

# The Elgar Society JOURNAL



JANUARY

1986

# Contents

	Page
Editorial	3
News Items and International News	4
Articles	
A Walk around the Elgars' Worcester. Pt III	8
Elgar and Eric Coates	20
'Moriah' and the Introduction and Allegro	23
Concert Diary	25
Record & Book Reviews	26
Branch News	29
Letters	31
Subscription Details	32

.....

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

.....

The cover portrait is reproduced by kind permission of RADIO TIMES

---

ELGAR SOCIETY JOURNAL

ISSN 0143-1269

# The Elgar Society Journal

104 CRESCENT ROAD, NEW BARNET, HERTS. EN4 9RJ

01-440 2651

Vol. 4, no.4

January 1986

## EDITORIAL

The publication of so many important works on British music in general, and on Elgar in particular - especially Jerrold Northrop Moore's definitive work - may persuade many people that there is little else to say. However, a glance through the pages of the last few issues of the Journal will show that there is still quite a lot to examine and research. The investigations into nineteenth century Worcester, and the Elgars' forbears, by Dr & Mrs. Simmons shows that original research can still be important. Over the years we have often noted individual efforts, and have published some of their findings. However, some of our previous appeals for help and information have not been successful, so I think it a suitable moment to repeat some of these appeals, or to indicate where new researches are proceeding. Any help members can give would be much appreciated, and will be passed on to the researchers concerned. But please remember it is *original information* we need - we do have access to printed books, though local newspapers and journals, particularly before Elgar's death, are often of great help. What we need are letters, diary notes, hand-written accounts, reviews of local events, and photographs. All such material would, of course, be treated with the utmost care.

Here then are some of the matters on which research continues:

Transcriptions of Elgar's music (not already listed by P.L. Scowcroft in our pages); Morecambe Festivals, and material on Canon Gorton (*especially* any photographs taken at the Festivals in Edwardian times); Elgar's connection with Stratford on Avon; The Elgar family at Dover; early recordings of Elgar's music (but wait until you have examined the revised Elgar Discography first!); any ms. material on Elgar's broadcasts, or early broadcasts in the 1920s of his music by *any* artist. (In this respect we need to know the whereabouts of official BBC programme archives from Birmingham, Cardiff, Newcastle, Edinburgh, and Aberdeen - they are *not* in the BBC Archives); any unpublished photographs of Elgar or his close friends, and especially any amateur or professional cine-film (did *no-one* take cine-film of Shaw and Elgar at those Malvern Festivals?)

Your help will be greatly appreciated by all concerned, and will add to the sum total of our knowledge.

RONALD TAYLOR  
Editor

## NEWS ITEMS

Carol Holt has been appointed Hon. Secretary of the Society in succession to Andrew Neill. Mrs. Holt has considerable experience of musical matters and has been very active in the West Midlands branch for some years. We welcome her to office, and tender our very best wishes for a successful tenure. The appointment will, of course, need to be confirmed at the next Annual General Meeting of the Society. Carol Holt's address appears on the back cover of this issue.

We extend belated congratulations to our distinguished Vice-President, Dr. Percy Young, on being awarded an Honorary Degree - Doctor of Music, by the University of Birmingham in July last. We apologise to Dr. Young for the fact that the information arrived just too late for our printer to insert it in the September issue. A bulletin of the University last March drew attention to Percy Young's "wide range of historical scholarship and internationally-known editorial work."

Some members may know that Mrs. Richard Powell ('Dorabella') left many letters, papers, scores and photographs to the now defunct Sheffield Elgar Society. After some necessary negotiation Mr. Claud Powell has been able to fulfil one of his mother's wishes and the collection as it now stands has been presented to the Royal College of Music. We must also thank Raymond Monk once more for his good offices, and also a special word of thanks to Mrs. Vera Plant, one of the founder members of the Elgar Society in Sheffield, for her great help and kindness in the negotiations. There remains, however, one problem: Does any member know the present whereabouts of those letters which were written by Elgar to Mrs. Powell? These were reproduced in her book "Memories of a Variation", but we do not know their present location. The Editor would greatly appreciate any information which will be passed on to Mr. Claud Powell.

*The Elgar Trail continues to attract many tourists, and further mention of guides is made on another page. However, may we remind members that almost all of the various houses mentioned in the Trail literature are private homes. Whilst most owners are proud of the Elgar connection they are most reluctant to have their privacy disturbed unless specific mention is made that the house and property is open to the public. Please note that entry into private gardens or buildings can otherwise constitute trespass, as well as being a source of great annoyance to the owners.*

*Nigel Kennedy's recording of the Elgar Violin Concerto (with the LPO under the baton of Vernon Handley) has been declared The Gramophone "Record of the Year." Congratulations to all concerned!*

Professor Ian Parrott is to talk on Walford Davies to the Hon. Society of Cymmrodorion in London in February, and visitors to the one-day School at Christ College, Brecon, on the 18th January will have an opportunity to hear Professor Parrott's talk "Elgar's Enigma Solved."

FOOTNOTE. Now that the Dorabella Archive is in the Library of the Royal College of Music it will be possible to examine the contents, or any part of it, by prior arrangement with Pamela Thompson at the Royal College.

**RECORDING NEWS** Following their Barbican concert in May, the London Symphony Orchestra, under Richard Hickox, is to record for EMI *The Music Makers* and *Sea Pictures*. The soloist will be Felicity Palmer. It is good to have the LSO again recording Elgar works.

EMI will also record, in January, *The Banner of St. George*, *Psalm 48*, *Te Deum* and *Benedictus* (the two latter with the seldom heard orchestral accompaniment). The orchestra will be the Northern Sinfonia, again under Richard Hickox. An eagerly awaited addition to the Elgar catalogue.

---

### **ELGAR'S INTERPRETERS ON RECORD. A Discography, by John Knowles.**

*Second Edition, extensively revised and illustrated.*

Thames Publishing, £7.50

*Although announced in our last issue delays in production have meant that the original October date was too optimistic. At the time of going to press it is hoped to publish in December. We trust that by the time you read this notice the book, an important one for all Elgarians and record collectors, will be available. Orders should be placed with your bookseller, and not sent to the Society.*

---

**KING OLAF.** Coincidentally with the Royal Festival Hall performance of Elgar's neglected work, and the announcement of the forthcoming recording, comes a reminder of a performance of over 60 years ago. A member, Mrs. Joan Wilkinson, has sent us details of a performance in Rugby by the local Philharmonic Society in May 1923. Mrs. Wilkinson's uncle Ernest Wolstencroft is now 90 years of age and lives in Vancouver, where over many years he took part in the activities of choral societies and subscribed to the concerts of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra. He cannot recall that there has ever been a performance of *King Olaf* while he has lived in Canada, but in Rugby in 1923 he took part in the performance, singing among the tenors. He remembers the occasion, though - probably due to the lack of a recording - he no longer recalls the music. When Mrs. Wilkinson visited Vancouver to see her uncle this year she told him of the revival of interest in this work, and Mr. Wolstencroft gave her the original Rugby programme, together with a newscutting from a local paper reviewing the concert: "...without doubt by far the best thing that the Society has ever done". The soloists were Spencer Thomas, Robert Chignell, and a local soprano, Gladys Moger. Mr. Wolstencroft asked Mrs. Wilkinson to pass on the programme and cutting to the Society for whatever use they thought fit. It is our intention to lodge the two items at the Birthplace to add to their collection. We are very grateful for this reminder of a long past performance. Mr Wolstencroft must be almost the only survivor of that occasion in 1923, unless one of our readers knows of another ex-member of the Rugby Philharmonic present on that day in May.

---

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

**OVERSEAS MEMBERSHIP** At the last count, in March 1985, this stood at 78, including 5 libraries. This represents a slight fall over the previous twelve months. Since March, however, the flow of new members has been good. Countries now represented for the first time include Spain, Japan, Switzerland and the USSR, where our member Sacha Kiselev who lives in Yaroslavl on the Volga has become an enthusiastic Elgarian. In August he arranged his own Elgar Festival - seven concerts of records to which friends and local musicians were invited. His interest in Elgar stems from meeting members of the London Symphony Orchestra and the LSO Club in Moscow in 1979.

**CORRESPONDENCE CIRCLE** This now includes 18 names of overseas and UK members. It gives an opportunity for members living in isolated areas to keep in touch by post. Anyone who is interested in having their name added to the list should contact the Secretary of the International Subcommittee: Margaret Benselin, 41 Malden Green Avenue, Worcester Park, Surrey KT4 7SG.

**PERFORMANCES OF THE ENIGMA VARIATIONS** The President of the Society, Sir Yehudi Menuhin, has included this work in many recent concerts he has conducted overseas. In addition to five performances in the USA, European performances have been given in Zurich, Geneva, Lugano, Vienna and Prague.

**VIENNA ORGAN RECITAL** Our member Christopher Wentworth-Stanley reports that following the successful Elgar/Delius/Holst concert in Vienna in the Autumn of 1984 conducted by Janet Canetty-Clarke he has been looking into the possibility of arranging concerts of Elgar's music. The first of these was held on 4 June 1985 when a recital of organ music was given by Basil Coleman including the two *Sonatas*, *Cantique*, and Sir Herbert Brewer's arrangement of the *Prelude to the Dream of Gerontius*. Mr Wentworth-Stanley is to be congratulated on his initiative and his efforts in arranging this event.

**NEW YORK** Members were shocked to hear of the death of Jeannette Visek in a road accident on 19 November 1984, only two weeks after she had arranged a lunch party for local Elgarians at her home. Her kindness and enthusiasm will be very much missed. Frank Beck reports that performances of Elgar orchestral items are already announced for 1986. The next gathering of Elgarians is expected early in 1986. Meanwhile, it is good to hear that the TV Elgar production 'Hope and Glory' has already been seen on New York TV.

**WEST GERMANY** The *First Symphony* received favourable reviews following a performance by the Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by David Zinman on 15 March 1985. The *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung's* review concluded that on the evidence of this performance Elgar's symphonic music could hold its own alongside that of Mahler.

**POLAND** A projected performance of the *Serenade for Strings* in Warsaw in September by the Scottish Chamber Orchestra under Laszlo Heltay was unfortunately not proceeded with. The difficulty was that the main work in the Royal Choral Society concert concerned was Britten's *Saint Nicolas* and it was thought by the Polish organisers that it would be unwise for box office reasons to include two unfamiliar works.

## INCREASE IN SOCIETY SUBSCRIPTIONS

*As announced in our last issue subscriptions are to go up as from January 1st. In addition a new category of student subscriptions will be introduced.*

The new rates are as follows:

For all U.K. members, excluding registered students: £6

U.K. registered students: £5

Overseas members: U.S.\$10.00

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.

Members are reminded that subscriptions are now due, from January 1st, and should be sent to the Hon. Treasurer, David Morris, 125 Cleveland Road, Ealing, London, W13 0EN. Branch members should pay their branch treasurer as usual. A banker's order form is enclosed with this issue for those paying by this method, or for the convenience of those who wish to pay this way in future.

---

## The Morrison Collection of Elgar's Music

Readers may recall that we have often draw attention to the remarkable loan collection of scores, and individual pieces of music, available from John Morrison. This is of particular value to those who wish to perform Elgar works as multiple copies are often available. Mr. Morrison makes no charge for the use of his Collection, other than borrowers paying postage, and, of course, care in handling.

Mr Morrison has recently moved home and his new address is given below. He has advised us of the categories of the collection as follows:

- (1) Orchestral works: 52 pieces consisting of conductor's score, and a full set of orchestral parts
- (2) Military (wind) band works: 24 pieces (latest addition his own arrangement of the Prelude to Gerontius)
- (3) Brass Band: 14 pieces (latest addition Eric Ball's arrangement of the Enigma Variations)
- (4) Choral: 166 pieces. About half of these consist of sets of 40 or more copies for choir use.
- (5) Songs: 72 pieces.
- (6) Instrumental: 70 pieces
- (7) Piano: 85 pieces (7a) Pianola rolls: 4
- (8) Organ: 36 pieces, (latest addition Solemn March from *The Black Knight*)
- (9) Full scores (where not included in Orch. sets): 17
- (10) Miscellaneous - programmes, cards, letters, etc.

A full catalogue is available, 21pp, at a cost of £2.10, plus postage.

This is a splendid collection and should encourage the performance of much of Elgar's music. Additionally, Mr. Morrison is always anxious to add works not in his present list, and would welcome donations. Write to: John Morrison, 34A Back Lane, Ham, Richmond, Surrey, TW10 7LF.

# A WALK ROUND THE ELGARS' WORCESTER

by K.E.L. Simmons and Marion Simmons

## Part III

### 3. COLLEGE YARD TO BROAD STREET

Revived but anxious still to catch the morning light, we moved on along the rest of High Street, pausing by Elgar's statue to read the plaque newly set into the pavement to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of his death, then crossed Deansway into College Street to explore the area round the Cathedral with its important Elgar connections, first in College Yard on the west side. Here, at No. 8 just opposite the North Porch of the Cathedral, Elgar's great friend Sir Ivor Atkins lived when Organist and Master of the Choristers in the period 1897-1950 and until his death in 1953. No. 7 next door had been the home for many years, from the late 1830s to the early 1880s, of one of Atkins's predecessors, William Done who held the post from 1844 to 1895 (the year he died), though in later years most of his duties were undertaken by his assistant Hugh Blair.

It should not be thought from this that College Yard was the traditional address of the Cathedral Organists. Atkins's immediate predecessor (Hugh Blair) lived at 64 London Road and Done's (Charles E.J. Clarke) first in Sidbury and then in Britannia Square. Done, a friend of the Elgars, was Organist throughout Elgar's formative years in Worcester and his influence on the younger man, to whom he showed great kindness and gave much encouragement, remains to be fully assessed. He taught music for many years at the College for the Blind Sons of Gentlemen in Worcester - then housed in The Commandery, Sidbury - and later shared a pupil of his there, William Wolstenholme, with Elgar (see further, below). Like Jabez Jones, Done was one of the pianists of the Worcester Glee Club.

On census day 1851, as well as Done (aged 35) and his wife Emma (38), five children were listed at No. 7: Emily (10), Fanny (seven), Ellen (four), Agnes (three), and Henry (one). The Dones had two sons but both died young.

Of even more interest is the house at No. 2 College Yard, still claimed by some, including the last three of Elgar's biographers, to be where the Elgars lived before going to 10 High Street, though to persist in pressing it on us as an Elgar house is to fly in the face of facts, complicated as they are (as we showed in our booklet *The Elgars of Worcester*). Yet there is an Elgar connection here, for No. 2 was later the home of members of that branch of the Grafton family which was related to both the Elgars and the Leicesters by marriage. Just when the Graftons came to 2 College Yard is uncertain but it was some time after 1873 - when the Taylor family, who had been there on census day 1871, were still resident. Martin Charles Grafton, a 'commission agent' (commercial traveller), was listed at No. 2 in 1879, the year he died, aged about 72. He was the father of Will Grafton, husband of Pollie Elgar. Like his father, Will and his two older sisters Eliza and Blanche had been born in Alcester, Will in 1850 and the girls in about 1842 and in 1843 respectively. The family must have moved to Worcester soon after 1850 for it was there that Edwin John, the next child, was born in August 1851. Six further children followed: Frances Mary in 1854, Francis Joseph in 1856, Mary in 1858, Ann in 1859, Agnes in 1860, and Bernard in 1864. On census day 1881, the household at 2 College Yard comprised Will's mother Blanche Grafton (aged 60), now a



widow, and her children Edwin John (29) 'commission agent', Frances Mary (27) 'governess', Agnes (20) 'scholar', and Bernard (16) 'lawyer's clerk'.

Ann Grafton had died in 1866. Agnes Grafton later married Hubert Leicester, as we have seen; Edwin Grafton became a chartered accountant, joining the firm run by Hubert and his son Philip at their office at 15 Foregate Street; and Bernard Grafton took Holy Orders. Their mother Blanche, whose maiden name was Brindley, died in 1888; born in Kinver, Staffordshire, in 1820, of a Protestant family, she was a Catholic convert - so it may have been her, rather than her daughter, who was confirmed on the same day in 1855 as Ann Elgar, another convert (see Part I). The Grafton family address was then given as 'near the County Gaol' - that is, in or off Salt Lane (now Castle Street) - but they had moved to Britannia Square by the time of the 1861 census, to No. 16 on the south side just along from the school of Miss Caroline Bidwell Walsh which the young Elgars and other Catholic children attended, and went later to 33 Broad Street (see below). The sisters Eliza ('Lily'), Blanche and Mary, later ran the school at Sansome Lodge. Teaching seems to have been a family tradition: there was a girls' school run by a Miss Sarah Grafton listed in Brierley Hill, Staffordshire, in 1850 and another by the Misses Grafton - Louisa and Ellen in this case - in Dudley during the 1870s, at 32 Dixon's Green (where a William Ebenezer Grafton, a fire and life-insurance agent, also lived).

Crossing the Cathedral grounds, we went next to College Precincts on the east side: As we proved conclusively, 2 College Precincts just off College Street is now the premier Elgar house remaining in Worcester, the home of the family during 1848-56 and also 1861-63 - when they were supposed to be at 2 College Yard. There are still some who doubt that Elgar himself ever lived at this address but the evidence is overwhelming and strengthened by his own remark to Sir Ivor Atkins in a letter from the flat at 37 St James's Place, London, of 1 December 1921 (see Atkins's *Friendship*, p. 335), the significance of which has hitherto been overlooked:

'I shd have given you another envelope, my pen having travelled back sixty years and tried to write Precincts - economy prevails as you see.'<sup>18</sup>

There are further Elgar links with College Precincts. Firstly, Henry Elgar, who had stayed with his brother and sister-in-law there during both the periods that the family were at No. 2, came back twice later.

The first time was in the 1870s, before he went to Britannia Square (see Part I). We had not been sure exactly where in College Precincts this was but have since discovered that Henry lived at No. 1 - the companion house of No. 2 - then run as a lodging house by Miss Mary Boucher with whom he had previous stayed at 54 Henwick Road, St John's (where they were listed in the 1871 census). The second time was towards the end of his life, when he and his friend Albert James Smith left The Hill Avenue for 9 College Precincts - where Henry died on 24 February 1917 (aged 84). He had continued to practise his profession into late age and Alan Webb, whose father Frank W. Webb was a friend and pupil of Elgar, tells us that he well remembers Henry Elgar coming to tune his father's piano before the Great War and how 'terribly solemn' the old man was - an impression confirmed from photographs of him, with his distinctive white mutton-chop whiskers.

Elgar himself later used his uncle's old rooms at No. 9, when he and Carice came to Worcester for the 1920 Three Choirs Meeting after the death of Lady Elgar. According to W.H. Reed (*Elgar*, 1939) and E. Wulstan Atkins, who both visited him there, Elgar lodged with a 'Miss Allcott' - the maiden name, presumably, of Smith's wife Betsy. (The Smiths occupied the house both before and after Elgar's stay in 1920.)

We also pick up the trail of Henry Baldwyn and his family again in College Precincts where they lived for a while during the late 1860s, Henry being listed there professionally in 1868. Though we have still to discover the actual number of the house, Rodney Baldwyn believes that it was the last in the row - the one by St Mary's Steps, with its corner in Edgar Street opposite the Elgars' old home at No. 1. Both earlier and later, Henry Baldwyn lived and worked in College Street where he was listed in the censuses of 1861 and 1871, as a teacher of music and as a pianoforte dealer respectively, together with his wife and three surviving children, all still scholars in 1871 - Maud then aged 16, Charles 11, and Edgar 10. The Baldwyns' peregrinations about Worcester before they settled at their penultimate home in Chestnut Walk are, however, so complex as to defy exact elucidation we fear.<sup>19</sup>

Up to 1855, the Baldwyns' home had been in London Road but they moved in July 1855 to a house near the Baths in Sansome Walk - presumably where the second daughter Clara Sophia (who died in infancy) was born. At Christmas 1856, the family went to live for a while above George Baldwyn's shop at 98½ High Street before going to an address in College Street - where Charles was born in 1859. by 1860, however, when Edgar was born, they were living in Sidbury - where Henry was listed as a teacher of music. They were back somewhere in College Street in 1861 but in 1863 went to stay behind 10 High Street, as we have seen, before returning (in 1864) again to College Street - to No. 31, moving later to No. 16 and lastly to No. 1. Maud, born in 1854 and Elgar's particular friend in a family that he had known from his early childhood, was engaged for a while to another life-long friend of his - the blind musician William Wolstenholme. He was often mentioned in Henry Baldwyn's diary, Rodney Baldwyn tells us, and the Baldwyns read his text books to him when he was preparing for the Bachelor of Music degree at Oxford - where, as is well known, Elgar acted as his amanuensis at the final examination in 1887. It now appears that Maud Baldwyn did not leave Worcester in the 1890s after all, but remained there at the house in Arboretum Road until after her father's death (see Part I). When in Arboretum Road, Henry Baldwyn had among his piano-tuning customers the Misses Grafton of the nearby school at Sansome Lodge.

Leaving College Street for Sidbury, we went next to Edgar Street where the Elgars had lived at No. 1 on the corner with Severn Street in 1859-61. Now long demolished, as we proved, No. 1 was situated opposite the entrance to Castle Place - guarded then, as now, by Tower House which was once widely but mistakenly believed to be the Elgars' old home.

There are still those who insist that the Elgars did live in the building known, from the end of the last century, as Tower House. The evidence against this view is overwhelming, however, and was presented in detail in our booklet. We would add here that a careful study of the local directories alone proves the point, revealing that No. 1 Severn Street (also demolished in the Elgars' time), No. 1 Castle Place (the correct address of Tower House), and No. 1 Edgar Street were all separate places and not one as has been claimed. Why then, it may be asked, did Elgar point out Tower House to Edgar Day as his former home? In *The Elgars*, we took the charitable view that he was mistaken; after all, he could hardly have remembered the house himself. However, his parents certainly knew which was the correct building, Elgar must have passed it from time to time, at least when walking home to Lucy's from the Cathedral during the 1880s, and its demolition (in the mid-1880s) must have been a topic of comment in the family. No, it seems more likely that either Day was mistaken or Elgar misled him, if only on the spur of the moment. In later years, he was most secretive about his humble homes in Worcester so, instead of indicating the bakery at No. 2 Edgar Street and saying he once lived next to there, he may perhaps have selected the most impressive building he could see and identified that instead!

It is interesting to note that during the 1850s, after leaving Chestnut Walk, the Elgars' friends William and Emma Leicester lived with their four children somewhere in nearby Castle Place, their two sons being born there - Hubert in 1855 (it would be ironic if it was at Tower House). Perhaps then the Elgars' neighbours for a while, they later moved to Waterloo Street where, in addition to the family and their two servants on census day 1861, William's sister and nephew were listed together with a governess and a boarder - Miss Annie McGuire, a schoolmistress from Ireland and presumably the same Ann McGuire who was godmother to Frank Elgar when he was baptised at St George's on 14 October the same year. When both families moved to High Street - the Elgars to No. 10 in 1863 and the Leicesters later to No. 6, after the death of William's sister Charlotte in 1865 and the departure of his brother John - they became neighbours for perhaps the second time. Before that, following the death of both their parents in 1860, it was John and Charlotte Leicester who had lived above the shop - where they were listed as sole occupants in the 1861 census.

Passing under the Edgar Tower, we entered the quiet haven of College Green to look first at No. 2 where Dr William Done spent his last years after leaving College Yard (he was made a Doctor of Music a year before his death). By census day 1881, only Ellen and Agnes were still living at home with their parents.

Fanny Done, for instance, had married the languages master at the King's School.<sup>20</sup> The two younger sisters remained on at 2 College Green for many years, Agnes (who died in 1931) until the mid-1920s at least. Agnes Emma Done was an accomplished solo pianist and had played at Three Choirs Festivals as well as at rehearsals for the Worcester Festival Choral Society (see *Friendship*, p. 437).

We then moved to the south side of the Green to No. 6 (Castle House) which Edward and Alice Elgar used to take for the Three Choirs Meeting in the years before the Great War. This was the same house, as Moore pointed out (*Life*, pp 24-25, 374), that the boy Elgar visited to play the piano. During the 1850s, 60s, and 70s, it was occupied by Miss Mary Ann Davison and her sisters Grace and Eleanor, Grace remaining there until her death in 1885.

Originally No. 5 and situated next door to the 'Headmaster's house' (No. 6, later demolished), it was known as 'the old house' - the name Castle House not being given until it was taken over officially as a school 'house' by the King's School in 1901, after which it was considerably extended. By 1902, therefore, when the Elgars first rented it, the building and its setting had much changed since Edward first knew it.

Leaving Castle House, and passing the entrance to School House (which the Elgars took in 1908), we went on into the gardens on the west side of the Cathedral for views of the River Severn and the Malvern Hills beyond. From a notice near the Water Gate lodge, we learned that the Cathedral Ferry was operating again, but, to our disappointment, only at weekends and Bank Holidays. It was this ferry - the Priory Ferry in earlier times - that the young friends Edward Elgar and Hubert Leicester, their finances permitting, took at times to shorten the long way to the Reeves's school at Littleton House in Lower Wick, the route across the river and Payne's Meadow beyond ('always to the brightly-lit west') being later described by Elgar in his Foreword to Hubert's book on *Forgotten Worcester*.

The Catholic School at Littleton House was run by Francis Reeve and his wife Lucy. They had moved there by the mid-1860s from their previous school at Grove Villa in Worcester

itself, on Rainbow Hill off Lansdowne Crescent, where they had had the services of Francis's younger brother George as assistant master; in more recent times, the building was greatly extended and became the Masonic Hall. On census day 1871 - in the year that the 14-year-old Edward Elgar and the 16-year-old Hubert Leicester were still day pupils at Littleton House - the establishment there consisted of: Francis (aged 40), born in Coughton, Warwickshire; Lucy (44), born in Baldon, Oxfordshire; eight of their children, three boys and five girls (aged from one to 14 years), the two eldest children born in Grafton, Worcestershire, and the others either in Worcester itself or Lower Wick; a housemaid; and 18 boy boarders (aged between nine and 16) drawn from all over the country and from Ireland. The Reeves had at least eleven children in all, two of whom died young.

There was another Elgar connection at Lower Wick for W.H. Elgar's friend Tom Hopkins, of the Corelli Society days, later had his home next door to Littleton House - at Manor House which lay on the site of a former chapel dedicated to St Cuthbert, some remains of which were incorporated into a barn there.

A member of another of Worcester's musical families, he had become - as Thomas Meredith Hopkins Esquire - a well-to-do farmer and hop merchant, with offices in Sansome Street and in London. We have yet to discover the relationships of the various Hopkinses, but there was also William Hanbury Hopkins (a professor of music as well as a currier) of the Worcester Amateur Instrumental Society, who had once run the Worcester Quadrille Band from his leather shop in Broad Street, while William Jeffrey Hopkins Esquire, the diocesan Architect, may also have been a member of the family. He was listed at 44 Foregate Street in 1851 and in Pierpoint Street in 1855; by the 1870s, however, he had moved to Sansome Lodge in Sansome Walk, later the location of the Misses Grafton's school. There, on census day 1881, aged 58, he was listed with his brother Edward Hopkins a hop factor, aged 59; both had been born in St John's. By 1885, W.J. Hopkins was sharing the accommodation at The Lodge with Blanche Grafton.

Moving on through the gardens, the trees flanking the steps that lead to the upper terrace in front of the West Door heavy with white blossom, we passed through Cathedral Close and entered the Cathedral itself through the North Porch. Inside, we found that a small exhibition about Elgar had been mounted near the Memorial Window. There were many items of interest, but one in particular caught our attention - a programme supplied for their patrons by Elgar Brothers for a Meeting of the Three Choirs in, if we remember correctly, 1881. This listed Edward himself among the orchestral players as well as his father and uncle, giving their positions in the Band. The Choirmaster, we noted, was A.R. Quarterman.

We would like to know more about Arthur Richard Quarterman, a peripheral figure in the Elgars' story mentioned in our booklet and a member of still another of Worcester's musical families. We had come across him in only one of the Elgar biographies (*Elgar O.M.*): as a member of an instrumental ensemble at a concert at the Union Workhouse, in January 1873 - a group that had included, among others, W.H. Elgar, Henry Elgar, and the young Edward himself at his first known public appearance; and as a member later in the 1870s (together with a P. Quarterman) of the Worcester Amateur Instrumental Society. W.H. Elgar had referred to a Quarterman in a letter to his brother Henry of 11 December 1859 from 1 Edgar Street: 'Quarterman is still with us, we don't have so much of his company as we did/ he is appointed organist at Stourport'. We had first assumed that this was the Charles H. Quarterman listed in 1847 as a professor of music at 10 Bridge Street but identified him later as the Arthur Quarterman listed as Organist at St Michael's Church, Stourport, in 1860 and a professor of music, pianist, and organist at No. 7 The Tything, Worcester, in the 1870s and 1880s - when he was Organist of the Congregational Chapel in Angel Place and music master at Worcester Upper and Middle School at Albany House, Britannia Square. He later moved to Britannia Square, as we have seen (Part I). In addition to the WAIS (founded

1876), being one-time Honorary Organist of both and Honorary Sub-Conductor of the WPS (whose Honorary Conductor was William Done). Like Done and Jabez Jones in their time, he served as pianist for the Worcester Glee Club. On census day 1881, as well as Quarterman himself (aged 40), the family in the Tything consisted of his wife Julia (38), daughter Amelia (14), and sons Percival (12), Arthur (11), Edwin (9), and Stanley (6). It was A.R. Quarterman presumably, rather than his son Arthur, who succeeded Elgar as music teacher in Worcester after the latter's marriage in 1889 (See Moore's *Life*, footnote, p. 181).

Crossing the Nave of the Cathedral, we next visited the Cloisters before returning to the gardens for a picnic lunch in the sun, taking some photographs of the old house, once called Ivy Lodge, in Cathedral Close on the way. Now No. 10 College Yard, it had (when numbered 9) become the Precentor's House on the appointment of the Rev. Edward Vine Hall in 1877.

Canon Vine Hall remained at Worcester until 1891, when he went to Bromsgrove. He had played an important part during those years in the musical life of the City, not only at the Cathedral and the King's School but also in secular circles. As Conductor of the Worcestershire Musical Union, he performed some of Elgar's early pieces (see Moore's *Life*). His influence on the young composer, like that of William Done, has still to be fully assessed.

Having noted earlier that the Cathedral Tower was open to visitors, for the first time in years on one of our days in Worcester, we joined the 2 o'clock party and started the dizzying and claustrophobic 190-foot climb to the top. From there, in perfect sunshine, we enjoyed the wonderful view, particularly of the area immediately round the Cathedral itself: College Yard, with the familiar steps leading up to No. 8; the Old Palace and its garden, happy place of Three Choirs' tea parties; College Green, with a glimpse of No. 2 Edgar Street beyond through the archway of the Edgar Tower; College Precincts - though, alas, the Elgars' old house at No. 2 is quite hidden by the east end of the Cathedral; and High Street, with the Elgar statue tiny but dominant at the southern end.

For one of us, this was her first ascent of the Tower; for the other, the first in over forty years and, more than any other experience of the day, a visit into his own past when a schoolboy in wartime Worcester. Then, in a strange way quite different from today, the memory of Elgar in the town was so fresh that one almost expected to see the great man himself emerge from Woolworth's with a bag of sixpenny goodies in his hand.<sup>21</sup> In 1941, Palace Yard - where the Nicholson organ-building workshops once stood, next door to the warehouse in which Elgar Brothers stored and packed their pianos - had already been widened into the east end of Deansway, but the view northwards from the Tower was otherwise much as Elgar would have known it before the City Fathers, by their planning, devastated historic Worcester in a way that Hitler's bombers failed to do. In place of the modern Lichgate Precinct development, were the old buildings of Lich Street; those of the north side of College Street, including St Michael's Church (by then the Diocesan Registry) where Elgar's brother Harry was christened in 1850; and those of the east side of High Street, including the site of No. 10 (still T.A. Collins's, the shoe shop, as it had been since Frank Elgar gave up the business) and that of No. 6 (still W.C. Morris's, the printers, as it had been since W.B. Leicester retired in the 1920s).

Leaving the Cathedral, we decided to postpone our planned walk up the Bath Road to visit the Elgar-associated houses in Field Terrace and The Hill Avenue (see Part I) and the nursing home at South Bank where Elgar was taken during his last illness and cared for by the matron Miss Susan Buddle and her staff under the supervision of Dr W.E. Moore Ede and his partner Mr N. Duggan, the surgeon who operated on Elgar.

It was the abandoned visit to South Bank Nursing Home, which we had not seen since June 1978, that we were to regret the most for in July 1984 it was demolished, yet another link with Elgar gone because of modern planning philistinism in his home town - and in that of all years. The loss, however, may be even more grievous than many Elgarians might realise for there is a long-held local tradition that it was at South Bank that Elgar actually died, having been taken from Marl Bank again just before his death on 23 February 1934. One of us encountered this in 1944, when he and his mother were living off the Bath Road and often took a short walk which passed the rear of South Bank, and it has found expression in print at least once. According to the local historian H.W. Gwilliam, in his book on Worcester<sup>22</sup>, 'It was at Southbank that Sir Edward Elgar died'. Commenting recently on this statement, Mr Gwilliam told us apropos South Bank: 'when I wrote in 1975, that Elgar died there, I accepted the fact from people better placed than I to know'. Against this, however, must be set the evidence of Elgar's death certificate on which it is stated unequivocally that he died at Marl Bank on Rainbow Hill.<sup>23</sup> There, in the continuing absence of concrete evidence to the contrary, the matter must rest. Mr Gwilliam himself convalesced at South Bank in 1960 and then met an elderly nurse who had helped to tend Elgar during the first phase of his final illness. She told him: 'He was a bit crochety but very considerate, and concerned whether his gramophone, which he played almost constantly, was being a nuisance to those in rooms near by'; she went on to tell Mr Gwilliam how they were pestered by reporters hanging about the grounds, waiting for Elgar to die - even climbing trees to see if they could photograph him in bed. It was at South Bank, on 13 November 1933 - a week before the well-documented crisis when Billy Reed was called - that Elgar first received the Last Sacrament of the Roman Catholic Church, then administered 'sub conditione' however by Fr Reginald Gibb because Elgar was too ill to respond.

So, instead, we went on down High Street again and, after further refreshment near The Cross, started on our way back to the car via Broad Street, postponing another planned detour along The Cross, The Foregate, Foregate Street, and The Tything to seek out further places with Elgar associations. We have already mentioned some of these in connection with William Allen, Jabez Jones, A.R. Quarterman, E.J. Spark, and Thomas Stratford. Among others, was the earlier shop of William Weaver at 17 The Foregate, and the shops of Franz Augustus Friedrich (the jeweller and watchmaker mentioned in *Moore's Life*, p. 87) at 1 Foregate Street and of Frederick Spray at 11 Tything.

Frederick Spray was a grocer and confectioner in Worcester during the 1850s, 60s, and 70s, having inherited the business from his father William Spray, but he also taught the violin, viola, and cello, both in Worcester and Malvern. He too had been a member of that instrumental ensemble in which Elgar made his public debut in 1873 (see above); Elgar received violin lessons, and much encouragement, from him and probably took over some of his pupils later. Spray had two sisters, Sarah and Elizabeth - the latter, like him, a teacher of music. According to the Elgar ledger notes, it was the sisters who ran the shop; Spray gave Elgar his first violin lessons - being an honest man, he told Elgar that 'he could not teach him any more and E. decided to go to Pollitzer' in London. By 1879, Spray's wife alone was listed at No. 11.

In Broad Street, we noted that the site of Henry Perkes' old music shop at No. 65 on the south side seemed to have been swallowed up by new buildings; W.H. Elgar had given this address, and those of Jabez Jones and Leicester and Son, to his tuning customers as a point of contact with him when he removed from Worcester to Broadheath in 1856.

Henry Perkes, the one-time partner of Jabez Jones, was the son of Ann Perkes, the baker and confectioner of 7 High Street - from where, as we have seen (in Part II), W.H. Elgar once advertised and where he may even have lived before his marriage to Ann Greening in 1848. Further information on the Perkes family, the next-door neighbours of the Leicesters.

is given in our booklet. The Joseph Perkes mentioned there, who ran the bakery in the 1830s, was evidently Ann Perkes's husband but only she and her five children were listed at 7 High Street in the 1841 census, Henry then being a journeyman printer in his early twenties.

We also visited the new shopping precinct off the yard of The Crown Hotel on the north side where, fortunately, the room used by the Worcester Glee Club for its meetings has survived.

On 28 May 1979, with our friends Barry and Pauline Collett, we had visited that most distinctive oval-shaped chamber and must have been almost the last people to see it as it was before its modern refurbishing, then just started. As well as some remnants of the older black paper mentioned by Barry Collett in his description of the room<sup>24</sup>, the terracotta wall-paper of later Victorian times still survived, each of the twelve panels having a single motif of instruments - horn, violin, and trumpet - in gold in the centre.

Moving on west along the same side of Broad Street, crossing the end of Angel Place, we eventually passed the site (now also occupied by new buildings), just east of Dolday, where the firm of Brown & Pipe had its grocery shop at No. 25 from the mid-1870s.

Charles E. Pipe was born in Lichfield (Staffordshire) in 1853, the second of four children of Charles Joshua Pipe and his wife Jane. He and his senior partner Edward Brown took over the thriving and long-established business at No. 25 Broad Street from Edwin Leonard, a specialist in teas and coffees and an importer of foreign hops, and his partner Henry Haines Harrington. They may even have inherited it from Leonard for, on census day 1871, they were both listed with him above the shop, as resident servants - Brown (aged 44) as grocer's foreman and Charlie (18) as grocer's assistant - together with the housekeeper, another assistant, and the errand boy. On census day 1881, Charlie was lodging at No. 26 next door but, after his marriage to Lucy Elgar on 26 April of that year, the couple went to live at 4 Field Terrace where they were joined by Elgar two years later. Charlie, who was baptised conditionally at St George's on 5 August 1880 by Fr William Humphrey SJ, had become a Catholic in order to marry Lucy. Elgar left Field Terrace in 1889 and, some time in the 1890s, when Charlie took over sole charge of the business, the Pipes too moved away - into the accommodation over the shop previously occupied by Edward Brown. Here they remained for some years before going to live in Barbourne north of Britannia Square, first at 14 Barbourne Terrace, where Charlie was listed as a voter in 1914, and later at 2 Waterworks Road - the house that Elgar bought for them. There, Lucy died on 23 October 1925 (aged 73) and Charlie on 15 December 1937 (aged 84); Elgar's will had given him rent-free use of the house for the remainder of his life provided he paid for the up-keep. Elgar would visit the Pipes in Waterworks Road when in Worcester. Mr H.W. Gwilliam tells us that his wife - who, as a child of about six or seven, lived a few doors away - has a fond memory of Elgar 'who used to come and cut the hedge that grew over a low wall at the pavement'; 'a pretty, talkative child', she 'used to chatter to him, and he used to lay aside his shears a while and talk to her'. Though hardly a successful business man, the grocery business having eventually failed, Charlie Pipe rose to become Governor of the Hop Market Guardians, a largely honorary post. He was an active member of the Worcester Glee Club and paid frequent visits to the games at the County Cricket Ground and to variety and comedy at the Theatre Royal in Angel Place. Natural history was also his hobby, especially the study of fungi, and he was for many years a member of the Worcester Naturalists' Club and its Treasurer from 1904 to 1932.<sup>25</sup> Elgar too joined the Club, in 1931. He had been fascinated by nature and the natural sciences for most of his life and shared an interest in birds with his wife and daughter, there being several references to birds in the Elgar diaries. For Christmas 1902, Carice (then twelve) received a copy of Richard Kearnton's *Birds' Nests, Eggs, and Egg-collecting* from her parents - which would hardly be considered a suitable present for a young girl today!

Eight doors further along Broad Street, on the other side of Dolday and almost opposite All Saints' Church in Merryvale, is still to be found No. 33 where, above the Britannia Cooperage (a business owned by William Pitt, cooper and vat-builder), the Grafton family lived before they went to 2 College Yard. Here, sharing the accommodation with Pitt and his family, they were listed on census day 1871 - Martin Charles Grafton ('wine agent'), his wife Blanche, daughter Blanche ('lady's companion'), and younger children Mary, Agnes and Bernard ('scholars') - together with Eliza Brindley ('annuitant'), one of Blanche's two older sisters.

#### 4. ASTWOOD

Back at Pitchcroft and our walk over, we still had a last visit to pay - one we had been promising ourselves on each of our recent trips to Worcester but for which we could never spare the time from our researches in the archives. So finally we drove up Rainbow Hill, passing the dreadful Elgar Court on the site of Marl Bank, and along to Astwood Cemetery.

The Worcester City Cemetery off Astwood Road was not opened until October 1858 on land given by William Laslett Esq., of Abberton Hall near Pershore, then one of Worcester's two Members of Parliament and a generous local benefactor. Until that date, many of the City's Anglican dead had been buried in the churchyard at Claines, the parish in which a large area of Worcester fell (as we have seen). At the new cemetery, ground was allocated for Catholics as well as Protestants - both Dissenters and members of the Church of England.

At Astwood, we walked first to that section where most of the old Catholic graves are situated and where in earlier years we had sought those of Elgar's parents and of his brothers (Harry, Joe, and Frank) in vain. Here, before looking at the notice recently erected by the West Midlands branch of the Elgar Society to indicate the position of the newly rediscovered and restored Elgar graves, we soon found the close group of graves of various members of the Leicester and Grafton families that we had located previously.

These include the graves of: Hubert Leicester (died 1939) and his wife Agnes (1940); their children Blanche Mary Leicester (1950) and Basil Brindley Leicester (1960); William Bernard Leicester (1929) and his wife Rose (1940); Will Grafton's parents - Martin Charles (1876) and Blanche (1888); Edwin John Grafton (1925) and his wife Emily (1929); Fr Bernard Grafton (1936); Blanche Grafton (1923) and Frances Mary Grafton (1932); and Mary Grafton (1940).<sup>26</sup>

A little further on we again came across the family grave of the older Leicesters: William senior, his wife Charlotte, their son William (died 1882), and his wife Emma (1901). Then, quite unexpectedly, there next to the Leicesters we found the main Elgar family plot, containing four of the five graves, its position now outlined by a simple square curb of edging stones, each section with just the name of one occupant: William Henry Elgar (died 30 April 1906), Ann Elgar (1 September 1902), Henry John Elgar (5 May 1864), Frederick Joseph Elgar (7 September 1866). Newly surfaced with green chippings, it must have been entirely unrecognisable when we sought it before. Checking the notice, we learned that Frank Elgar (died 7 June 1928) was interred nearby but we failed to locate the grave as it is unmarked.<sup>27</sup>

Elgar himself was responsible for the erection of the curb stones on the main grave in about 1908 but the more substantial memorial he planned for his parents never



materialised, not even during those last years of his life when he lived only a mile or so away. He had written to his friend A. Troyte Griffith, the Malvern architect, from Hereford on 25 October 1907 saying:

'The time has come when a gravestone has to be put up to my father & mother. I cannot afford much as the living seem to have more pressing needs, and the 'quick' feel hunger & cold - which I trust the dear departed old people do not'.

He went on to ask Griffith for ideas:

'I do not feel drawn towards the stonemason monumental-artist sort of thing. As we bear an old Saxon name wd. it be too fanciful, if practicable, to take some old Saxon thing for a model or rather type?... I should think about five foot high or less - nothing pretentious but sincerely wholesome ...'.

Writing again on the subject later (19 July 1908), two days after visiting the cemetery while in Worcester, he thanked Griffith for his letter which included a photograph of a possible model of the proposed tombstone:

'I like the cross but I *don't* want the heart & sursum corda. I have been to the graves & have decided to have an edging round first to make them look tidy; this will be very simple, & will not interfere with anything designed after'.<sup>28</sup>

We were disappointed today not to find the named graves of the many other Worcester contemporaries of the old Elgars mentioned in our booklet, especially that of John Harvey Leicester (who we lost track of after about 1866) though he may well be buried elsewhere. A further puzzle also went unresolved that day for we knew that Will Grafton's grave was there some where too. Checking later (on 25 July 1984), we discovered it among the other Grafton and Leicester graves. We had misidentified it earlier because, like most other Elgarians, we had not realised that his full name was Martin William Grafton, the name on the tombstone. He had died, aged 58, on 13 January 1908 at the Stoke Prior Works and was buried in Worcester on the 17th of that month. The stone cross has fallen down over the grave, almost totally hiding the lower inscription, which, however, reads:

'Also of S(usannah Mary Grafton) his wife ...'

So Pollie Elgar (who died in Bromsgrove on 18 November 1936) is there too after all, as we thought she must be, just fourteen paces from her parents and brothers.

Ann Elgar had composed 'Reverie', a special poem 'to Polly Elgar and Willie Grafton on the eve of their wedding' at St George's ...

'Tomorrow is St George's Day/ And to his shrine we wend our way;/ Beloved and loving you will stand/ Before God's altar hand in hand,/ Vowing fidelity through life,/ You'll turn away, husband and wife,/ Old fashioned titles, but so new, Old to the world but new to you, - / May the light fetter then put on/ Hold firm and sure till life is gone;/ May grace and strength to both be given/ To lead each other on to Heaven/ April 22nd 1879'.<sup>29</sup>

... and Pollie left her own diary account of the day:

'Willie and I married/ St George's day 9 o'clock/ Ted played Wedding March/ Dotty bridesmaid/ Pa gave me away/ F. Grafton Best man/ Started for London/ at 12.15. Mr

Pipe, Ted/ and Tom came to/ see us off/ Arrived in London 5 o'clock/ Euston/ 'Cloches de Corneville' in/ evening'.<sup>30</sup>

It is to be hoped that Will and Pollie's grave will now be restored and the other Elgar graves at Astwood also re-discovered and marked. Elgar's sister Lucy is there somewhere and her husband Charles E. Pipe; also, of course, Elgar's beloved uncle Henry Elgar.

There is still much to do to settle these and other problems connected with the Elgars' Worcester - thank goodness! - a field of research of which we have only just started to scratch the surface.<sup>31</sup>

---

18 We said in our booklet that 2 College Precincts later became a bookshop; rather, it was the home of a bookseller - Daniel Eaton, whose shop was in College Street nearby.

19 The story is clarified somewhat in a memorandum by Maud Baldwin, evidently copied from a diary of her father, a transcript of which was sent us recently by Rodney Baldwin.

20 See Michael Craze, *King's School Worcester 1541-1971*, 1976.

21 Elgar's love of visiting Woolworth's in later life is well-established. For example, there is a testimony of Mrs D.I. Keys who, as Doris Sortey, cared for Elgar during his stay at Battenhall Manor (see Pauline Collett's *Elgar Lived Here*, 1981, p. 96). Mr F.G.W. Firth, now Secretary at St George's Church, told us that 'as a boy I often used to see Sir Edward in Woolworth's where he seemed to like going'.

22 *Old Worcester/People and Places*, 1977; Vol. 2, p. 96.

23 The place, date, and cause of death were certified by Dr Moore Ede and the death registered by a Miss Mary Kathleen Harrison, presumably a nurse, who had witnessed it.

24 See Barry Collett, *Elgar Country*, 1981; p. 24.

25 See Mary Munslow Jones, *The Looker-Out of Worcestershire*, 1980.

26 Agnes Leicester is given the title of Dame on the gravestone. Just a week before his death on 14 June, Hubert had been awarded a knighthood in the 1939 Birthday Honours for political and public service in Worcester where, among many other functions, he had been a Justice of the Peace, Alderman and Mayor (no less than five times). As he did not live to receive his title, King George VI granted to Agnes by special warrant the style, title, rank and precedence to which she would have been entitled if her husband had survived. Eliza Grafton (died 1903), the eldest of the Misses Grafton, is also buried at Astwood.

27 Frank Elgar's grave is soon to be marked by a wooden cross specially made by Jack McKenzie.

28 See further in Percy M. Young's *Letters*; and, for an account of Elgar's visit to Worcester on 17 July 1908, Moore's *Life*, p. 531.

29 Ann Elgar's poem, written into her scrapbook, is quoted here by kind permission of the Trustees of the Elgar Birthplace. The copy presented to Pollie and Willie is to be seen among the Grafton papers deposited at the Record Office, St Helen's, Worcester.

30 The full entry can be read in the Record Office at St Helen's (Planquette's opera had first come to London the previous year.)

31 Our work continues and we will be pleased to hear from any one with further information or comments for it is only through co-operative inquiries, we believe, that full discovery will be achieved.

. . .

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

The main sources of information are those listed in *The Elgars of Worcester*. We would again like to thank Mr Rodney Baldwyn, Rev. Fr Peter Dennison, Mr F.G.W. Firth, Mr Anthony Phillips, Mr Jack McKenzie, Mrs Vivienne MacKenzie, Mr N.A.D. Molyneux, Mr Ronald Taylor, Mr Barry Collett, Mrs Pauline Collett, and Mr Raymond Monk for their further help or encouragement.

We owe a particular debt, too, to those who have looked for information on our behalf, especially about Elgar's relatives (see Part II): our sister Mrs Joan Brailsford, Dr L.F.W. Eickhoff, Mr A.E. Daniels, Mr A.M. Wherry (Head of Record Services, Hereford and Worcester County Council) and his staff at the Worcester Record Offices at St Helen's and County Hall, and Miss M. Sanders (Reference and Information Librarian, Worcester City Library).

We are grateful also to: Mr James Bennett (Curator of Elgar's Birthplace) for his help and hospitality at Broadheath; Mr Alan Webb for his memory of Henry Elgar; Mr H.W. Gwilliam for writing to us about South Bank and Elgar's visits to Waterworks Road; Miss Marjorie Parsons (grand-daughter of Francis J. Grafton) and Mrs Angela Grafton for comments on our statements about the Grafton family in Part III; Rev. Fr V. Ambrose Crowley for identifying William Allen's grave for us; and Mr E. Wulstan Atkins and Mr Nigel Edwards for exchanging information with us on the Weaver family.

## ADDITIONAL NOTES

(Part I: Britannia Square) The Elgars' friend Louis H. D'Egville and his family lived in College Yard, not College Precincts as stated. This is made clear by critical re-examination of the 1841 census when D'Egville (then aged between 55 and 60) was listed in College Yard together with his wife Mary and children William, Kate, Millicent, and Fanny. It must have been the son William who later lived in College Precincts, Bath Road, Edgar Street, and Britannia Square and his son William Henry (aged 13 in 1861) who Elgar knew in Malvern.

(Part I: Sansome Walk) The establishment at The Lodge was the main private school for Roman Catholics in Worcester for many years, in this century and the last. Mary Grafton - remembered by her grandniece Marjorie Parsons, who attended the school herself (as did many of her family), as an 'incredible woman' - was its mainstay, especially in the later stages. A musician, she played the organ at St George's and trained the altar-boys to serve Mass, as later recalled by Fr Francis Weaver SJ - who, with his brother (John Bernard), went to the school and prepared for First Communion there.

(Part II: Mealcheapen Street) Hester Greening, Elgar's grandmother, was one of six Apperley children, not five as stated (information from Mr A.E. Daniels). Hester's mother (Elgar's great-grandmother) must have been Ann Gibbons, who married John Apperley in 1781, and *not* Ann Mann as suggested - for the latter's marriage was to an evidently different John Apperley in 1776, when Elgar's great-grandfather would have been only 16 (information from Dr L.F.W. Eickhoff and Mr Daniels). The Daniel Greening of Aston Ingham, who may have migrated to Worcestershire before Joseph Greening\* and his family, was Joseph's younger brother (born 1782). We have recently come across other Greenings and Apperleys in the Worcester censuses, all apparently related to the Elgars, but their identities remain to be determined.

(Part II: High Street) At 5 High Street, next door to the Leicesters at No. 6 and the Perkesses at No. 7, lived the artist Enoch Doe and his family (1841 census). Their servant that year was an Ann Grafton and we wonder if there was the start of another Grafton/Leicester connection here - for a Mrs Ann Leicester, whose identity we have yet to establish, was listed at Bath Place, Chestnut Walk, in 1873, perhaps the wife or widow of J.H. Leicester. Doe and his wife Mary Ann, a staymaker, later shared business accommodation with John Baldwyn across the road at 98 High Street. Like John's grandson Charles Henry Clifford Baldwyn, Doe and his son Enoch painted china for the Worcester manufacturers - Baldwyn specialising in bird subjects and the Does in scenic subjects and figures.

\* Joseph Greening's death (we now learn from Mr Harry Hollingsworth of California) was registered, not in Worcester but in Droitwich. This was because all registrations of births, marriages, and deaths for the Parish of Claines were required to be made at Droitwich in those days - a cause of considerable inconvenience to those living in Worcester itself then and of much confusion to genealogists later. The death certificate (obtained for us by Mr Ronald Taylor) shows that Elgar's grandfather died of 'hydrothorax' or dropsy (oedema) of the chest after an illness of some months; the death was registered on 13 November 1848 by Joseph's daughter Elizabeth Simmonds who gave his occupation as 'farmer'; she had been present at the death and had probably helped to nurse him.

---

## Elgar and Eric Coates

by Ian Lacey

This year (1986) marks the centenary of the birth of Eric Coates, who is mainly remembered today for his light orchestral music which introduced such long running radio and television programmes as *Music While You Work* (*Calling All Workers*), *In Town Tonight* (the March *Knightsbridge* from *London Suite*), *Desert Island Discs* (*By the Sleepy Lagoon*) and *The Forsyte Saga* (*Halcyon Days/Elizabeth Tudor* from *The Three Elizabeths Suite*)

Coates' music, which is marked by fine craftsmanship in melody and orchestration, followed a tradition of polished popular orchestral music started by Sullivan, Edward German and, of course, Elgar.

Of Elgar, Eric Coates said: 'Many people found him difficult but I always found him charming.' Eric Coates' style - particularly his marches - owes much to Elgar. Elgar had a high regard for Coates' music. He once told Eric Coates that he always bought his recordings and that his favourite at that time was *Summer Days Suite* which Elgar said he had literally worn out.

Eric Coates was born on 27th August, 1886, at Hucknall in Nottinghamshire. He studied viola with Lionel Tertis and composition with Frederick Corder at the Royal Academy of Music in the days of Sir Alexander Mackenzie when the Academy was in Tenterden Street.

Eric's wonderful autobiography *Suite in Four Movements*, published by Heinemann in 1953, paints a marvellous picture of life and the musical personalities at the Royal Academy in the early years of this century. Coates went on to play the viola in theatre and concert orchestras under the batons of such famous names as Henry Wood, Nikisch, Mengelberg, Debussy, Richard Strauss and Elgar.

In 'Suite in Four Movements,' Coates wrote:

'I think the most uncertain of all the composers I played under was Sir Edward Elgar for his highly-strung nature, added to a habit he sometimes had of starting to conduct a work before the orchestra was ready, was unnerving. How well I remember the night at Queen's Hall when he was conducting a performance of his overture, 'In the South'; he

raised the stick without warning and executed a terrific down-beat, which was responded to by the first desk of the violas only (that being myself and my colleague), the remainder of the orchestra joining in on the second bar!

With stick in hand, he did not seem able to indicate to the orchestra all that was in the score. That he himself was aware of this shortcoming seems to be borne out by the story of his turning to a famous 'cellist, who was just about to play Elgar's Violoncello Concerto with him one day at Bournemouth, and saying: "I'm going to leave this to you. I simply can't make head or tail of it!"

Elgar's restlessness seemed reflected in his part-writing and I always found his music, lovely as a great deal of it is, extremely tiring to play. You never seemed to be in the same position for more than a few seconds, and were kept dodging up and down all over the strings, *sans cesse*. He was a great writer, even if you did not like everything he wrote, and he at least knew his own mind well enough never to have to resort to the expedient of a 'second edition'.

Eventually, when neuritis in his left hand made playing the viola more and more difficult, Eric Coates turned exclusively to composition.

Like Elgar, Eric was often influenced by childhood themes. He was inspired by the story of Cinderella to produce one of his most charming compositions. He set Oscar Wilde's fairy tale story *The Selfish Giant* to music too and the original inspiration for *The Enchanted Garden* was *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. Another of these orchestral phantasies *The Three Bears* greatly appealed to Elgar.

Again, writing in his autobiography, Eric Coates related this story:

'Elgar scared me out of my life at Eastbourne by appearing in the artists' room just as I was about to go on to the platform to conduct my 'Three Bears'. He insisted on sitting behind the drums. He was quite oblivious of the fact that his entry into the orchestra had created a minor sensation among the audience and that during the performance he nearly dried me up by tapping his feet and wagging his head from side to side, to such effect that it was only with the greatest difficulty I managed to keep my mind on directing the orchestra through the cross-rhythm of the foxtrot section in my *Phantasy*.'

Like Elgar, Coates enjoyed great popular acclaim for his marches. After *Knightsbridge* was first broadcast in 1933, twenty thousand letters arrived at Broadcasting House within the following two weeks asking for the name of the composer and the signature-tune of *In Town Tonight*. Late in his life a similar acclaim followed *The Dam Busters March* (Coates' only film score).

What is less well known today is that Coates, like Elgar, composed a large number of songs which were very popular in their day - particularly in the years before the first World War. The most successful of these included *Stonecracker John*, *Green Hills o' Somerset*, *Bird Songs at Eventide*, *I Heard You Singing* and *The Fairy Tales of Ireland*.

Although there were many similarities between the two men the sharpest contrast seems to have been in their personalities. Whereas Elgar's personality was more volatile Eric Coates was very much more serene. His was a happy personality full of *joie de vivre*. His son, Austin, confirmed that this was the case...

'Though, of course, one noticed at home first and foremost what a calm person he was, how extremely ordered he was - how, for example, he couldn't write music until he was properly dressed in the morning complete with tie and Harris Tweed coat and perhaps a Turkish cigarette. He was very formal at home and incredibly tidy but very easy to live with.'

Whereas Elgar sought inspiration in the countryside it was usually the reverse for Coates. He was most happy working amongst the sounds and excitement of London.

In common with Elgar, Eric Coates had a delightful sense of humour. Teddy Holmes of Chappell's tells of an occasion at a Chappell Ballad Concert rehearsal under Alick Maclean: 'Eric used to tell the story of MacLean stopping an orchestral rehearsal and saying, "Tympani, I want the accent - Bum - Titty - bum - titty - bum." During the replay, MacLean again stopped the orchestra, and said, "Tympani, I want the accent Titty - bum - titty - bum" to which the tympani player responded (to the delight of the orchestra), "Excuse me, Mr MacLean, but do you want the accent on the Titty or the Bum'

If Elgar's *Land of Hope and Glory* regularly stops the last night of the Proms, Eric Coates' *Four Centuries Suite* once caused a similar sensation at a Prom concert. Austin Coates told me:

*Four Centuries* is a very demanding work. In the valse, the leader, faced with that appallingly difficult violin solo, fluffed badly. I thought to myself, 'How on earth are they going to get through the fourth movement?'

'When that movement began, my mother and I were getting pretty nervous. Then, when the tenor saxophone entered, the audience laughed. Jascha Krein, who had been specially engaged with two altos from his saxophone team, was so shocked he nearly dried up. There was a moment when the work very nearly collapsed. Outwardly, my father remained entirely cool, and avoided looking at Jascha Krein, who somehow mastered himself and went on.

'Again, at the point of the trumpet phrase played 'in the hat', there was a laugh. Although it was a very warm evening, my mother and I were, by this time, stone cold and perspiring with anxiety. The trouble with laughs from a concert audience is that you can never tell whether it is a laugh of ridicule or amusement.

'By the end of the work I had reached a stage where I didn't mind what happened. I had somehow cut myself off. Well, there was no clapping. Instead, they were banging on the boards, waving their arms in the air and yelling at the tops of their voices. Even in the more sedate tiers they were on their feet cheering, and in the gods they were yelling and waving. The noise was deafening. I have never before or since seen such an extraordinary scene in a concert hall, and it went on unabated while my father took two calls, at the end of which the principal violinist said something to him. Amid the uproar it was impossible to hear a thing, but by lip-reading I could see the principal was saying, 'Eric, you've got to ...!'

'So, in defiance of BBC rules - they were on the air - my father took up his baton (immediate dead silence) and conducted the fourth movement again. This time, Jascha Krein, realising the audience was with him, not against him, and the orchestra having

recovered from their nerves (make no mistake, they had been worried too), gave a magnificent performance, far better than the first. And the same incredible scene took place a second time. Deafening uproar. And again, it went on unabated while my father took two calls. For an awful moment I thought he might have to do it a third time. But he had a wonderful way with an audience. He made a very simple gesture, which without need for a word, said, 'Now, I'm going home. So must you.' They cheered him till the last instant they could see him. The moment he was lost to view the cheering stopped like turning off a tap, and they were all rumbling home.

Eric Coates died at Chichester in December 1957. The centenary celebrations this year include: a special concert in either Hucknall (Coates' birthplace) or Nottingham, with a probable repeat concert of the same works in London. A possible re-issue of some pre-1936 78s on LP is planned and probably a reprint of Coates' Autobiography expected to include a selective discography and a list of works. A new biography is being written by Geoffrey Self, ex-Trinity College of Music, also BBC Radio and Television plan a series of concerts possibly to be introduced by Austin Coates. Bournemouth and Eastbourne Music Festivals have also expressed interest and a Chappell folder will be published which will include details of music scores available of the orchestral music and songs.

---

### 'Moriah' and the Introduction and Allegro

A brief coda to our editor's generous description in the last Journal of the Llangrannog weekend.

Delightful though the social side was, we were bent on a little mild musicological research. Geoffrey Hodgkin's article in the *Newsletter*, May 1975, in which he examined the discrepancies between Rosa Burley's two published accounts, provided the spur.

I aimed at recreating Elgar's own experience. His account runs: 'on the cliff, between blue sea and blue sky, thinking out my theme, there came up to me the sound of singing.' The fall of a third, he thought, was common to the songs, which he said he heard from Ynys Lochtyn. So I tried to arrange for us to be on Ynys Lochtyn, and for a choir to sing to us from below.

Sing what? When Percy Young's and my books came out in 1955, *The Western Mail* carried an article on them by Wil Ifan. In this he said that John Davies (in 1955 conductor of the Treorchy Male Choir, in 1985 director of the Fishguard Festival) guessed that Elgar might have heard a neighbouring Sunday School outing, and that one of the tunes was the hymn 'Moriah'. So the local Blaenporth Choir, at our request, prepared, among other things, 'Moriah'.

Ynys Lochtyn? On our own feet we clambered up, then down, to look at that tiny but steep-sided islet at the low north end of the great peninsular. Unlikely that Elgar could have climbed onto it without grappling irons, and if he had, the great bulk of the cliff behind him would have cut off sounds of singing. So probably he thought Ynys Lochtyn was the name of the whole headland.

Between blue sea and blue sky? Before our visit Geoffrey asked the Meteorological Office for details of Elgar's days there (they are for Aberporth, a few miles south).

Friday 16 August 1901. Partly cloudy. Max temp 65. Wind SW, force 3-4

17 August. Cloudy with rain, heavy at times. Max temp 65. Wind SW, backing SE, force 3 incr to 5

18 August. Partly cloudy, brightening later. Max temp 69. Wind S, force 4 decreasing to force 1

Writing for his programme note in 1905, 'brightening later' may well have become 'blue sea and blue sky' in the mind's eye of happy memory. As Wil Ifan said, who in 1901 was in his 'prime as an open-air choralist' and took part himself in waggon outings to that coast, 'it never rained, or, if it did, it made no difference; I can never think of Aberporth of Llangranog without the sun and the singing.'

The Met details of our visit in summer 1985 are unprintable; and the Blaenporth choir, with great zeal, had prepared a concert setting of 'Moriah' with extended piano accompaniment (a piano on those cliffs?) so our chapel listening was scarcely authentic. But afterwards, in the pub next door to where Elgar had his meals, members of the choir ended their spontaneous extra recital with a plain, unaccompanied and fervent singing of 'Moriah' which nearly lifted the roof. So if our research could not be accurate in the letter, we certainly shared in the spirit.

D. McV.

285.

# MORIAH. M. 8.7.8.7. D.

ALAW GYMREG.

The musical score is written on four staves. The first two staves are for the vocal line, and the last two are for the piano accompaniment. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked '♩ = 72'. The score includes a repeat sign at the end of the first vocal line. The piano part features a steady accompaniment with chords and moving lines. The piece concludes with a 'D.C.' (Da Capo) instruction.



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

26 Jan.	Enigma Variations <i>RPO/Previn</i>	Royal Festival Hall
15 Feb.	Froissart Overture; Carillon (with speaker) <i>LSO/Bernard Keeffe, Denise Keeffe</i> (speaker)	Royal Festival Hall
20 Feb.	Symphony No. 1 <i>Philharmonia/Andrew Davis</i>	Royal Festival Hall
24 Feb.	Introduction and Allegro <i>English Chamber O. &amp; Robles Harp</i> Ensemble	Royal Festival Hall
24 Feb.	Violin Sonata <i>Lorraine McAslen (v) and John Blakely</i> (p)	Purcell Room, South Bank
24 Mar.	The Apostles <i>Philharmonia Orchestra and Choir; RCM</i> <i>Girls Chorus/Andrew Davis; I.</i> <i>Buchanan, A. Hodgson, M. Davies, J.</i> <i>Summers, S. Roberts, S. Dean</i>	Royal Festival Hall
27 Mar.	Symphony No. 2 <i>Philharmonia/Andrew Davis</i>	Royal Festival Hall
30 Mar.	Froissart Overture; Chanson de Matin; Sospiri; Wand of Youth; Violin Concerto <i>Philharmonia/Andrew Davis; Oscar</i> <i>Shumsky (v)</i>	Royal Festival Hall
11 Apr.	Pomp and Circumstance No. 1 <i>RAF Benevolent Fund concert</i>	Royal Festival Hall
27 Apr.	Symphony No. 1 <i>Kent Co. Youth Orchestra</i>	Royal Festival Hall
10 May	Enigma Variations; Sea Pictures; The Music Makers <i>LSO Chorus and Orchestra/Hickox; with</i> <i>Felicity Palmer</i>	Barbican Concert Hall, City of London
17 May	Dream of Gerontius <i>RPO/Huddersfield Choral Society</i>	Royal Festival Hall

## RECORD REVIEWS

Symphony No 1 in A Flat Major, opus 55

*Philharmonia Orchestra, conducted by Sir John Barbirolli*

*EMI Eminence EMX 41 2084 1.*

For many years this 1962 recording was the version of the 1st symphony which I played most often. Not having heard it for some time, listening to it again, for the purpose of this review of its latest reissue, has given me special pleasure.

The first thing to say is that the recorded sound has withstood that passage of nearly a quarter of a century exceptionally well. It was always one of the best products of a vintage period in EMI engineering, in the early days of stereo. It is still more than acceptable, with outstandingly natural balance and perspectives. I have not heard the last reissue, in the HMV 'Concert Classics' series, but comparison between this new reissue and the original top price HMV issue shows that remastering has made a remarkable improvement to the detailed clarity of the sound. Nowadays, perhaps, we would expect rather brighter, more immediate, siring tone - but this recording captures to perfection the unique silky quality of the Philharmonia strings of that time. And what an orchestra it was! For sheer beauty of playing there has never been a better version of this symphony.

The performance may not suit every taste. Barbirolli adopts some controversially slow tempi, and is somewhat wayward in the first movement. This is by no means the most dramatic or symphonically coherent of interpretations. However, his flexibility certainly allows one to savour to the full the beauty of the playing. In particular there are some wonderful moments of great sensitivity and individuality of tone from the wind players.

I would not recommend this reissue as a first choice version of the 1st symphony. On the other hand it is a highly characteristic interpretation by one of the really great Elgar conductors, whose deep affection for, and understanding of, the music shines through every bar. As such it is a recording to treasure, and its reappearance must be warmly welcomed.

G.H.L.

---

Symphony No 2 in E flat (recorded August and October 1944); CHOPIN, orch. Elgar: Funeral March (from piano sonata No 2 in B flat minor, opus 35) (recorded 30th May 1932)

*BBC Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Sir Adrian Boult*  
*HMV ED 29 0355*

On the sleeve note for this remarkable reissue, Michael Kennedy movingly recalls the impact of the original 78rpm discs on a young seaman in wartime. It really is an astonishing performance for anyone like myself previously familiar, only with Boult's four later, broadly similar, recordings of this symphony. Here tempi are surprisingly brisk, especially in the outer movements, and the whole performance has an extraordinary sweep and passion.

The other thing which will surprise many people, whose knowledge of the BBC Symphony Orchestra at that stage in its existence derives from hearsay and legend, will be the outstanding quality of the playing. We all know what a fine orchestra this was in the 1930s. It has always been said, however, that it went through a pretty thin time during the war years, with many key players in the services. One would hardly guess it from listening to this record: the string playing is exceptionally warm toned and rich and there is some wonderfully characterful solo wind-playing. It is the superb sense of confidence that comes from a perfect rapport between conductor and orchestra, shining through every bar, which gives this performance its special quality, and which permits not only the brisk tempi already mentioned, but allows for a remarkable degree of subtle flexibility and spontaneity of phrasing. The fourth movement is a perfect illustration of this: Boult sets off at a tempo slightly faster than Elgar's marking, yet manages to incorporate a greater degree of tempo variation and rubato than we are used to. The result is that the movement comes across with far greater emotional impact than usual, and sums up the various moods of the earlier movements far more successfully than I have ever experienced before. There is no trace of the 'autumnal resignation' generally regarded as the spirit of this movement by people who like to see it as an anticipation of the mood of the last group of major compositions, eight years later.

The performance benefits from recorded sound which is astonishingly faithful for its time, and which must have been something of a sonic miracle to the hi-fi buffs of the mid-1940s.

The Chopin orchestration is a curiosity which few people, I suspect, will want to listen to very often. The recording dates from more than a decade earlier than the symphony, and the considerable technical advance during that period is evident from the generally thinner sound and slightly scrawny, edgy, string tone. It is for the symphony, however, that I urge every lover of Elgar to obtain a copy of this record. G.H.L.

Piano Quintet in A Minor, opus 84

*John Bingham (piano) with the Medici String Quartet*

'Wood Magic'. A extract from an entertainment arranged by Michael Kennedy, read by Barbara Leigh-Hunt and Richard Pasco

*Meridian E77082 (disc)*

Piano Quintet in A Minor, opus 84; String Quartet in E Minor, opus 83

*Medici Quartet with John Bingham (piano) in quintet.  
Meridian KE77082*

Piano Quintet in A Minor, opus 84

*Leonard Cassini (piano) with Aeolian String Quartet;  
BAX: Legend for Viola and piano  
Watson Forbes (viola) and Leonard Cassini (piano)  
Concert Artist ATL-TC-5001 (cassette only)*

The common link between these three new issues is the *Piano Quintet*. The Meridian recording, it will be noted, is differently coupled on the disc and cassette issues, despite the fact that they carry comparable catalogue numbers - an example of intelligent use of the greater flexibility of side lengths available on the tape cassette

medium. In fact, the Meridian recording is a very fine production indeed: the sound quality is outstanding, the balance between piano and strings being just about ideally managed, the sound benefitting from the warm ambience of the renaissance mansion, Sutton Place, where the recording was made. Having said that, however, I am not entirely happy about the performance. Bingham and the Medici Quartet seem to me to fall into the trap of lingering rather too much over the slower sections, especially in the outer movements. The result is that from time to time the music almost comes to a stop, resulting in a loss of any real symphonic cohesion, especially in the rather discursive first movement. There is also a slight tendency to oversentimentalise the music at times. There is much beauty in the playing - but ultimately I found the whole performance just a little too self-indulgent.

Just what is missing in the Bingham/Medici version of the *Quintet* is immediately apparent in the reissue of the famous old Leonard Cassini/Aeolian Quartet recording, first issued on the Delta label over twenty years ago. This performance is full of passion, drive and forward movement, perhaps occasionally lacking in tenderness, but ultimately far more satisfying as a unified interpretation of one of the grandest of all the great chamber works. The biggest surprise, however, is how well the recorded sound has stood the passage of the years. Indeed the performance may not have been given its just due when first released as the sound quality was pretty dim on the old Delta discs. There was obviously little wrong with the master tapes, and a great deal of trouble seems to have been taken over the production of the new Concert Artist 'real time' cassettes. The balance is good, the rather close microphone placing in a rather dry acoustic resulting in wide stereo spread, exceptional clarity of internal detail and impressive impact. The piano tone is sometimes a little less faithful than might be achieved today, but is never less than acceptable.

The decisive factor in making recommendations between these issues is the various fill-ups. The *String Quartet* hardly deserves to be dismissed as a mere fill-up, of course, and it has to be said that this is a very fine performance indeed: full of life and colour, and, as an interpretation showing far more understanding of the requirements of the music than the *Piano Quintet* performance. Despite my reservations about the performance of the *Quintet*, the Meridian cassette should give a lot of pleasure, especially as the sound quality is so appealing. Michael Kennedy's *Wood Magic* is an evening's entertainment which did the rounds of the festivals last year, mingling live music with readings from Elgar's letters and diaries, as well as from contemporary writings. The Meridian disc opens with a six minute extract, read by two distinguished actors, covering the period of the late chamber works and after - two Binyon poems and Elgar letters covering the period of residence at Brinkwells, and the illness and death of Alice.

The Concert Artist cassette has a rare curiosity as a fill-up on the second side - about which I have been able to find nothing. The accompanying notes (by the late Alec Robertson), concise but detailed on the *Quintet*, contain not a word about the Bax piece. It is not perhaps a rediscovered masterpiece, but a worthwhile addition to the Bax discography, as well as to the limited repertoire for solo viola. Although the sound quality is not quite up to the best modern standard (and falls short of that achieved by Meridian), and the *Quintet* is not complete on one side, unlike the rival cassette, the Cassini/Aeolian still ranks as one of the finest performances ever of the *Quintet*. For anyone wanting just this work, this is the version I would now recommend, especially in view of the bargain price.

G.H.L.

## NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES

EAST ANGLIAN Branch ends a memorable and dramatic year with membership numbers fairly stable, - some gains but, sadly, some losses, - yet, with the prospect of more good meetings ahead, seasoned with good music and good fellowship, members will, hopefully, continue to bring friends whenever possible, introduce new members, and generally help with spreading the word. Significantly, with the A.G.M. opening the New Year it is hoped also to make this an occasion perhaps to ring some changes, infuse "new blood", - for the vitality of any society springs, surely, from a continuing source of fresh ideas, bringing new approaches, new contacts. The meeting over, a presentation by Roger Rowe of "The Black Knight" recording will suitably complete a lively evening.

February brings two events, - firstly the annual Winter Party, with "eats", "warmers" and Elgar quiz, (all good fund-raising stuff), and later that month a move to the Barbirolli Room in the Cathedral Close to take, with Michael Nicholas, "Another Look at Elgar's Choral Music, Including the Church Music." In March the Branch will welcome Michael Oliver, broadcaster and critic, to speak on "Elgar's Legacy", and Spring ends with an April visit from F. Harrison Oxley, one-time Organist and Master of Choristers at St. Edmundsbury Cathedral, whose subject will be "The Inspiration of Elgar".

LONDON BRANCH opened the 1985/6 Season at Imperial College on October 14th with a programme of live music followed by a social evening. The former was provided by Garry Humphreys (baritone) and Patricia Williams (piano), who gave us a most intelligently contrived and excellently performed programme, an object lesson in what can be achieved in a brief 45 minutes. Songs of Ernest Farrar, a casualty of the First World War, were followed by examples of the work of Farrar's pupil Harry Gill, including Gill's "In Memoriam" tribute to Farrar. We moved via Gerald Finzi ("Only a Man Harrowing Clods") to the almost light relief of Elgar's "The Fringes of the Fleet". The encore, too, was Elgar! The highlight of the social part of the evening was Maxwell Hutchinson's reappearance after a three year gap in the guise of auctioneer, cajoling over £100 from bidders for various oddments of Elgariana and kindred items.

At the November Meeting we welcomed Bernard Keeffe and enjoyed, some of us for the first time, the magnificent BBC film about Elgar and the Orchestra which first appeared about a dozen years ago. Mr Keeffe then added his more recent thoughts and provided a fascinating insight into Elgar's practical mastery of the orchestra at a time when playing standards and instrumental capabilities were by no means what they are today. There is certainly more to Elgar's masterpieces than abstract musical thinking on the Malvern Hills!

The 1985-6 season of the NORTH WEST Branch got off to a good start on October 5th, and membership appears to be slowly but surely increasing. We sincerely hope that this trend will continue.

By this time two people have expressed interest in the Secretaryship and Treasurership. It is hoped, subject to Branch approval at the AGM in January, that they will take up their duties after this date. All details in the next issue of the Journal.

The YORKSHIRE Branch commenced its 7th season with Ron Bleach's talk on 'Elgar and Bantock', on Sept. 16th. This, and subsequent meetings - including a Branch-sponsored organ recital at St Bartholomew's Church - have been well-attended, considering our relatively small total strength. Twenty-five have paid subscriptions for 1985; only three less than our best ever year. We have the expected slight 'turnover' of members, with the odd leaver being replaced by a new member, often coming by courtesy of the parent Society, assisted, we are sure, quite often by the Birthplace. It is a pity that such acquisitions often turn out to live anything up to 50 miles from Leeds, and we hesitate to press them to attend meetings when we know what it will cost to do so. We hope, however, that such distant members will keep in touch and perhaps make the effort to come along on one of our major evenings. Well worth such a trip will be the visit of Barry Sterndale Bennett on March 10th. We also have the Delius Society Chairman, Rodney Meadows, to address us on April 7th, and a visit by Diana McVeagh on June 30th.

Regular attenders will need no urging to come along to the pre-Christmas social on December 9th, when we expect the usual abundance of good food and drink, and a surprise or two in the way of entertainment.

WEST MIDLANDS send notes of their 1986 meetings, including the AGM on Saturday, March, 1st. This will be at The Stables, Albany Terrace, Worcester at 2.30 p.m. and will be preceded by songs from Diana Walkley. March 22nd, at the Old Palace, Deansway, at 7.30 p.m. sees Bernard Hall-Mancey, director of music at Bromsgrove School, introducing *The Music Makers* at a joint meeting with the Recorded Music Society. On May 3rd at Birchwood Lodge, Storrige, at 2.30 p.m. Margaret Elgar will give her 'Reminiscences', including childhood holidays at Woodend with Carice.

As will be noted on another page Frank Elgar's grave at Astwood Cemetery, is at present unmarked. Jack McKenzie has made a wooden cross, and Vernon Cartwright arranged for the carving of the inscription. The Branch hopes to have this erected at an early date.

SOUTH WEST Branch followed a successful last season with a fine start in September. We had a return visit from Dennis Clark, from Yorkshire Branch, with his talk 'Fred Gaisberg - HMV & the association with Elgar.' Another welcome return in October, of Terry Barfoot provided a thought provoking evening. His talk was on the Elgar symphonies. Our Journal editor Ronald Taylor brought the first half of the 1985/6 season to a close with his illustrated talk on the Elgar-Shaw relationship.

Jan. 18th is a Members' Choice Evening, when favourite Elgar recordings will be played, as well as contemporary British composers. The following programme in February (15th) we welcome the Society's former Secretary Andrew Neill, with his talk on 'Elgar and the First World War'. Final details are awaited on our March Meeting. On April 19th a joint meeting with the Delius Society, Stephen Lloyd, editor of the Delius Society Journal, will talk on Elgar & Delius. It could mean a South West Branch for the Delius Society. We wish them well. On 17th May Branch Secretary Ron Bleach will present his talk 'Dedicated to the Ladies.' More music than talk - music of Elgar which he dedicated to the ladies. Any member is invited to attend our meetings - Saturdays, 7.30 p.m. at the Octagon, Bristol Polytechnic, Frenchay. Just off the M32/M4 and close to Parkway Station.

## LETTERS

From RAYMOND MONK

Bill Nicol will not be surprised to learn that an article 'ELGAR AND THE MAN WHO COLLECTED TICKETS AT WORCESTER RAILWAY STATION' might be welcomed by me! And, he should know that Elgar scholars of the future might not thank us for being so dismissive about the impressions of such contemporaries. After all, they may well have afforded much greater enlightenment about ELGAR - THE MAN than much recent conjecture.

Clearly, Mr. Nicol is right to suggest that some areas of Elgar study have their limits. However, the subject of Elgar's many friendships, personal and professional, is far from being exhausted. For instance, Dr. Percy Young's brilliant talk on the Variations characters, only underlines how little we really know about most of them!

In 1956, Ernest Newman wrote 'Some day, no doubt, we shall be given a fairly complete edition of Elgar's letters'. Thirty years later, such an edition is not even on the horizon! My own view, for what it is worth, is that only with the publication of ELGAR - A LIFE IN LETTERS will some kind of watershed in Elgar research have been reached. But, we may then be sent off in many new directions!

---

From PHILIP L. SCOWCROFT

Mr. Nicol's letter (September 1985) seems to me totally misconceived. Several of Elgar's contemporaries as British composers have Societies of their own (Delius, Havergal Brian and Bantock are just three); more generally there is the British Music Society which does a great deal of useful work for native composers generally and more particularly those of the past 150 years - nor does it ignore those composers who already have a Society as its Journal printed, a few years ago, a lecture I gave on Elgar and South Yorkshire to our own Yorkshire branch.

Mr Nicol's final suggestion that our foreign members might submit articles on their national composers would, if adopted, make our field of activity impossibly wide. Nor, in our pursuit of knowledge about Elgar's life and works, have we yet descended to the triviality he suggests with his "ticket collector" illustration and there seems no reason why we should; the September issue is as good as ever.

---

BOOK WANTED. Rosa Burley & Frank Carruthers. Edward Elgar, the Record of a Friendship. Offers please to Dennis Clark, 227 Tinshill Road, Leeds, LS16 7BU

---

# THE ELGAR SOCIETY

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

**ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION:** £6. Family membership is available if only one Journal is received per family: 2 members per family £7; 3 members £8; 4 members £9. Branch members pay their branch subscription in addition to the basic amount. Applications for membership should be sent to the Hon. Membership Secretary, J. R. Greig, Orchard Barn, Derrington Street, Barham, Canterbury, Kent, CT4 6QB. Renewal of subscriptions, due January 1st, should be made to the Hon. Treasurer, David Morris, 125 Cleveland Road, Ealing, London W13 0EN. The Hon. Secretary is Carol Holt, 20 Geraldine Road, Malvern, Worcs, WR14 3PA.

## BRANCHES:

- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| London          | <i>David Bury, SECRETARY, Flat 6, 19 Ringstead Road, Sutton, Surrey SM1 4SE. Tel: 661-2120. John Greig, TREASURER, Orchard Barn, Derrington Street, Barham, Canterbury, Kent CT4 6QB. Tel: 0227-831337, to whom combined subscription should be sent.</i>   |
| Subscription £5 |   |
| West Midlands   | <i>Alan Boon, SECRETARY, Old School House, Martley, Worcester. Tel: 088 66 527. Jim Holt, TREASURER, 20 Geraldine Road, Malvern, Worcs WR14 3PA, to whom combined subscription should be sent.</i>  |
| Subscription £1 |   |
| East Midlands   | <i>For details, apply to the Hon. Secretary</i>   |
| North West      | <i>John and Gwenan Weir, SECRETARIES, 23 Buckingham Road, Cheadle Hulme, Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 5EG Tel: 061-485 1116. Douglas Carrington, TREASURER, 84 Park View Road, Lytham St. Annes, Lancs. FY8 4JF, to whom combined subscription should be sent.</i> |
| Subscription £4 |   |
| East Anglia     | <i>Anthony Morris, SECRETARY, 54 Abbey Park, Beeston Regis, Sheringham, Norfolk NR26 8SR. Tel: 0263 823875. Jack Gill, TREASURER, 74 College Road, Norwich, NR2 3JL. to whom combined subscription should be sent.</i>                                      |
| Subscription £2 |   |
| South West      | <i>Ron Bleach, SECRETARY, 54 Clarendon Road, Redland, Bristol, BS6 7ET. Tel: 0272 427329, to whom combined subscription should be sent.</i>   |
| Subscription £4 |   |
| Yorkshire       | <i>Dennis Clark, SECRETARY, 227 Tinshill Road, Leeds, LS16 7BU. Tel: 0532 671533, to whom combined subscription should be sent.</i>   |
| Subscription £2 |   |
| South Wales     | <i>Terry Jenkins, SECRETARY, 38 Tan y Bryn, Burry Port, Llanelli, Dyfed, SA16 0HP, to whom combined subscription should be sent.</i>  |
| Subscription £3 |   |