

# The Elgar Society JOURNAL



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# The Elgar Society Journal

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RADIO TIMES

## Edward Elgar: A Retrospect

From "The Henley and South Oxfordshire Standard", March 30th 1934

(Reproduced by permission of the proprietors).

I first remember him as a spare, dark, shy young man, somewhere about 1888, standing by a piano and looking at me with a gaze that was at once diffident and aloof - a look that I was to see many a time in after-years - as if he was half there and half in some other place beyond our ken. At that time he was trying to make me play the violin, and after listening for a while he would say with a most justifiable sigh, "Let me show you how that goes", and taking the fiddle would play the piece as it should be played, to our mutual satisfaction. On one of these occasions he showed me some musical MS, which he had recently written: I regret to say that I remember nothing of its nature, except that it was, I think, in D, and looked difficult: but it caused me to say: "Why do you not publish something, Mr. Elgar?", and his reply is worth recording: "They would never listen to me", he answered, "I am not scholar enough". Well, you were wrong, Master! They have listened to you and will continue listening with a pure joy and affectionate gratitude beyond any imagining of yours.

Memory jumps on to a certain study in a house at Malvern Wells: time has progressed also, for *Gerontius* is in the making, is indeed well nigh finished. Edward is in cheerful mood and has given us a resume on the piano of a recent folk song lecture which had appealed to the humorous side of him, never very far away. He now pulls out a drawer, extracts two sheets of pencilled MS, and hands us each one. "Like them signed," he asks, "red ink or black ink?" and as always when stirred by the whimsical, he moves not a muscle of his face. We accept with alacrity and gratitude, for it is something to possess a piece of the original pencil sketch of *Gerontius* and a thing to ponder over for many a time to come. Other memories come thick and fast, so that it is hard to choose from them or indeed to say in what order of time they should come. In my early days a musical enthusiast used to hold gatherings at his house every fortnight. I think to one of those we drove and Edward went with us. The first piece performed was I think the Schumann pianoforte quintette and Edward was playing first violin. I managed to get a seat from whence I could follow his score. "Hope you don't mind" I murmured, to which he replied with his most aloof, detached glance, "I don't think you will make me nervous" - and so it proved: he was a very good violinist and on this occasion carried the whole thing on his shoulders. The Malvern incident must have been about 1900. But before that, in 1895 or '96, there is a memory of a quiet room in London and many pleasant talks and happy meals, - of kindness and sympathy and lofty ideals - of hopes and fears and chagrin and disappointment and triumphs. And always that quaint whimsicality to touch the raw edges of life with a healing hand.

Then the scene shifts to an Elgar Festival at Hanley in 1903. A veritable treat, it included *Gerontius*, *Froissart*, *Sea Pictures* and other works. I would I could remember them all but I have mislaid the programmes for at least thirty years: but the memory of the whole is ineffaceable. Dinner with the Elgars and some friends (we were all staying at the same hotel), the ride in the old horse cab to the hall, the glorious performance of Elgar's works, nearly all in the first flush of their success, the scramble back to supper and much congratulatory talk received by Edward with little quaintly humorous rebutments of any merit whatever past, present or to come. Then sitting up to talk over

all matters musical with John Coates till 3 a.m.: but Edward, I remember, did not take part in this. Now here I must interpolate one memory that should have come earlier. Walking on the slopes of Malvern (this must have been after 1900) he asked me if I had ever heard a gramophone, and on saying that I had not he told me about his, what a wondrous invention it was and what effects could be had through its agency.

Another memory is standing in the Guild Hall at Worcester with him listening to the Festival Chorus under Sir (then Mr.) Ivor Atkins rehearsing his *Coronation Ode*: when they came to the well-known "Hope and Glory" tune he turned to me and said "What do you think of that tune, my boy?" (you must remember that the tune was quite new then). I expressed my sense of the stir and swing of such a direct appeal as his in that tune. He said "Well, I've had that tune in my pocket book for twenty years without using it".

Another memory: at a concert of the Worcestershire Philharmonic he conducted an earnest performance of Humperdink's *Pilgrimage to Kevlaar*. When it was finished there was a short interval and then they performed the whole work through again - a perfectly priceless idea but one that I have never known anyone else adopt: this, however, is a general rather than a personal reminiscence. Whenever I met him, and alas, we had lately but seldom met, he was the same kind, cheerful, humorous friend; the same whimsical, matter of fact, commonsense fellow citizen of the world. Sir Landon Ronald has said that Elgar was always perfectly conscious of his genius; I can only say that he never once gave me a sign of it in all the 46 years I knew him. At what proved to be our last meeting, as recently as September 20th 1933, he met me as if we had parted the day before. In the course of our talk I said "All the world is waiting for your symphony". He replied "What a gathering of the Clans there will be at Queen's Hall". He just said "I don't expect I shall be there", so quietly and naturally that the significance of the words quite escaped me then and until some time afterwards.

And now he is dead - as we say, and in good truth know not what we say. For he will yet speak to us and on through the years and what he has to say will take on a richer and a fuller meaning than ever before. As, for instance, when we hear again the triumphant cry which opens the E flat symphony there will ring in our ears and strike upon our understanding a subtler message and a more spiritual understanding.

There is no greater problem than that presented by genius. Not the brilliant cleverness which too often is labelled as genius and offers no exceptional difficulties, but that golden grace unfettered by man-made law, free and spontaneous as the winds of heaven, boundless as the interstellar spaces, which crown the little group of the Immortals, amongst whom Edward Elgar has stood and shall surely always stand. It may be that the only possible clue of the mystery is in the assurance that there is something which we call genius: that these fragments of Objective Beauty may be expressed in many ways in sound, in colour, in marble or in winged words. To those who loved and revered him it seemed that to Elgar the door was never wholly shut but that when he took up his pen he always, sometimes more, sometimes less, caught stray echoes of the Beauty as it came through that door never quite shut.

What will be his ultimate place among the thrice gifted of mortals it is far too soon for anyone to say but we know that for very certain truth he stands among them. And he will speak to us always while we wait here: in the symphonies and the variations, the concertos and the overtures we shall hear his voice. He was of no school - he had no predecessors and he had no pupils: if he had not lived what he had to say would never

have been spoken: thank God that he lived, and so, farewell Master.

A. B.L-W.

**Footnote**

*From Allan Jones*

Diana McVeagh's biography of Elgar makes reference in a footnote to two letters which are said to have appeared in the "Henley and South Oxfordshire Standard" on March 30th and December 30th 1934. I have checked the volume for that year and can find only the March 30th letter. The anecdote about the "Land of Hope and Glory" tune appears in that issue, not on December 30th as the footnote states. I have discovered that the "A. B. L-W" who wrote the article was Arthur Bradshaw Littleton-Wheeler, a keen local amateur musician who lived in Belle Vue Road, Henley-on-Thames. The article is now given in full.

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## **ELGAR: What Lay Behind**

by  
**Dr. Louie Eickhoff**

The dream was to trace Elgar's ancestry back to the nobility from which he seemed to have sprung, a product of gentle breeding, not just a rearing of quality augmented by experience granted, in that happy era, to those who served the Quality, whereby they caught gentility like the whooping cough. For Elgar was a gentleman long before he was knighted; and had Alice's aunts not known his background, he would have passed muster in their drawing rooms.

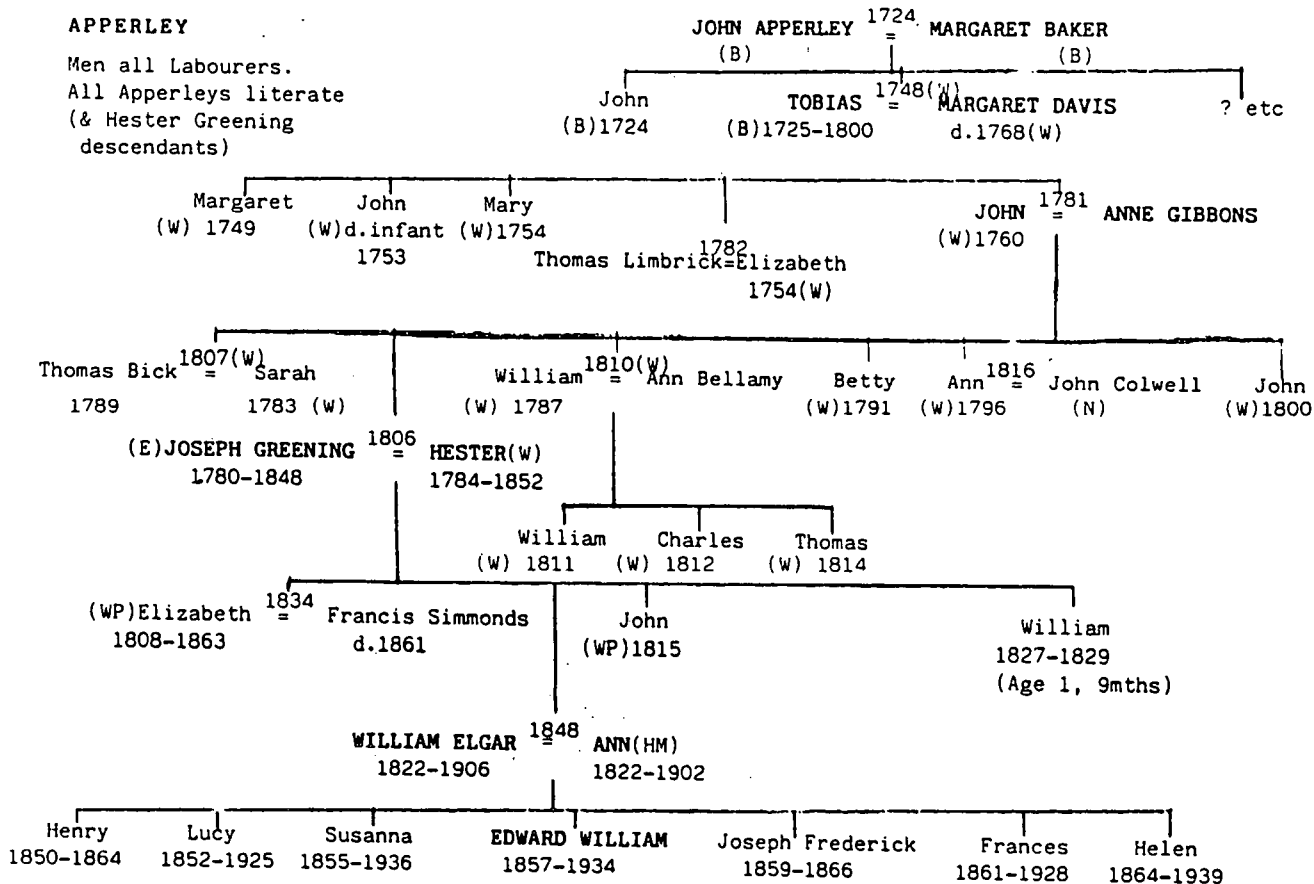
The reality proved better than the dream. Our Elgar came from the very earth of England. His forbears on his mother's side, to a man, were humble farm labourers, tilling the soil, labourers, not even farmers, let alone yeomen. Elgar's Apperleys, originating in Berkeley, were in Westbury from the 1740s, his Greenings in Elmore before that. Both places were part of the Guise Estate, which covered a wide area, including Blakeney, Awre, Newent and Cheltenham, and, indeed, all places where Apperleys and Greenings cropped up. Clutterbucks and Bicks also appear and there were more connections between the four families than is shown in the two tables - even an early 17th century link between Bick and Greening. These families swing about Gloucestershire as was common in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century; but not until the latter do they begin to migrate into Herefordshire, led, it seems, by Elgar's great-uncle Daniel, and spread into Ledbury and Worcester. Elgar's Greenings and Apperleys stayed in their Elmore and Westbury for upwards of 75 years, with much everyday contact between the two places. Apperleys even lie in Elmore churchyard.

They bred until they were tribes. There was more than one strain of Apperleys in Westbury, and Greenings in Elmore. In 15 years, in the latter village, there were four Greening marriages, all from different branches, between 1765 and 1780, resulting in 23 children of whom 3 died. When Elgar's grandfather was 15 to 16 (1795) he was, therefore, one of 28 living souls in the village bearing the name Greening, 3 Bettys, 3 Josephs, 3 Daniels, 4 Williams, 2 Johns, 2 Edwards, 2 Hannahs, one Sarah, Martha, Zacharias, Mary, Samuel, Jane, Elizabeth, Abraham, Ann.

They were born poor and lived poor - keeping no letters or papers (not even the literate

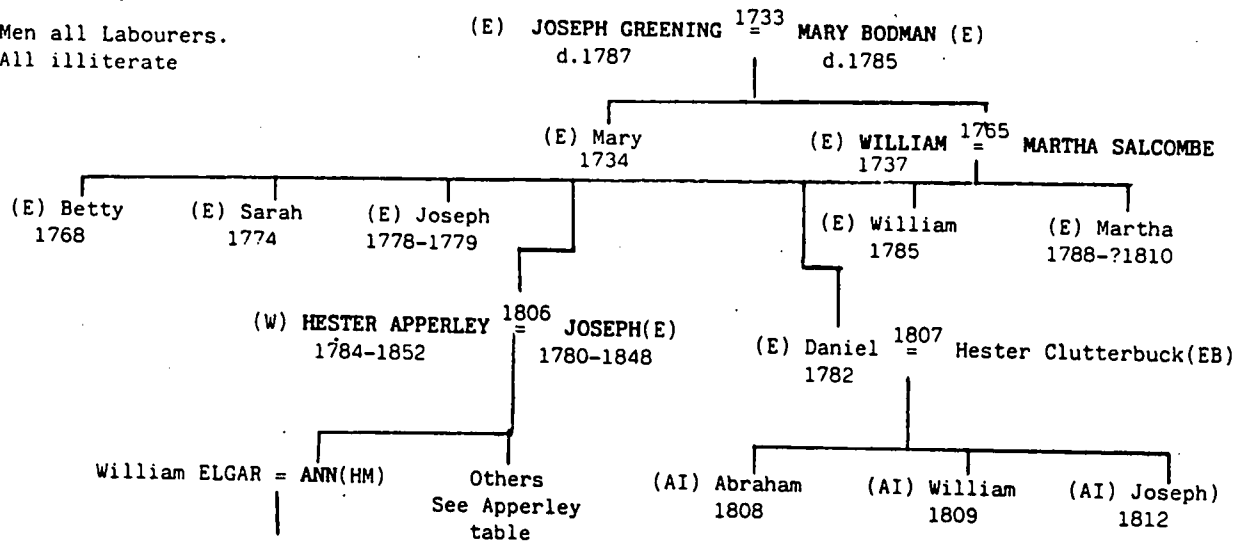
**APPERLEY**

Men all Labourers.  
All Apperleys literate  
( & Hester Greening  
descendants)



**GREENING**

Men all Labourers.  
All illiterate



For full details of descendants  
see APPERLEY table above

AI = Aston Ingham,  
Herefordshire

E = Elmore, Glos. EB = English Bicanor,  
Glos.

HM = Hope Mansell,  
Herefordshire

W = Westbury, Glos.

WP = Weston under Penyard, Herefordshire.

Dates are of Baptism, Marriage, & Burial (before 1850)

Apperleys) to clarify circumstances or lineage, and for descendants to hand in to Gloucester's Record Office. They appear in no crime lists or reports but are represented in Poor Law and Parish Returns as "Pauper" or "Poor" or as Parish "Apprentices" (i.e. put into service to prevent them being a charge on the Parish), the Apperleys more than the Greenings. At the time of Hester's marriage to Joseph Greening, his brother was living (presumably with his Ann) in an "old" rented cottage with garden (entire acreage 1 rood and 3 perches) belonging to the Guise Estate, "in shocking repair. If put in good repair it would be worth £2.10s rent but as it is, it is too bad to repair." Brother William, however, did not merit "Poor" or "Pauper" appended to his name.

The Apperleys married poor: their literacy did not elevate their aspirations. Thomas Limbrick, husband of Elgar's Apperley great grandfather's sister, had been a Parish Apprentice as his wife and her two sisters had been, and the son of the union was in his turn (1793). Those great-grandparents must have suffered from Hester's and Sarah's marriages. The former's to an illiterate was enough come-down; but Sarah's union with the eldest of the Bicks would have seemed calamitous, a public scandal. He was a youth scarcely 17, about six years her junior, making what was officially termed an "improvident marriage", and coming from a disastrous family, still christening the youngest at the time of Sarah's wedding, with the head of the household registered "Pauper" and "Poor" in Baptismal Registers. It would seem that the ceremony was forced, for just before is recorded the christening of a base child of Sarah's who, as did others of her station, assumed her husband-to-be's surname before the church put the seal on the union.

No wonder John and Anne (Elgar's great-grandparents) did not witness the wedding of Hester and Joseph (Elgar's grandparents); instead Joe's brother William, and his Ann, united in name, and probably living, four year before their church ceremony (just in time for their first 'arrival') did the honours as they were to do for Sarah a year later. Was this why Ann (Elgar's mother) asserted that her grandfather's name was William? We probably know more about the skeletons in Elgar's cupboard than he did himself. Ann would not have been the first mother to upgrade her father (to 'gentleman farmer'), lest others despise him, or her children be ashamed of their origins. In any case, in those days, unpleasant details were kept from children, who were left feeling that relatives were good for they were the extensions of father and mother, whose goodness was plain for all to see. But Alice's aunts! That their niece should marry into trade was enough to get her disinherited. How would the aunts have taken the background of LABOURERS peppered with illiteracy, poverty, pauperism, Parish Apprenticeship and 'base-born' offspring.

One jewel there was:-

1804 Collected at Westbury Music Festival in aid of the Parish School and left in the hands of the Rev. R. Wetherall. £16.0.0  
1805 ditto ..... £14.10.2d

Did the Apperleys take part? A hundred years later their famous descendant was given an Elgar Festival at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, March 1904. A tribute never before made to an English composer in his lifetime.

\*Particulars of an Estate situate in the Parishes of Elmore & Harwicke, the Property of Sir Berkeley William Guise, Bart. 1906.



Editor's note: Any sensible editor of Elgar material makes an early vow to keep solutions to the 'Enigma' puzzle away from his pages as much as possible. One hazard of this occupation is the many, sometimes bizarre, solutions which you have to cope with. However, over the years several interesting theories, more solidly based than most, been put forward, and the latest is set out below. Readers of the *Daily Telegraph* will have noted remarks by Michael Kennedy, and the correspondence which has resulted. However, no-one has yet given Mr. Kemsey-Bourne space to present his argument, and we do so here. Readers may well recall that the same solution was suggested by Ben Kingdon in our pages in May, 1979, though he approached the problem from a slightly different angle. (We regret that the May 1979 issue is now out of print.) Elgar's 'secret' died with him, but the musical and psychological solution suggested here is a most interesting one, R.P.T.

## THE REAL ANSWER TO ELGAR'S RIDDLE?

by Kenneth Kemsey-Bourne

The well-known seven notes of the plainsong-chant usually called the *Dies Irae* theme could well be the under-lying but unplayed "larger theme" that goes through and over the whole set of Elgar's *Variations on an Original Theme*, Opus 36, known familiarly as the *Enigma Variations* -- first performed in 1899.

This suggestion or hypothesis may be surprising, at first. The D.I. theme is not associated with ideas of friendship; the *Variations* are -- as have been most of the tunes or themes suggested over the years, e.g. the pentatonic "Auld Lang Syne" (which Elgar specifically said would not "do").

Members of this Society will be familiar with the detailed matter on pages 50 to 90 of Christopher Redwood's *Elgar Companion* -- lots of ingenuity, some interesting anecdotes, but most of it (I submit) on entirely the wrong tack.

Elgar himself reported how he improvised his Original Theme (O.T. for short) on the piano, one evening in October 1898, after a hard day's teaching, enjoying a cigar and his wife's company. "I musingly played on the piano the theme as it now stands." His wife (Alice) asked, "What was that?" Elgar said "Nothing -- but something might be made of it." After Elgar had played some variation ideas ("Powell would have done this" : "Nevinson would have looked at it like this") Alice remarked "You are doing something which I think has never been done before." Thereafter the idea of "picturing" his friends took over, the work went ahead rapidly -- and that O.T., a very "odd tune" remained unchanged.

Elgar, improvising his O.T., had no clear idea in advance of generating a jolly, friendly theme on which his *Variations* would be written, each characterising or caricaturing in turn his "friends pictured within". It follows that neither his O.T., or any under-lying "larger theme", should be assumed to have any basic connection at all with friendship, happiness or jollity.

We know that the work of putting the *Variations* together went ahead with plenty of fun, but that does not mean that the O.T., and any "larger theme" behind it in Elgar's mind, are humorous or friendship-oriented. From the O.T. quotations in *The Music Makers* the exact opposite is suggested.

## ELNIK Op. 56 VARIATIONS

ORIGINAL THEME

G MINOR

1 2 3 4 \* 5 6 7 8 9

G MINOR

DIES IRAE NOTES. IN B FLAT MAJOR

ONLY FOUR NOTES - TOP OF MAJOR SCALE

G MAJOR -

2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 17

G MAJOR

1st notes + clef

2nd notes + clef

2nd notes + clef

G MAJOR

If the Opus 36 Variations are based, however variably or loosely, on Elgar's O.T. -- and Elgar himself said that "the apparent connection between the Variations and the Theme is often of the slightest texture" -- and that O.T. itself has an under-lying (but unplayed) larger theme then that larger theme may fairly be said to "go" through the whole set of Variations.

The *Dies Irae* (D.I. for short) theme, or at least the first part of it, seven notes or seven bars, is no more than the top four notes of a major scale : e.g. G A B C if in C major, or F G A B-flat in B-flat major. Those four notes, played as seven notes from the top in a down-up-down sequence such as B-flat A B-flat G A F G are the D.I. theme. It has been much used, in plain or modified form e.g. by Berlioz (finale of the *Fantastic Symphony*), Saint-Saens (in waltz-time in *Danse Macabre*), for piano variations by Dohnanyi and violin variations by Ysaye, and in many different ways and places by Rachmaninoff.

It may or may not be relevant, but is certainly interesting to know, that Elgar knew his Berlioz from an early age and was very fond of the *Fantastic Symphony*, that Elgar knew Saint-Saens and had conducted his music, that Elgar encouraged Dorabella (Dora Penny, Mrs R. Powell) to dance to her variation in Opus 36 (Variation 10, in 3/4 waltz-time) and that Elgar knew and worked with the violinist Eugene Ysaye.

Elgar's improvised O.T. has been described as an "odd tune", and it is just that. It is uncommon for Elgar themes to begin with a rest. However, each of the first six bars of the O.T., in 4/4 time, begins with a crotchet rest in the top-line theme (first-violins only). The key-signature is two flats, which can be G minor or B-flat major. The top-line first violins theme uses A B-flat C D F and G (and B-natural in bar 7) but not E or E-flat, so it could arguably have been itself written in one flat, F major, but it sounds in G minor.

(The O.T. strings-only opening is summarised on two staves on pages 24-25 of Michael Kennedy's BBC Music Guide titled *Elgar Orchestral Music*.)

I am no Elgar, but like him and many others I enjoy playing about on a keyboard, and one recent evening, after a hard day, I was looking at Elgar's odd-tune O.T. with its seven bars and six first-note rests, and it occurred to me to see what happened if I put the D.I.-theme notes (B-flat A B-flat G A F G) in at the beginning of the first seven bars of Elgar's O.T. That is, hit B-flat in the bass, play B-flat G C A in the treble for the first bar; then hit A in the bass, play D B-flat A C in the treble for the second bar; and so on through the first seven bars of the O.T. You may care to try this. It gives a fair "fit", winding up with G major in bar 7.

That "fair fit" triggered some further thoughts, including Elgar's well-known surprise that nobody had guessed the nature or identity of the "larger theme" he had said (but only after the first performance of Opus 36 in 1899) existed, plus his remark to Dorabella that "she of all people" should have spotted what lay behind his O.T. I have two guesses or hypotheses to mention, namely:

1: After the success (internationally, not just in this country) of the *Variations*, and the fact that nobody had hit on the D.I. theme as his under-lying "larger theme", the last thing he wanted to disclose was that what had been at the back of his mind that evening in 1898 was not a jolly "friendship" theme at all (theme, not tune) but our old friend the D.I.:

2: In the Dorabella variation (waltz-time) there is, at cue 39, a viola-solo entry that counterpoints directly with the D.I.-theme notes (twice).

Then, looking for further circumstantial evidence, I turned to the last variation (Variation 14, E.D.U.), in G major. There, if anywhere, one might find something useful and relevant. The D.I.-theme notes, for G major, are the top four notes of the G major scale, namely, D E F-sharp G. The Finale begins. Allegro, with plenty of orchestral "skirmishing" until at cue 62 we find (full orchestra, largamente) a five-note sequence not previously used, namely: D E G F-sharp G. No programme-note that I have ever seen explains where the "E.D.U."-theme, a triumphant theme if ever there were one, originates. But, with hindsight, it is quite clearly the D.I.-theme notes, in a form one can only describe as transfigured by Elgar.

That E.D.U. sequence is repeated at cue 71 -- again marked 'largamente'. Elgar's Finale does have (three after 72) a wood-wind entry (four notes) that uses the four notes of D.I., but with the second and fourth reversed (B-flat A B-flat G), and the identical note-sequence occurs in Variation 1 (Elgar's wife, C.A.E.), but according to Dorabella, that note-sequence was used (whistled) by Elgar to announce to his wife, Alice, that he had arrived home -- so that may be a) either irrelevant, or b) indicate that the D.I.-theme-notes (the top-four of any scale) may have been more at the back of Elgar's mind than has been previously supposed.

Putting it at it's least, it is worth considering, the next time you hear the Variations, Opus 36.

Agreed, the whole of the Variations music is enjoyable, in its own right, as direct music. Nobody has to know anything at all about Elgar, or his friends "pictured within" to enjoy it.

The word *Enigma* was appended (and not by Elgar, as Michael Kennedy has pointed out) to page one of the score, the O.T., well after the first variations were written.

None of us can prove, at this late stage, exactly what was at the back of Elgar's mind on that October 1898 evening when he was relaxing and enjoying himself, improvising on the keyboard, but as any improviser or variation-writer must admit, be he cathedral-organist or jazz-musician, there will be times when fingers and sub-conscious memory-tracks take over -- and Elgar did know his Berlioz, church music, Saint-Saens and masses of other material over the years -- but the Original Theme (plus any sub-conscious larger theme, such as that D.I. sequence) did come first, and the idea, prompted very much by Alice, of writing Variations related with his friends, came second.

"Nothing -- but something might be made of it..."

Some under-statement! I submit, with all respect, that the D.I.-theme literally played a significant part, although you will not find it played, as such, in the score.

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## Part 1

- 1- Overture Titus Mozart
- 2- Part Song "When hands meet" Pinsute
- 3- Selection "Instrumental" Sphor  
{ Miss Woodward & Thompson - Meas.  
{ Elgar, Hadley & Woodward
- 4- Song "Oh haste ye Birds" Gumbert  
(Miss Brooks)
- 5- Serenade - Trans Flute & Violoncello  
(Miss Woodward Mr. Hadley & Dr. Woodward)
- 6- Song "Kind Words" Pinsute  
(The Ladies Reader)
- 7- Overture "Tancredi" Rossini

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Interval of half an hour  
During which Tea & Coffee will be served  
in the Coffee Room. —

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1986

The Society's 36th Annual Meeting was held on 31st May, at Malvern Girls' College, Great Malvern. It was perhaps sad that the meeting coincided with news of a fire at Gt. Malvern station (only recently restored to its Victorian splendour) which had destroyed part of the buildings. This was a station which Elgar used often, and it is unfortunate that money may not now be available to bring the station back to its previous state. It is to be hoped that Malvern and British Rail between them will be able to come up with a satisfactory solution. In a building once known as the Imperial Hotel, and where the young Elgar played in an amateur orchestra, an encouragingly large number of members gathered for the meeting, welcomed by the chairman, Michael Pope. Membership now stands at about 1200, and the finances are in reasonable shape, though expenditure has been heavy. However, the members seemed content with the reports given and expressed their confidence in the officers by re-electing them for a further year. Three vacancies on the committee were filled by Miss Margaret Elgar (the first time that a member of the family has served on the committee), Charles Adams, and Leslie Mustoe. The Society looks forward to the coming year with confidence, to an extension of its activities, and where possible it hopes to collaborate with other organisations

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### NEWS ITEMS

Older members, and particularly members of the London Branch, will learn with great regret of the death, earlier this year, of Constance Jackson. Her husband Bill Jackson was secretary of the London Branch for many years and later Society Secretary, and in the hours of hard work needed to establish the Branch Mrs. Jackson was an ardent supporter, and a regular attender at all the London meetings until ill-health prevented her further active interest. To Bill, and their daughter Lindsay, we express our sincere sympathy.

The long-awaited recording of *King Olaf* may not appear by the Autumn after all. The latest information, as we go to press, is that issue may be put back to January 1987. If this is so, what a pity that the Christmas trade will have been lost, though we must be glad that it is to appear, eventually!

Settle-Morecambe Visit. After the successful expedition to Llangrannog in 1985 London Branch hopes to organise a visit to Settle and Morecambe (home ground of Dr. Buck and Canon Gorton). Probably over the weekend of June 26/27, 1987. Further details will be announced at London Branch meetings and will appear in the January JOURNAL. Meanwhile, anyone wishing to receive further information is invited to contact the Secretary of London Branch

The Society is in need of someone, or, indeed, several people working together, to operate a Newscuttings Service. At one time the West Midlands kept cuttings of interest to Elgarians, news of Elgar Society matters, or musical research involving Elgar's work and life. The large number of papers and journals which need to be covered has made it impossible for the branch to continue this work, but it needs to be done. Are there any volunteers, or anyone with experience of such work? Please write directly to Mrs. Carol Holt, the Society's Secretary.

**BYGONE KENT** is not a magazine which often crosses our path, but the May 1986 issue contained an article of great interest to our readers. The article was "The Kentish Roots of Sir Edward Elgar" by Joan Brailsford, and is a well-researched piece of work, with illustrations, which gives much new information on the Elgar family, before William Elgar made his move to Worcester. It was with sadness that we learnt just after we received the magazine that the author has died, and we send sympathy to her family. Copies of the magazine may be obtained from the publishers Meresborough Books, 7 Station Road, Rainham, Kent, ME8 7RS. The cost of a single issue, including postage is £1.40.

Dr. Melville Cook advises us that after many years at the Metropolitan United Church in Toronto, he is returning finally to this country. We are delighted to welcome him back, and he hopes to settle in Cheltenham. Dr. Cook has been responsible for some fine choral and organ performances in Toronto, and gave a series of farewell organ recitals to mark his retirement. Many Toronto music-lovers will regret his leaving them.

David Stybr, one of our American members, is now issuing a bi-monthly newsletter called 'Maestro' for the Classical Music Special Interest Group of the American MENSA. Appealing to such a wide range of interests in a brief newsletter is not easy, and we wish Mr. Stybr well in his task. The copy we have seen is very interesting.

Barry and Pauline Collett are the tutors in a one-day school to be held at Vaughan College, Leicester, on Saturday 11th October, 11 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. The subject is "Edward Elgar, his music, life and times." Details from Trevor Hold, Dept. of Adult Education, University Centre, Barrack Road, Northampton, (Telephone: 0604 30084)

**THIS YEAR** marks the 50th Anniversary of the setting up of the Elgar Birthplace Trust. To the Trustees, past and present, and to the Curators, past and present, we extend our congratulations on work well-done, and wish them success in the future. Members of the Society take a keen interest in the Birthplace Museum, and if, by some strange chance, there are any members yet to make their first visit then we urge them to do so without delay. They will be well-rewarded

Macmillan's have published several volumes extracted from the large Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, and the volume TWENTIETH CENTURY ENGLISH MASTERS is to appear in October. Diana McVeagh's essay on Elgar will head the contents, together with essays by other writers on Delius, Vaughan Williams, Holst, Walton, Tippett and Britten. The essays have been expanded and updated since their appearance in the Dictionary in 1980, and extended revised bibliographies are included for each composer. Hardback will be £13.95, and paperback £8.95.

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I had hoped that by this time we might have been able to combine our editorial forces with those of the Elgar Foundation. Unfortunately it has not yet proved possible, but I am still hopeful that before very long something will happen in that direction.

Ronald Taylor  
Editor

## AN ELGAR WORLD PREMIERE

With so many works of a dramatic nature to his credit, in the form of oratorio and cantata, it is perhaps surprising that Elgar did not attempt an opera until too late in his life for completion. *The Spanish Lady* promised all the ingredients, including humour, of a form one would have thought a natural medium for the composer. Such music as was completed in basic content but not orchestrated contained so much that was unmistakably Elgar in style.

It is due to the enterprise of the City University Department of Music that we were able to hear the first concert performance of Dr. Percy Young's realisation of the score of this unfinished work. It was given as the opening item of their tenth anniversary concert at St. John's, Smith Square, on May 15th, and was preceded by an enlightening and explanatory talk by Dr. Young himself, at which many members of the Elgar Society were present, including officers and several distinguished Vice-Presidents.

The City University Symphony Orchestra were joined by members of the Opera Course of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, in what could be described as a concert dramatisation, being neither a straight concert performance nor a costumed stage presentation, but something in between. All the personae were effectively characterised with just enough suggestion of movement and gesture; entrances and exits pertinent to the five scenes being enacted and, in the case of the Spanish Lady herself/himself - the requisite mantilla donned (and doffed) at the appropriate moment.

Under the stylish and masterly direction of Cem Mansur, of whom we shall no doubt be hearing much more, including, it is to be hoped, further Elgar performances, the orchestra, chorus and soloists gave a convincing and well-integrated presentation. Of special mention were the strong, rich voices of Bryn Jones, Gaynor Morgan, Roisin McGibbon and Simon Tunkin who, as Meercraft, had the right mixture of haughtiness and naughtiness. Dramatic continuity was maintained by the lucid exposition of the narrative by Peter Roberts, and the vocal team as a whole evinced as much theatrical awareness as excellence of voice production. It would be interesting to hear them in a kinder acoustic.

The performance of other items in the concert was excellent.

Margaret Benselin.

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## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

20 Sep.	Introduction and Allegro <i>Rutland Sinfonia/Collett</i>	Uppingham School Hall, Rutland at 7.30 p.m.
5 Oct.	Introduction and Allegro <i>Halle Orchestra</i>	Free Trade Hall, Manchester
13 Oct.	Symphony no. 1 <i>Philharmonia/Sinopoli</i>	Royal Festival Hall
18 Oct.	Pomp and Circumstance no. 1 <i>London Concert Orchestra</i>	Royal Festival Hall
28 Oct.	Serenade for Strings <i>London Mozart Players/Hughes</i>	Queen Elizabeth Hall
1 Nov.	Fringes of the Fleet <i>Rutland Sinfonia/Collett</i>	Uppingham School Hall, Rutland at 7.30 p.m.
5 Nov.	Introduction and Allegro <i>Philharmonia/Hughes</i>	Royal Festival Hall
6 Nov.	Falstaff <i>Halle Orchestra</i>	Free Trade Hall, Manchester
8 Nov.	The Kingdom <i>Leeds Philharmonic Chorus/RPO/Groves, with Rogers, Caley, Montague, Donnelly</i>	Leeds Town Hall at 7.30 p.m.
15 Nov.	Violin Sonata <i>Keith Ramsell (violin); Gordon Kirkwood (piano)</i>	Purcell Room, South Bank
15 Nov.	Spirit of England/Cello Concerto <i>Croydon Philharmonic Society/London Orpheus Orchestra/James Gaddarn, with Jo Ann Pickens, Felix Schmidt (cello)</i>	Fairfield Hall, Croydon at 7.45 p.m.
19 Nov.	Pomp and Circumstance no. 4 (Royal Concert) <i>RPO/Dorati</i>	Royal Festival Hall
21 Nov.	Serenade for Strings <i>London Bach Orchestra/J. Williamson</i>	Queen Elizabeth Hall

24 Nov.	Introduction and Allegro <i>Purcell Ensemble</i>	Queen Elizabeth Hall
3 Dec.	Cockaigne Overture <i>RPO/Davison</i>	Fairfield Hall, Croydon at 8 p.m.
10 Dec.	Violin Concerto <i>Kennedy/LPO/Downes</i>	Royal Festival Hall
14 Dec.	The Dream of Gerontius <i>Brighton Festival Chorus/RPO/Groves, with Walker, O'Neill, Luxon</i>	Royal Festival Hall

## RECORD REVIEWS

A Tribute to Elgar, Delius & Holst, *Black Dyke Mills Band*

Chandos BRD 1031

Records of Elgar for brass band (and I mean not just the *Severn Suite*) seem to be a growth industry. A year or so after the 1984 discs by the Desford and Foden bands (reviewed in the JOURNAL, vol. 4, no. 1, p.20) comes this fine production by the venerable, yet brilliantly skilful, Black Dyke Mills Band, which, as it includes transcriptions of works by Delius and Holst, as well as Elgar, looks as though it too should have appeared in 1984. All the transcriptions were made specially for the record by Gordon Langford and the Black Dyke Mills conductor Major Peter Parkes, but I hope they may be published and achieve wide circulation, so that brass band audiences - a large proportion of which, for whatever reason, do not go to orchestral concerts or hear many orchestral records - may get to know and love Elgar's music.

The present record, made in Dewsbury Town Hall last year and excellently engineered, is splendid advocacy for Elgar as it is indeed for Holst (*The Perfect Fool ballet music*, arr, Parkes) and Delius (the early *Marche Caprice*, arr, Langford). Gordon Langford, a prolific composer, is even better known for his many brilliant arrangements, whether vocal, for the King's Singers, or instrumental, primarily for brass. The seven movements from *The Wand of Youth* (the Desford/Foden set featured four, arranged by Bram Gay) have such delicate orchestration they must have taxed even Langford's ingenuity, but the result is to my ears outstandingly successful in Black Dyke's accomplished and sensitive readings. The movements, by the way, are Overture, Serenade, Minuet (all of which have playing of great delicacy) and Fairies and Giants, for the First Suite; then March, the Tame Bear, and Wild Bears, from the Second. Peter Parkes probably had fewer problems in arranging the *Three Bavarian Dances*; his band show their virtuosity especially in *The Overture in D minor*, the remaining item and a Langford setting, seems to me to be particularly suited to brass and I can see it being a favourite with bands in the future. Again the playing has great breadth.

Elgar would surely have loved this record and particularly the devotion brought to the music by these Northern bandmen. I do urge you to investigate it.

P.L.S.

Violin Sonata in E minor; Gavotte for violin & piano (plus encore pieces by Frank, Falla, Shostakovich, Clara Schumann & Scarlataescu)

Isabelle Flory(v), Robin Colvill(p).

ARCT 1021, Cassette only.  
(Available from the Elgar Birthplace)

The young French violinist Isabelle Flory has done some excellent propaganda for Elgar in Europe, playing this Sonata in France, Belgium, Greece, and other countries, and performing the *Piano Quintet* with her French chamber group Arpeggione. She has also played the *Sonata* many times in this country and recently gave a stunning account of the *Violin Concerto*, with the Rutland Sinfonia under Barry Collett. Now this cassette has appeared, made by EMI in their studios, and I have no hesitation in saying that it is one of the finest performances of the *Sonata* that I have heard. It is a thoroughly passionate and powerful performance, with the many rhythmic subtleties beautifully shaped and judged, and with absolute security of tone and intonation throughout. Do hear it - and what an excellent answer it is to those doubters who still believe that foreigners, and especially the French, do not understand Elgar! On the second side is a sparkling account of the marvellous early *Gavotte*, with other short pieces for violin and piano (not by Elgar).

B.C.

Four Pieces from *Wand of Youth*; *Salut d'Amour*; *Serenade*, Op. 20; *Pomp & Circumstance Marches*, nos. 1-5.

Foden O.T.S. Band/Howard Snell

EHS 003D

(Polyphonic Reproductions Ltd, 77-79 Dudden Hill Lane, London, NW10 1BD)

Late in 1984, and reviewed in our pages in January 1985, two records appeared in The English Heritage Series (Brass Band). These were very well received, and the arrangement by Eric Ball of the *Enigma Variations* drew special comment. Now a third record has appeared, this time using the Foden band exclusively, but again conducted by Howard Snell. Four more movements of the *Wand of Youth* have been arranged by Mr Snell, and he has also produced arrangements of *Salut d'Amour*, *P & C Marches 2 and 5*. *Marches 1 and 3* have been arranged by Philip Sparke, and no. 4 by Bram Gay. These *Marches*, of course, lend themselves perfectly to the sound of a brass band, and all the arrangements pay due regard to Elgar's original feeling and emphasis. They make easy listening, and as with each of the records in this series the recording is excellent.

The *Wand of Youth* movements: *Overture*, *Fairies and Giants*, *Slumber Scene*, and *Sun Dance*, are all finely done. Howard Snell was for long a trumpet player in a symphony orchestra and he is adept at producing delicate effects, as well as using the full force of brass when it is called for. The arrangements are first-class and beautifully performed. This is brass-playing at its finest. *Salut d'Amour* is the weakest item on this disc. We have long been used to *Salut* being played on almost any instrument, and a cornet or trumpet does nothing really except to emphasise that this piece always sounds best on the violin.

However, the astonishing piece here is the *Serenade (for Strings)*. But how, you may well ask, can you have a work written entirely for strings played without any strings at all? I must confess that I approached this track with some doubt - it could not possibly sound anything but a travesty, surely? I was convinced otherwise within a few moments - indeed it is hard to get away from the feeling that this must have been written for brass band, it sounds so *right!* Everything about it gives us the very best of brass sound, with some quite brilliant playing. The arranger is Philip Sparke, and he has done a marvellous job. This record is worth buying for the *Serenade* alone.

NEMO.

Enigma Variations, Op. 36; Falstaff, Op. 68.

London Philharmonic Orch/Sir Charles Mackerras

EMI EL 270374-1  
(Cassette) EL 270374-4

I believe firmly that *Falstaff* is one Elgar's most brilliant scores, but I find that I seldom hear a performance which really satisfies me. There always seems to be something lacking, though I would be hard put to it to explain exactly what I mean. Over the years I have constantly returned to Elgar's own performance, first on 78s, and then transferred on to LP. But this score, if any of Elgar's, should benefit from the marvels of modern recording, and I have waited for a version which really pleased me. Well, here it is! I cannot fault it, it brims over with brilliance and vitality, though the quiet and contemplative passages are handled with great delicacy. The recording was made in St. Augustine's, Kilburn, and the acoustic is perfect for this music, and the combination of LPO and conductor. I had not previously considered Mackerras a real Elgarian, but how wrong I was! He has judged this music, and its performance, to perfection. I shall still keep a corner for the Elgar version, but for me Mackerras and *Falstaff* are now synonymous.

After such fulsome praise it might follow that the *Variations* would be a let-down, but most certainly this is not the case. In a month when there are two versions to consider (the other reviewed below) it is inevitable that a comparison must be made between Menuhin and the RPO, and Mackerras with the LPO. I have to say that the latter version appealed to me more, both for the clarity of the recording, and the spirit of the performance. We all judge the music we hear by our own individual quirks and preference. I judge *Enigma* by the following: The Theme, Nimrod, Romanza, and EDU. If these are right, then the rest usually follows. My somewhat arbitrary method of judgement is here completely justified. The theme and variations which I have listed are outstanding, and indeed the whole performance is remarkable. One of the best versions ever recorded.

NEMO

Cello Concerto (Soloist: Julian Lloyd Webber); Enigma Variations.

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra/Sir Yehudi Menuhin

Philips 416 354-1PH  
(Cassette) 416 354-4PH  
CD 416 354-2PH

Julian Lloyd Webber is an outstanding young cellist, and it was only a question of time before he tackled the Elgar Concerto. The fact that he had Menuhin as the conductor could only aid the performance, and I looked forward to hearing it for the first time. Despite a fine recording I must confess that I was a little disturbed at the amount of restraint the soloist and conductor displayed. It is true that it is a work full of melancholy and longing, but that is not the only emotion in this great work - there is a frustration, a fretfulness, a sense of things left undone, never to be finished. Therein lies much of the sadness ... These latter qualities, despite a lovingly-prepared performance by Lloyd Webber, are just not there. I put the record aside, a somewhat disappointed listener, and then a day or two later I played it again. This time I found more in it, and I appreciated its subtleties. Perhaps it needs several hearings to understand how Menuhin and his soloist saw the work. I shall listen yet again.

As I said above, the coupling is another performance of the *Variations* and here it comes in direct competition with the new Mackerras version. Let me say immediately that the recording is very fine, but I was disturbed by the tempi - from the beginning we are dreamily going along. The theme drifts into CAE, and the succeeding variations have not the individuality which we should expect. Even the rumbustious Troyte seems to be a bit subdued, though Dorabella 'dances' delightfully. Perhaps Mackerras has spoiled the appreciation of Menuhin's performance for me. Certainly Sir Yehudi's attitudes to Elgar deserve our attention and respect, and we hope for more performances on record.

One small complaint: Philips is, of course, a large international company, and they have obviously decided to standardise their European labels by using German for the titles. I must admit though that seeing such a brilliant British work, recorded in Watford Town Hall, described as "Variationen" looks very strange!

NEMO

Sir Adrian Boult Conducts Elgar: Choral Songs

*BBC Chorus Sir Adrian Boult*  
*(BBC recording, made at Maida Vale Studios, 8th February 1967)*  
*HMV 'Greensleeve' ED 29 0818 1*  
*(formerly Elgar Society ELGS 002)*

Nowhere on the sleeve of this HMV issue of Boult conducting Elgar part songs is there any indication that this is identical to the Elgar Society disc, ELGS002, which came out in 1982. Yet not only have the notes by John Knowles and Michael Pope (producer of the original broadcast) been used again (the latter with a minor modification and an updated copyright to 1986!) but the sleeve illustration is an almost identical view of the church of San Miniato at Pisa - this one taken by our own Andrew Neill! What is the old saying about the sincerest form of flattery?...

EMI have gone to a lot of trouble over this issue, and I have to say, albeit reluctantly, that the BBC tapes sound much better now. I am sure that Nimbus, who processed the Elgar Society issue, and who have such a fine reputation for careful mastering and pressing, did the best they could with the original issue. There has been progress in the past four years, however, and EMI have been making use of the Direct Metal Mastering system, invented by the German Teldec company. The result is that the sound is generally brighter, cleaner and clearer in detail. I was troubled by a touch of distortion which clouded some of the high, loud soprano passages on my copy of the original issue. The HMV issue reproduces all the suspect passages with perfect clarity.

As before the second side is filled up with the rather stilted and obviously scripted short conversation between Sir Adrian and Carice Elgar Blake (a 1940 broadcast) and Sir Adrian's personal reminiscences of Elgar, recorded in 1951, which have since been reprinted in the Toccata Press 'Boult on Music' book.

Gareth H. Lewis

Elgar: Piano Music

Peter Pettinger

Chandos ABRD 1164

Much of the music on this new Chandos disc duplicates what John McCabe recorded in his pioneering album of Elgar piano music, first issued ten years ago. Without minimising McCabe's enterprise, however, it must be said that it is now completely superseded by this new recording. Peter Pettinger plays with as great sensitivity and technical accomplishment as his predecessor, but the main asset of this new recording is both its completeness, as far as exploring the outer limits of Elgar's piano writing is concerned, and the superb sound quality. The piano tone (notoriously difficult to capture faithfully on record) is as natural as I have ever heard.

Peter Pettinger has prepared a fascinating programme. Some of the pieces he has recorded here, such as *Dream Children* and *Carissima*, are better known in orchestral form, although, like so much light music of that period, they were published in a variety of forms, and it seems pretty certain that these piano versions were prepared by Elgar himself. The late *Serenade* and *Adieu* became more familiar in 'small orchestra' format, but were undoubtedly first submitted to publishers Keith Prowse in short-score form, with the instruction that they could be 'adapted to any arrangement you think fit'.

The central work in any survey of Elgar's piano music is inevitably the *Concert Allegro* - here given in the revised and slightly shortened version prepared from Elgar's indication on the manuscript. Pettinger plays it with great virtuosity, if not quite with the barn-storming panache of the famous John Ogden recording of the original, longer version of the piece.

Completeness does mean the inclusion of some juvenilia - although these are of rather more than historic interest for the Elgar enthusiast. We are given the *Sonatina*, published in 1931, both in its familiar and original (1889) versions. The charming, if understandably derivative *Chantant* was written at the age of 15, while the brief 'air de ballet' called *Pastourelle* has a bizarre history, having been written under the pseudonym 'Gustav Francke', and first published by Boosey in 1903 as the opus 10 of Edward's brother Frank!

Elgar may not have been one of the great writers of piano music, but as this disc shows, what he did write specifically for the medium shows the same thoroughly professional understanding of the instrument that he showed in his writing for other forces - and occasionally, as in the *Concert Allegro* and the wonderful miniature *In Smyrna*, he came very close to the sort of greatness which we have come to love in the major orchestral works.

A record which should be an essential part of the record collection of every real Elgar enthusiast.

G.H.L.

**Symphony No 1 in A flat, op 55**

*Royal Philharmonic Orchestra Andre Previn  
Philips 416 612-1 (disc) 416 612-2 (CD)  
London Philharmonic Orchestra Bryden Thomson  
Chandos ABRD 1161*

**Symphony No 2 in E flat, opus 63**

*London Philharmonic Orchestra Bryden Thomson  
Chandos ABRD 1162  
Halle Orchestra Sir John Barbirolli  
EMI 'Eminence' EMX 41 2093-1*

None of these recordings of Elgar symphonies is likely to appeal to devotees of the Haitink, Solli (and, perhaps, Boult) approach, which places forward movement and symphonic cohesion ahead of superficial emotional impact. Having said that, however, the great revelation for me was the new Previn recording of the *1st Symphony*. None of his handful of previous Elgar recordings prepares us for the sensitivity and insight with which he is now able to penetrate Elgar's special world. Just occasionally there are moments in the difficult first movement which disappoint, in that some weaker linking sections are less successfully disguised than they might be by a conductor who has spent a lifetime with the music, and knows instinctively how to distract the attention by a subtle change in tempo or phrasing. In general, though, there is nothing to fault interpretatively - there are few conductors who have so successfully discovered how to bridge the gap between the 'European' symphonic, and the instinctively British way of handling this familiar music.

Nevertheless, there is much that is highly individual: no other conductor, for example, has brought such a brash swagger to the first part of the scherzo. The orchestral playing is outstandingly good. The rather dry acoustic of the hall, coupled with the customary rather lean-toned RPO string sound, allows more detailed internal clarity than usual, permitting the snarling brass and the very fine and individual RPO wind players to be captured in all their splendour. This is undoubtedly one of the great Elgar interpretations on record.

By comparison the Bryden Thomson *1st Symphony*, is something of a disappointment. On the credit side, one must praise Chandos for giving us outstandingly attractive sound quality. The warm, resonant acoustic of All Saints Church, Tooting has added a warm glow to the LPO strings (which is not always evident in the concert hall) but at the expense of blunting the impact of the brass and tympani. Particularly attractive is the skilful way in which a simple, slightly distant microphone arrangement has allowed a clear but exceptionally natural orchestral balance, with the sort of 'depth' to the sound which one used to get on EMI recordings in the early days of stereo. Thomson, however, chooses very slow tempi overall, and the first movement in particular suffers from too much emotional underlining, which, superficially attractive though it may be, seems here to seriously disturb the forward movement of the music. The orchestral playing, it must be said, is absolutely superb, a similar sense of alertness to that which characterised Vernon Handley's recordings (with the same orchestra) giving a spontaneous feel to Thomson's often unexpected tempo changes and highly individual phrasing. There are, as might be gathered, many moments of great beauty in Bryden Thomson's performance of the symphony, but somehow the parts do not add up to a totally satisfying whole.

Much the same can be said about Thomson's interpretation of the 2nd symphony. Once again slow tempi throughout prevent any real sense of symphonic cohesion, despite the obviously carefully thought out, highly personal approach to tempo and phrasing. Again the recording quality and the orchestral playing are of a rare calibre - sufficient to make this performance, like that of the *1st Symphony*, really be recommended as amongst the list of first choice recordings of the Elgar symphonies.

Barbirolli's 1964 recording of the *2nd Symphony* has always been controversial, a constant complaint being the slow tempi. As a performance it is generally felt to be less satisfying than his more straightforward earlier version, made a decade before (still available from the Barbirolli Society, on SJB101). Everything is comparative, however. Listening to this reissue of the Barbirolli recording immediately after Bryden Thomson's recordings, it actually seemed in places to be somewhat brisk! Barbirolli's personal, somewhat idiosyncratic, handling of the first movement has prevented many listeners (and critics) over the past twenty years from appreciating the many special insights to be gained from Barbirolli's great experience and understanding of Elgar's symphonies. As a whole, this performance will not be to everyone's taste - but there are outstanding moments, well worth exploration at the new bargain price, even if the total effect is rather less satisfying than the recording of the *1st Symphony* (with the Philharmonia Orchestra) recorded two years earlier, and reissued last year.

On the other hand this rather close-up recording has not stood the passage of time as satisfactorily as the 1st symphony - and, it must be said that the Halle of 1964 was no match for the Philharmonia in its prime, particularly in wind and brass intonation. No one, however, has imbued the 'largetto' movement with such emotional intensity as Barbirolli, yet he keeps it moving. Thomson, aiming at something of the same effect takes nearly a minute and a half longer over the movement.

G.H.L.

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## BRANCH REPORTS

LONDON reports that the 1985/6 season was completed in fine fashion. The "Evening with Norman Del Mar" saw our distinguished guest give an unforgettable performance as wit and raconteur, intermingled with wisdom and an erudition which saw him never lost for an answer! The Secretary received the suggestion that Mr. Del Mar be approached to speak to all our meetings next season, and though, of course, this will not happen, we should be marvellously entertained if it did.

In May Henry Sandon of the BBC's "Antiques Road Show", and late of Worcester Cathedral Choir, provided more hilarity with his often irreverent reminiscences of life as a Lay Clerk, though tempered with affection and good sense, notably in his tribute to the late Edgar Day. This was another first class meeting which can be enthusiastically recommended to other branches. It was an ideal introduction to our final meeting on Elgar's birthday, when Harry Brama and Southwark Cathedral Choir provided a special Elgar Evensong. This was followed by the AGM at which tribute was paid to Diana McVeagh after six years of inspiring leadership. Maxwell Hutchinson was elected Chairman in Diana's stead, and David Michell becomes Vice-Chairman, while no less



than four committee vacancies were filled by Dinah Beresford, Dr. John Buttrey, Martin Passande and Malcolm Walker. Meetings recommence at Imperial College on October 13th, with live music and a social get-together.

EAST ANGLIA's closing meetings of last season were well-attended, with gratifying support maintained by members from both near and as far afield as Cambridgeshire and Suffolk. Prior to the July Summer Party (a success despite uncooperative weather), the Branch held three meetings of contrasting interest and appeal. In April, a relaxing evening of reminiscences was given by Fred Harrison Oxley, recounting his growing affection for Elgar's music over the years. This was followed in May by a visit from Jim Berrow of Central TV, producer of *Land of Hope and Glory*, who gave a most interesting introductory talk on his work as a film-maker, prior to presenting the film itself. Finally, in June, the A Capella Singers from Southwold provided an enjoyable evening of unaccompanied choral songs, from Elgar's period to that of Britten and Tippett, presented with their usual happy informality, and interspersed with some lively recorder playing; a real end-of-term treat!

The new season opens on September 19th with a welcome return visit from Ronald Taylor to talk on Elgar's various involvements in the world of early broadcasting. Claude Powell comes to the Branch in October with reminiscences of his mother's friendship with the Elgars, and in the following month our own Branch Chairman presents a programme entitled *Elgar and other Composers of his Time*. This will be the last 1986 meeting, December being reserved for the most sacred of rites - the Christmas Dinner.

SOUTH WEST's season proved to be up to the usual high standard. In May Ron Bleach, Branch Secretary, presented 'Dedicated to the Ladies', in which he talked about and played recordings of most of the Elgar compositions dedicated to a particular lady. In June there was the AGM - the present officers and committee were re-elected for a further term, except our Hon. Treasurer, who decided to stand down owing to business pressures. As yet no replacement has been found, though we hope to fill the vacancy shortly. It was also decided to hold future AGMs in January rather than June.

Following the successful joint meeting with the Delius Society we are delighted that our opening presentation on Sept. 20th is another joint gathering when Dr. Eric Fenby has agreed to visit us. His association with Delius and Elgar, and other composers, should ensure a full house. It would be helpful if members could advise should they plan to attend this special meeting. Of course visitors are always most welcome. Following, in October, we have a visit from Garry Humphreys who will present *The Trees are Singing my Music - Edward Elgar Illuminated*. Then on 22nd November a live presentation by The Avon Brass Ensemble, when they will play a mainly English programme, including some Elgar, of course. No meeting in December, but we start again on 17th January with the AGM, followed by the Branch Social - food and wine. All meetings at 7.30 p.m. at the Octagon, Bristol Polytechnic, Frenchay, just off the M32, close to the M4.

NORTH WEST Branch reports on their forthcoming meetings. First Dr. John Wray on the Third Symphony on 4th October, then on 1st November the Central TV film *Hope and Glory*. On 6th December the Christmas Meeting (a little early) with live music, probably the wind quintets. The AGM takes place on 10th January, and this is followed on 7th Feb, by John Weir talking on 'Elgar's Rival, C.V. Stanford'. The season ends on 7th March with Prof. Ian Parrott on 'The Enigma Solved'. Finally, our congratulations to Secretary Geoffrey Thomason and his wife on the arrival of a son, Patrick.

No news again from SOUTH WALES, except that sadly Terry Jenkins has resigned from the position of Secretary of the Branch. For the time being any enquiries and correspondence should be addressed to the Branch Treasurer. (Address on back page). Our thanks to Terry for good work done since the Branch was set up several years ago, and we hope that a replacement can soon be found.

WEST MIDLANDS season opens on THURSDAY, 25th September, when Sir Vivian Dunn will speak on 'The Elgar Others and I know', at 7.30 p.m. at The Foley Arms, Worcester Road, Malvern. This meeting on a Thursday is to accomodate Sir Vivian, who will be on his way from London to speak at Warwick University. On 18th October the Society Vice-Chairman, Trevor Fenimore-Jones will speak on 'Elgar - Man and Vision', at 2.30 p.m. in the Old Palace, Deansway, Worcester. 15th November will see a visit from Dr. John Wray who will talk on Elgar's Third Symphony, at 2.30 p.m. in the Friends' Meeting House, Sansome Square, Worcester.

Members generally might like to know that work is now underway to renovate and recut the musical inscription on Canon Gorton's gravestone at Breinton, Hereford. This was being sponsored by West Midlands Branch but relatives have recently undertaken to be responsible for the cost. Negotiations are still under way with the Conservators regarding a suitable site for the placing of a seat on the Malvern Hills in memory of Sir Edward. Members generally will be asked to contribute when the site is finalised. Watch this space!

Since Elgar's birthday this year fell on a YORKSHIRE BRANCH meeting night, it seemed logical to use the occasion to hold an 'Elgar Birthday Social.' This was duly enjoyed by a large turnout of members. A toast was drunk to Elgar's memory, a cake was cut, a large amount of food and drink was consumed, and we found time to hear some music and hold a very profitable raffle. Prior to this, however, on 13th May, eight of our members crossed the Pennines to visit Manchester's Free Trade Hall, where Nigel Kennedy gave a stunning performance of the Elgar *Violin Concerto*, with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, with Bryden Thomson. We thought the applause would never die down, but when it did we were entertained with an amusing and very un-Elgarian encore, which sounded as if Nigel was making it up as he went along!

We had looked forward to Diana McVeagh's visit on 30th June, but in the event Diana was unable to come due to illness at home, a disappointment to us and, we believe, to Diana. Members can be reassured that a new date will be arranged for her visit. The 1986/87 programme, though not yet printed, includes several evenings worth waiting for, starting with Ian Lacey's talk (Sept 22) on 'Elgar's Sussex'. Chairman Michael Pope makes his first visit to us on Oct. 6 to talk about Caractacus. Prof. Ian Parrott comes on Mar. 9 to give us his 'Elgar's Enigma Solved', and we have been very fortunate to secure a visit (May 11) from Winifred German, great-neice of that other 'Sir Edward'. Mrs. German is to give a talk entitled 'A Shropshire Lad', and is hoping to bring along some original MSS, and some of Elgar's letters to German.

## LETTERS

From Barry Collett

I was very interested in the two articles by Alexander Kiselov from Yaroslavl in the May edition of the JOURNAL. I am sorry, though, that he feels the need to apologize for not sensing the essential 'Englishness' in Elgar's music. He need not worry about that - neither do I. In fact the English themselves have often been the biggest stumbling-block to the appreciation of Elgar's genius abroad. "Great news for English Music Lovers!" scream the head-lines in The Gramophone when announcing new issues of the Elgar symphonies. Does this imply that it is not great news for anyone else, or that foreigners should not delve into the mystique surrounding his music? And how much Elgar, or other English music, is played by our orchestras when visiting Europe? Precious little - they take Mahler and Brahms - unless Rozhdestvensky or some other foreigner is conducting, when Elgar appears more frequently. Compare the amount of national music that nearly all European orchestras visiting us bring with them!

I suppose that the English, until quite recently, have been unsure how to cope with the fact of producing a major European composer. I can detect no 'Englishness' in his music anyway (whatever that may mean), except by hindsight or association, and I have worked with enough foreign musicians in performances of Elgar to know that there are no artificial boundaries where great music is concerned.

So, Mr. Kiselov, continue to enjoy and to promote Elgar in Russia, and make sure your friends know that he is a major European figure, and no more a provincial English one than Tchaikowsky or Rimsky-Korsakov are provincial Russians!

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From D.C.H. McBrien

I wrote the letter to Hi-Fi News about the Elgar 'stereo' 78s, the editorial footnote to which Mr. Dartnall quotes in his letter in the May JOURNAL. The June issue Hi-Fi News has brought letters from two EMI recording engineers both of whom confirm a negative view. Since one is currently EMI's remastering controller for the International Classical Division it is improbable that EMI propose to issue an LP of these recordings. From what the other engineer, David Pickett, says it would seem that the 'stereo' effect obtained when two different simultaneous takes are played together arises from the impossibility of exactly synchronising the recordings. If we are denied 'real' stereo recordings of the old Elgar performances an Australian engineer has demonstrated, on Radio 2, the amazing results that can be obtained in cleaning up old jazz records (even acoustic ones), and giving them a fake stereo effect. Perhaps he could be persuaded to have a go with the Elgar records.

## MUSIC for PAGEANT, PART I and PART II.

MASTER OF MUSIC ... .. HENRY JAXON

The greatest possible care has been taken in selecting the music, and British composers only are represented. Mr. Henry Jaxon has had the wide experience of Mr. I. A. de Orellana in assisting him in the selection and orchestration. The orchestra of 120 musicians has been specially selected from the London Symphony Royal Albert Hall and Covent Garden Theatre (Opera) Orchestras.

The Choir (who have generously given their services) are members of the Alexandra Palace Crystal Palace, Royal Choral, Ealing Choral, Harrow Choral, Northwood Choral Societies, and Wembley Chour, &c.

### PART I.

#### HENRY VII AND JOHN SEBASTIAN CABOT.

EMPIRE MARCH ("1924") ... .. Edward Elgar  
 OLD FOLK SONGS ... .. R. Vaughan Williams  
 COUNTRY DANCE ("Neil Gwynn") ... .. Edward German  
 DOG'S MARCH ("Merchant of Venice") ... .. Frederick Ross  
 SAILING WESTWARD (Noyes) ... .. Edward Elgar  
 CORONATION MARCH ... .. Edward German

#### THE PIONEERS.

THE EARL OF OXFORD'S MARCH ... .. Byrds  
 PRELUDE ("Garden of Allah") ... .. London Ronald  
 RIWATHA (Selection), Wedding Feast ... .. Colridge Taylor

#### THE PAGEANT OF NEWFOUNDLAND.

MARCHANT ADVENTURERS (Noyes) ... .. Edward Elgar  
 MELODIES ("Young England") G. Clutsam and H. Bath  
 ADMIRALS ALL ... .. Hubert Bath  
 GAVOTTE ("The Rebel Maid") ... .. Montague Phillips  
 QUADRILLERS ("Cameronians") ... .. Old Melodius  
 EMPIRE SONG (Choir and Orchestra) ... .. Percy Fletcher

#### THE PAGEANT OF LEARNING.

OLD PLAIN SONG (Organ) ... .. —  
 FRYAL MARCH ... .. George Elvey  
 PRINCE HERLON (March) ... .. Nicholas Gally  
 SHAKESPEARE'S KINGDOM (Noyes) ... .. Edward Elgar  
 PAGEANT ("Romeo and Juliet") ... .. Edward German  
 GRACEFUL DANCE AND MARCH ("Henry VIII") ... .. Arthur Sullivan

#### THE PAGEANT OF CANADA.

SOLEMN MARCH (Organ) ... .. Walford Davies  
 BENEDICTUS ... .. A. C. Mackenzie  
 SOUSUM CORDA (Organ) ... .. Edward Elgar  
 CANADA (Noyes) ... .. Edward Elgar  
 FOLK SONGS ("Maple Leaf—O Canada") ... .. —  
 FOR EMPIRE AND OUR KING (Choir and Orchestra) ... .. Percy Fletcher

### PART II.

#### THE DAYS OF QUEEN ELIZABETH.

EMPIRE MARCH ("1924") ... .. Edward Elgar  
 PRELUDE IN THE MEADOWS ("Countryside") ... .. Eric Coates  
 THE OLD CRUYS—CHERRY RIFE (Choir and Orchestra) ... .. Anon  
 DANCES ("Henry VIII") ... .. Edward German  
 IN A COUNTRY LANE ("Summer Days") ... .. Eric Coates  
 SPIRIT OF PAGRANTRY (March) ... .. Percy Fletcher  
 GLORIANA (Noyes) ... .. Edward Elgar  
 LONG LIVE ELIZABETH ("Mertie England") ... .. Edward German  
 THE DROM IN P ... .. Henry Smart  
 IMPERIAL MARCH ... .. Edward Elgar

#### THE ENGLISH FLEET IN THE MEDITERRANEAN—BLAKE AND THE BARDARY PIRATES.

"NERO" March ... .. Colridge Taylor  
 THE MARINERS OF ENGLAND (Choir and Orchestra) ... .. John Poynter  
 PLYMOUTH HOE ... .. John Aspin  
 AFRICAN DANCES ... .. Montague Ring  
 BRITANNIA (Overture) ... .. A. C. Mackenzie

#### THE PAGEANT OF SOUTH AFRICA.

THE CAPT OF GOOD HOPE (Noyes) ... .. Edward Elgar  
 OLD HOTTENTOT MELODIES ... .. —  
 PORTUGUESE MELODY ... .. —  
 DUTCH BOAT SONG ... .. —  
 OLD HUGUENOT DANCES ... .. —  
 BOUNDER ... .. Alward  
 AFRICAN SUIVE ... .. E. D. Barcroft  
 CAMP AND KAFFIR MELODIES ... .. Hamish McCunn  
 LIVINGSTONE EPISODES ... .. —  
 BAMBOULA ... .. Gertrude Taylor  
 FROM WAR AND PEACE (Choir and Orchestra) ... .. C. H. H. Parr  
 LAND OF HOPE AND GLORY (Choir and Orchestra) ... .. Edward Elgar

#### THE EARLY DAYS OF INDIA.

INDIAN DAWN (Noyes) ... .. Edward Elgar  
 INTRODUCTION ("Crown of India") ... .. Edward Elgar  
 MOGUL MARCH ("Crown of India") ... .. Edward Elgar  
 PERSIAN GARDEN SCENES ... .. Lue Lehmann  
 INDIAN LOVE LYRICS ... .. A. Woodford Fildes  
 OLD INDIAN DANCES ... .. Shankar  
 MARCH ("Crown of India") ... .. Edward Elgar

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A complete list of the musical programme of the Pageant of Empire, at the British Empire Exhibition, Wembley, July 21st - August 30th 1924. The pages are reproduced from the original rare programmes.

**MUSIC for PAGEANT, PART III.**

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**GEORGE III AND THE DEPARTURE OF CAPTAIN COOK.**

EMPIRE MARCH (" 1924 ") ... ..	Edward Elgar.
SYLVAN SCENES ... ..	Percy Fletcher.
MINUET ... ..	Dr. Phillip Hayes.
MUNRY AND PAGEANT MARCH ... ..	Herman Finch.

**A PAGEANT OF NEW ZEALAND.**

THE ISLANDS (Noyes) ... ..	Edward Elgar.
GOD DEFEND NEW ZEALAND ... ..	—
SEA CHANTIES... ..	Arranged by Richard R. Terry.
WHEN THE YELLOW KOWBAT BLOOMS ... ..	W. G. James.
MERRYMAKERS (Overture) ... ..	Eric Coates.
BENEDICTUS ... ..	Granville Bantock.
WAITA-POI ... ..	Alfred Hill.
TANGL ... ..	Alfred Hill.
HARVEST DANCE ... ..	Edward German.
EMPIRE MARCH (1924) ... ..	Edward Elgar.

**A PAGEANT OF AUSTRALIA.**

THE BLUE MOUNTAINS (Noyes) ... ..	Edward Elgar.
MARCH BLANC... ..	Herman Finch.
ADVANCE AUSTRALIA... ..	—
THE LONG, LONG TRAIL ... ..	Z. O. Elliot.
STOCK RIDERS' SONG ... ..	W. G. James.
PLANTATION SONGS ... ..	G. H. Clutsam.
SOLDIERS OF THE QUEEN ... ..	Leslie Stuart.
IMPERIAL MARCH ... ..	Arthur Sullivan.

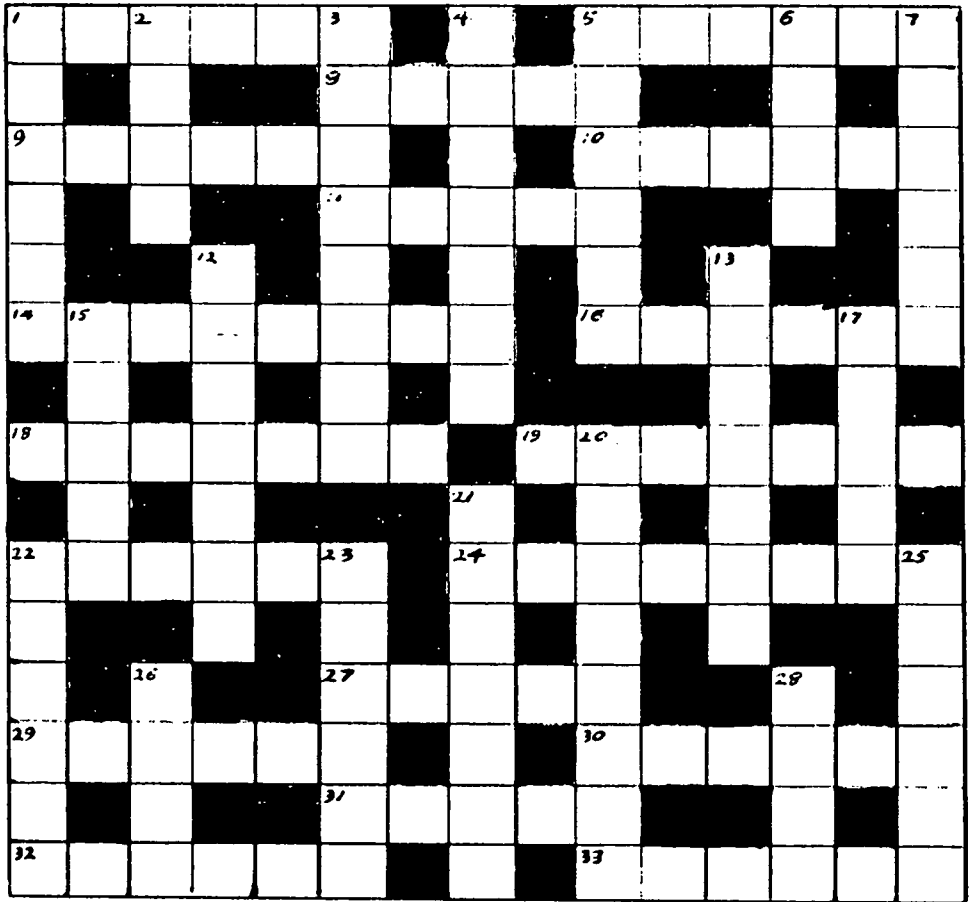
**A PAGEANT OF HEROES.**

THE IMMORTAL LEGIONS (Noyes) ... ..	Edward Elgar.
SOLEMN MARCH (Organ) ... ..	E. H. Lemare.
NELSON PHRASES ... ..	—
WITH PROUD THANKSGIVING (Choir and Orchestra) ... ..	Edward Elgar.

**THE EMPIRE'S THANKSGIVING.**

ANTHEM OF THE SISTER NATIONS (Binyon) ... ..	Nicholas Gally.
THE RECESSIONAL (Kipling) ... ..	Herbert Bunning.

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# A MUSICAL CROSS-WORD. Compiled by Bob Hellen

## ACROSS

1. and 8. Our raison d'etre. (6,5)
5. It's all mixed up for this composer. (6)
8. See 1 Across.
9. E's variation on Jaeger's nickname. (6)
10. Awarded E and Hon. Mus. D. (6)
11. One of many tickled by E. (5)
14. Ann's chum was E's "ideal" composer in 1883. (8)
16. Prime Eastern state, changed for pageant. (6)
18. Large Yorkshire church with a noble organist in 1905. (7)
19. Lady to sing about or serenade. (7)
22. and 24. Philanthropist E described as an "old fibber". (6,8)
24. See 22 Across.
27. The Windflower, for instance, does this in the Spring. (5)
29. Not the Imperial Crown, but that of another country. (6)
30. Leon Goossens, for example. (6)
31. Passed a weight for this early Elgarian flautist. (5)
32. Pry and see a patron or even a violinist. (6)
33. Sanguine Fan Pan, but not Daphne. (6)

## DOWN

1. Orchestrated by E "Three score furlongs from Jerusalem". (6)
2. Suitable rod for a child? (4)
3. To inscribe, "To my friends pictured within" for example. (8)
4. Stuck fast, on a firm base, we hear. (1,6)
5. Will E try to give a variation if moved? (6)
6. "Lover of Souls! Great God! I - to Thee". (4)
7. E's country seat? (6)
12. Room for composing music, described as "the sublimation of eternal youth"? (7)
13. Marco was one of these. (7)
15. 28 Down was one of these. (5)
17. Froissart loses loud Art for a confused Italian composer. (5)
20. Stop gran, the wanderer. (4-4)
21. "Worder", of Caractacus. (7)
22. "Leopard", more familiar with stops than spots. (6)
23. The wild West range was arguably a great influence on E. (6)
25. Frederick Edwards and Percy Scholes did this. (6)
26. The Misses lose their head, but the result gives them the upper hand. (4)
28. E's main composition changed at last. (4)

Solution in our next issue

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

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