Hospital where Edward was to have his first appointment as bandmaster.

Having lived in Claines for many years I was intrigued to learn that the Greenings moved to Ombersley Road, Northwick, Claines (Census 1841) from Hereford, but I could not reconcile the fact that Ann - Edward's mother - travelled daily to The Shades Hotel in Worcester, some four miles, and there were no bicycles or public transport. Several biographies say she was staying with her brother in Claines, but this was not so!\*\*

Ann's brother John was married at Claines Church, and her mother and father are buried at Claines Church. There is a headstone there. To add to the co-incidences my wife and I were married at Claines Church, our daughter was baptised there, and also she married there. My wife's great great grandfather was Sexton and Parish Clerk there for 47 years, and so too was her great grandfather Parish Clerk for 35 years (when the Greening burials took place). I don't think Ann would have attended the parish school as this was built in 1841, unless there was an earlier school.

\*\*See part II of "A Walk round the Elgars' Worcester"

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From Dr. L. Eickhoff

On his birthday this year, in the house of his birth, I saw, in its new resting place, Elgar's Froissart Overture, pages with neat, precise staves ruled by Alice and covered with myriads of his spiders, those complicated hieroglyphics of sounds appropriate - and how appropriate! - for each orchestral section.

I gazed and I thought how amazing it was that whereas a bride could sign herself surely as "Ester Apperley", her husband, labourer Joseph Greening, illiterate nonentity of Weston-under-Penyard, could only make his fading mark after their wedding on 26 May 1806: yet 84 years later, Froissart proved that his grandson could not only write his name but music of enduring quality: and was making his mark, his indelible mark, on the musical world and in Society. Fourteen years further on he would make his mark royally as a knight. From humble labourer, unknown and illiterate, to knight most memorable, and skilled in all forms of penmanship, in less than a century!

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From Garry Humphreys

Dominic Guyver must not be allowed to get away with perpetuating the misunderstanding (Journal, May 1985, p.15) that Edward German was born Edward German Jones. He was not.

His real name was German Edward Jones, as recourse to "The New Grove", "The New Oxford Companion to Music", "The Oxford Dictionary of Music" and many (though, alas, not all) other standard reference books will show. In a letter on the same subject in "The Musical Times," June 1985 (p.333), Brenda M. Law tells us that the Registrar-General's records provide further confirmation.

# THE ELGAR SOCIETY

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

**ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION; £4.** Family membership is available if only one Journal is received per family: 2 members per family £5: 3 members £6: 4 members £7. Branch members pay their branch subscription in addition to the basic amount. Applications for membership should be sent to the Hon. Secretary, Andrew Neill, 17 Earlsfield Road, Wandsworth Common, London, SW18 3DB. Renewal of subscriptions, due January 1st, should be made to the Hon. Treasurer, David Morris, 125 Cleveland Road, Ealing, London W13 0EN

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