

The Elgar Society JOURNAL



MAY

1987

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The Elgar Society Journal

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

01-440 2651

EDITORIAL

Vol. 5, no. 2
May 1987

THE ELGAR SOCIETY wishes to congratulate our President, Sir Yehudi Menuhin, on his appointment to the Order of Merit. This signal honour, the personal gift of the Sovereign, is traditionally given to those who have made an outstanding contribution to the arts and sciences. It will not have escaped our members' notice that Elgar was honoured in the same way, and it is a happy coincidence that 76 years later our President should join that body of twenty-four distinguished persons.

THE EDITOR.

THE EDITOR would like to thank a number of members who have written to congratulate him on his completion of ten years as editor. Each was kind enough to praise the Journal, and he is suitably grateful and conscious of the need to continue to improve the Journal in content and appearance. The help and encouragement of readers has been a major factor in our success over the last decade.



FRITZ VOLBACH on ELGAR Part II

Translated by Philip J. Titcombe

Elgar's growing awareness of his own power is accompanied by an expansion of his ideas. Just as Handel, in his biblical oratorios, was inspired to describe all the most important events of the Old Testament from the Exodus to the fulfilment of the Prophecy by the coming of the Messiah, so Elgar was moved to bring together a series of the principal events of the Holy Story into one whole. But a single oratorio was not sufficient for that purpose and so he conceived the idea of an oratorio trilogy. The first of these works, *The Apostles* describes the calling of the Apostles and the events right up to the Ascension in a series of varied scenes; the second, *The Kingdom*, describes the sending of the Apostles to all the nations of the world and the third*, still to be completed, is to have as its theme the Last Judgment and the Holy City of Jerusalem. The way in which Elgar has carried out his plan is as audacious as the conception itself. Instead of the relatively uniform atmosphere of 'Gerontius', we have in 'The Apostles' a series of scenes with extremes of mood. There are brilliant and mighty choruses and gripping solos; scenes of the utmost jubilation are contrasted with expressions of the bitterest grief. Nothing is superficial; everything springs from the depths of the soul and appears touched and transfigured by a wonderful light. The saints which Elgar chooses to portray and present to us at their most significant moments of action are captured with visionary intensity. He allows us to glimpse not only their physical exterior but also their very souls. For instance, the moment when Mary Magdalene turns in repentance to Mary the mother of Jesus and appeals to her to intercede on her behalf with her divine Son is wonderfully moving. In her anguish she does not dare to speak to the Lord herself and so she turns in trust to Our Lady, since the mother's entreaty to her Son will surely not go unheeded. The music accompanying Our Lady's consoling words is wonderfully mild and blissful, 'Hearken, O Daughter:- When thou art in tribulation, if thou turn to the Lord thy God and shall be obedient unto His voice, He will not forsake thee, Hearken, O Daughter:- Come thou, for there is peace to thee'.

But Elgar is also skilled in evoking the dark moods of despair. The portrayal of Judas is in this respect a masterpiece. The monstrous nature of the betrayer's act repeatedly urges us to ask how such a deed was possible. According to the conception of this work, Judas betrays the Lord in the hope of forcing him to destroy his enemies, emerge as King and establish his Kingdom. 'Let Him make speed and hasten His work, that we may see :': He then begins to fantasise: 'He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne, the great King - the Lord of the whole earth.' But none of this occurs and he sees his Lord condemned to death. Then he regrets his deed and goes to the Temple with the intention of returning the thirty pieces of silver and - but his train of thought is suddenly interrupted by the singing of psalms swelling towards him from the Temple:- 'O Lord God, to Whom vengeance belongeth, lift up Thyself, thou judge of the earth. Lord, how long shall the wicked triumph and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves?' As Judas listens, he hears his own sentence. He is seized by despair. 'Woe unto me!' he cries, 'I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. Whither shall I go from thy spirit?' Once again he has a vision of the Saviour feeding the hungry and assuaging the thirsty. He asks what his end will be and the answer resounds from the Temple, 'Until the Pit be digged for the wicked'. Then he collapses under the burden of his guilt. His sole desire is to think and feel nothing more of the

agony and to sink down into nothingness. 'Our life is short and tedious and in the death of a man there is no remedy'. There is nothing on the other side and 'our life shall pass away suddenly as a trace of a cloud'. Our spirit melts away into oblivion. Release is found in death. Then suddenly, from the distance, we hear piercing cries of, 'Crucify Him, crucify Him!' roaring like thunder, as if the whole of nature is crying out. Then he writhes in wild despair. 'Mine end is come, - the measure of my covetousness; over me is spread an heavy night, an image of that darkness which shall afterwards receive me; yet am I unto myself more grievous than the darkness.' After these dark scenes, the effect of 'At the Sepulchre' is like letting in the morning light. From the distance we hear the morning call of the Temple Watchers. Then from Heaven, resounds the Angels' Alleluia. The Lord Jesus appears, promising His Disciples the Holy Spirit and then, taking the main themes of the work, the mighty and majestic final chorus emerges, radiant as though filled with heavenly glory.

A significant device which Elgar uses to maintain the unity of the work is that of musical symbols, i.e. Leitmotive or 'motto' themes in which the emotions of the main characters and the mood of crucial moments are in a sense condensed. These themes occur throughout the work, sometimes joining together ideas, sometimes deepening them, and either draw the attention back to what has gone before or look prophetically into the future. They contain the most vital element of the work. It is through them that Elgar establishes the connection between 'The Apostles' and the second work of the trilogy, 'The Kingdom'. This work also contains the same Leitmotive, which look meaningfully back to what has occurred and form the very nerve of the action. In this work Elgar's genius for creating new and ever more stirring sounds from these themes is displayed. In melodic beauty, richness of harmony and colour, this work is in no way inferior to 'The Apostles'. Though it may possess less surface lustre than that work, it compensates for this by its greater profundity and spirituality.

The core of 'The Kingdom' is the descent of the Holy Spirit and the celebration of Pentecost, a scene of solemn splendour adorned by beautiful tone-painting. It is characteristic of the work that Peter, having received the keys of the Kingdom from the Lord, is now at the centre of the action as leader and teacher. This is immediately evident in the following scene 'At the Beautiful Gate' where he heals the lame man in the name of Jesus. There follows the scene, 'The Upper Room - In Fellowship'. The Disciples and the Holy Women celebrate the Eucharist. However, the end of the work is formed by the Lord's Prayer. With this the work concludes on a note of simple piety, avoiding all pomp and superficiality - an ending solemn and serious which could come only from a truly pious heart. The whole work stems from this pious and truly Christian mind. Here we have a holy art whose spirit is capable of bringing about a revival and a deepening of true Christianity.

(As a supplement to the article, the publishers printed an extract from Part III of 'The Kingdom', with German text. This is a paraphrase of Acts 2, verses 17, 21 and 22, in which Peter quotes the words of the Prophet,

'It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God,
I will pour forth all My Spirit upon all flesh:
And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
And your young men shall see visions,
And your old men shall dream dreams;
And it shall be that whosoever

Shall call on the Name of the Lord shall be saved.
Ye Men of Israel, hear these words:
Jesus of Nazareth,
A Man approved of God unto you
By mighty works and wonders, and signs,
Which God did by Him in the midst of you,
As ye yourselves also know;')

INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO VOLBACH'S 1929 ARTICLE

This second article on Elgar by Fritz Volbach appeared in the Munster cultural periodical called 'Am Weg der Zeit - Beilage für das Geistesleben der Gegenwart', Volume V, No. 4, which appeared on 20 March 1929. In it Volbach describes his first reactions on reading the score of 'The Dream of Gerontius', his first meeting with Elgar in Mainz and his observations on English musical life in the first years of the new century. He regrets the fading of Elgar's reputation in Germany as a result of the Great War and the vogue for new methods of composition such as atonalism. Volbach then repeats in condensed form what he said about Elgar in 1907 and I have therefore refrained from including the remaining two-fifths of the article here.

EDWARD ELGAR - A PORTRAIT OF A GREAT COMPOSER By Fritz Volbach

Many years ago, when I was Kapellmeister in the beautiful golden city of Mainz, the head of the publishing firm of Schott's pressed a work into my hands and asked me to have a look at it with a view to possible performance. It was the work of an Englishman. I admit that I accepted it with some misgivings, but the more I studied it, the more absorbed I became. I was encountering really something quite new, and of outstanding worth. Even the subject-matter of the piece was strange and quite different from anything created in our time in the field of oratorio. It was the composition based on the peculiar mystical poem by Cardinal Newman called 'The Dream of Gerontius'. In the work I found this mysterious atmosphere not only reproduced but in some sense deepened and I recognized with astonishment that a genius was speaking to us. I decided to perform the work, but then the major Handel festivals prevented me from doing so and postponed the performances for several years. This was perhaps no bad thing, since the work imposed demands on the performers which required a choral discipline of the strictest kind. In the meantime I came to know Elgar personally when he visited us in Mainz¹. He was a simple and unpretentious personality, both likeable and modest. The only drawback was that we could not understand each other. Elgar spoke no German - at least at that time - and my English was no better. However, the charming Lady Elgar had a good idea. She opened up the piano and sat us both in front of it. We immediately established a rapport and since that time we have remained friends. The first work that I performed was Elgar's great oratorio 'The Apostles'. I had correctly assessed its importance because soon afterwards this work began its triumphal progress around Germany. Fritz Steinbach² performed it in Cologne, Nikisch in Leipzig and Siegfried Ochs³ in Berlin. One city followed another. In Italy, where Elgar's friend Sgambati⁴ lived, in France and America his works were received enthusiastically everywhere, but his native land not only honoured him with exemplary performances but actually took him to its heart. There are few people in England who are looked upon with such affection as he is and there is no music festival at which one of his great oratorios is not performed.

Here in Germany we have often had a totally false picture of English musical life; it is very much under-estimated. I had my view changed when I went to England for the first time. I was invited to a performance of my 'Easter' Symphony at the great Musical Festival in Sheffield. On this occasion I heard 'The Dream of Gerontius' for the first time and I was very surprised. I have never heard a choir with such sonority, dramatic force and perfect tonal production as the Sheffield Choir. The Leeds Choir, which sings at the Music Festivals there, is just as excellent and Hans Richter often told me marvellous things about his great choir at Manchester. The orchestra, conducted by Henry Wood, who had brought his musicians with him from London, was on a respectable level.

Elgar was well on his way to gaining a permanent place here in Germany when war broke out. It abruptly snapped the threads which had been woven. When peace came, he had been virtually forgotten. His works appeared only occasionally. The younger generation of musicians had no interest in him, for however modern he was, he was no iconoclast or atonalist. The profound piety expressed in the works of this deeply pious Catholic did not appeal to the new generation. Like Bruckner, Elgar can be appreciated only in these terms. However, it is certainly time for us to remember this master and make up for what we have missed. In the field of oratorio, our time has produced virtually nothing of any significance.

It is the area of music most seriously neglected. I am sure that our great choral societies would gladly take up Elgar's magnificent works and restore them to their position at the heart of modern music.



* Sketched, but never completed. Elgar finally abandoned the idea of a trilogy in 1927 after hearing Vaughan Williams' 'Sancta Civitas', first performed on 7 May 1926 at Oxford.

¹ Elgar first met Volbach in December 1901 in Dusseldorf.

² Fritz Steinbach (1855-1916) was Generalmusikdirektor in Mainz (1880-86), Meiningen (1886-1902) and Cologne (1902-16). He was one of the first German conductors to perform the 'Enigma Variations' and his Meiningen Court Orchestra brought them to London in October 1902.

³ Siegfried Ochs (1858-1929) founded in 1882 the choir which in 1888 became the Berlin Philharmonic Choir and conducted it until 1920. From 1920 until 1928 he was Professor at the Berlin Hochschule and in 1923 wrote a 4-volume treatise 'Der Deutsche Gesangverein'. He is remembered, if at all, by his comic variations for orchestra on 's kommt ein Vogerl geflogen' and as an editor of Bach cantatas.

⁴ Giovanni Sgambati (1841-1914), a now largely forgotten Italian composer - though with an English mother - was one of the musicians who befriended Elgar on his visit to Italy in 1907 and evidently admired his music. Elgar succeeded to Sgambati's place in the French Academie des Beaux Arts in 1920. Sgambati studied with Liszt in Rome and accompanied him to Germany in 1869. He gave the first Italian performance of the 'Eroica' Symphony and the 'Emperor' Concerto of Beethoven and met Wagner in Rome in 1876; Wagner brought him into contact with Schott's who from then on published his works. Sgambati was evidently also a friend of Volbach, since in 1913 Volbach published a catalogue raisonné of Sgambati's principal works. His masterpiece is probably his String Quartet in C Sharp Minor, Op. 17, but only his Serenata Napoletana, Op. 24, No. 2, for violin and piano retains any hold on the repertory.

[I regret that I mistakenly said in my introduction to Part I that the German performance of *Gerontius* in December 1901 was part of the Lower Rhine Festival. In fact, the Festival took place in May 1902. - P.J.T.]

ELGAR Introduced by Diana McVeagh

I wanted to use London Branch's generous cheque to me in some way to create art. The painter Benedict Rubbra, the composer's son, lives near me, and I fell for, and bought, his *Early Beech Woods* in 1985. His *Elgar* now hangs in my music room, giving me infinite pleasure and reminding me too of my friends in London Branch. I hope to bring it one day to a Branch meeting. Mr. Rubbra writes:

'Elgar' is a painting, in pencil and watercolour on paper, of fragmented shapes set against broad flowing lines, united in an organized pattern suggesting a landscape.

I have been fascinated for some time with the possibility of finding links between painting and music, particularly how a theme can develop into a form, in music through time and in painting through space, the equivalent of time; and so the idea of making a painting about Elgar interested me. I had to find a theme that would become the opening or starting point. I knew that I did not want to make just a portrait in the sense of taking one aspect or viewpoint; and it would only be possible to convey an overall picture of Elgar and his work by painting a series of large canvases. Something had to be found in between.

First I had to listen again to his music and to find out as much as I could about his life. Slowly I began to realise that the key to the beginning of the picture was the idea of a search. My feeling was that his life was full of fragmented ideas, and his 'search' to unify the ideas into a coherent form could be conveyed if I saw a series of random shapes resolve into an ordered pattern. Then I felt the need to suggest the hold that the earth had for Elgar, and so knew that the random shapes had to be made of clay. I began to model these into organic forms to suggest the forms of hills and plants. To this I needed to convey the idea of distance and longing, an aspect of Elgar that to me is very strong. Blue and blue-greens seemed the most appropriate. To imitate the broad rhythms of his music I painted a background of flowing brushmarks on to which I could arrange my clay shapes into a suggested landscape. The background helps to unify the clay forms. Finally, I wanted to try and paint the balance between sparkle and weight, another Elgar characteristic. To achieve this I shone a strong light through a pattern of holes cut in a card that cast pools of light on to the landscape making mysterious and unexpected forms and accents. Having finished, I prepared my paper with a watercolour wash of pale blue-greens, introducing browns for the earth, and began the drawing of the still-life that I had made.

'My Dear Charlie.....' ELGAR - MAN OF LETTERS

by Dennis Clark

No one can doubt the advantage to the serious Elgar scholar of the existence of hundreds of the composer's letters, written to a wide range of people, over most of his life span. They can provide 'horse's mouth' confirmation on points of interest to a researcher and their value is often not affected by the absence of the letters to which he was replying, or which he received in return. However, to those whose interest is less academic, the letters can still be a joy to read and Percy Young's 'Letters of Edward Elgar' contains many examples of letters to his friends, all very readable, often very witty and revealing much about Elgar the human being.

Much is lost, of course, in the typescript and those with access to the originals gain the full effect of Elgar's multiple underlinings, exclamation marks, and the interspersing of his words with little cartoon drawings and fragments of musical notation. The ladies in his life were frequent recipients of leg-pulling letters and almost anyone might receive letters containing invented words and grotesque, deliberate misspellings. Although such 'japery' was characteristic of Elgar and helps to make his letters the fascinating documents they are, it was by no means indispensable to his technique. Without it, his letters have an easy flow - the words written as they might have been spoken - and containing many happy and often charming turns of phrase.

The facsimile examples reproduced herewith are from letters written to his Settle doctor friend, Charles Buck, the later of them separated from the early ones by half a century. Elgar's first letter to Buck, on August 25th 1882 - surely one of the earliest extant to anyone - reveals a stylish hand (a tribute to Littleton House?) and a florid signature not often seen later. His manner was polite - and well it might be; as a struggling musician of a mere twenty-five summers, he was writing to an established professional man whose friendship he wished to cultivate. Only nine days earlier, at the conclusion of a BMA Conference in Worcester, a musical soirée had been held and Buck, a competent amateur musician, had played in an orchestra led by Elgar. Buck had invited him to spend a few days in Settle with him and Elgar didn't want the invitation forgotten. From his sister Polly's house in Chestnut Walk, his letter began as follows:

My Dear Sir,

How about next week? If you are still in the same mind about my visit, I shall be most pleased to spend a few days with you. Monday next would suit me best. Will you let me know how this will suit you?

I see there is a train to Leeds arriving there at 3.40. I could then go on to Settle by the next. Is this the correct way

No one could accuse young Edward of being backward in coming forward.

know how this will suit
you?

I see there is a train
to Leeds arriving there at

3.40. I could then go
on to Settle by the west.

Is this the correct way?
I was sorry I did not

see you on Wedy last.

Looked at Rene's

but you were not at

the rehearsal, I suppose.

I hope you arrived
home quite safely after
your 'labours'.

And from

your very truly
Oswald ^{2nd} year.

From Sir EDWARD ELGAR, Bart., O.M., K.C.V.O.,
Master of the King's Musick; Lord Chamberlain's Office,
St. James's Palace, London, S.W. 1.

23rd Sept 1932

Dear Sweet: It is splendid
to hear you are still enjoying
life in spite of having your
ducts or something: you may
remember that I never could
conceive the best of human
form & to this day if you offered
me £1,000,000,000,000
I'd not take it here my liver,
or kidneys, or any damn
thing else.

It is marvellous that you
remember the forgers doing
after that Jones; - it was not
Louis d'Epville but his cousin
Wm. it was a paul wind of
to

Take! I have started
a Ladies' orchestral Class
& have sixteen fair fiddlers
all in two rows & I cherish
their graceful movements;

Midland Hotels
Midland Grand
London
Midland Manchester
Midland Liverpool
Midland Leeds
Midland Derby
Midland Derby
Midland Derby
Midland Derby

TELEGRAMS - MIDOTEL.

Queen's Hotel.
Leeds 1902

Wm. Fowler
Manager, Midland Hotels etc.

Very kin
Dear Buck:
Write this with
early in case I do
not see you
Here's a ticket.
Believe decent
I don't smoke
during the music
Yours
EJ

The stay in Settle was duly enjoyed by Elgar and thus commenced a very long friendship. Exactly fifty years later, Elgar wrote to Buck to remind him of those far-off days. Although ill - he died only three months later - a delighted Buck replied with his own memories of the soirée, recalling a smaller but certainly more riotous party which had followed it and which he called 'the orgy'. The merrymaking seems to have continued out of doors and Buck recalled how 'Louis d'Egville tore out old Mr. Hopkins' bell pull by the roots'. Elgar's reply, in a hand no longer easy to read, was as follows:

23rd August 1932

Dear Buck,

It is splendid to hear you are still enjoying life in spite of livers and ducts or something: you may remember that I never could learn anything about the human form and to this day if you offered me £1,000,000,000 I could not tell you where my liver, or kidneys, or any damn thing lies.

It is marvellous that you remember the gorgeous doings after that Soirée; - it was not *Louis d'Egville* but his cousin *Wm* - it was a grand wind-up to a woolly concert. Changes a-many have been among us: poor old Frank departed this life three years ago.

I fear there is small chance of my travelling north again but I still hope for it.

Warmest regards

Yours ever

Edward Elgar

The letters of 1882 and 1932 enclose virtually Elgar's entire musical career and, given his propensity for pouring out his heart on paper and Buck's assiduousness in saving the letters, we might well have had an almost complete 'Life of Elgar' in the composer's own words. Sadly, the correspondence after the turn of the century was not maintained at the prolific rate of the 1880's and there are many gaps.

From addressing Buck as 'My Dear Sir', Elgar quickly changed to 'My Dear doctor', an only slightly less formal address which then, strangely, continued for several years. It is clear that eventually Buck himself protested that it was high time Elgar addressed him as 'Charles'. Elgar's very next letter, on August 30th 1888, commenced with:

My dear Charles!!!

As your affection actually ran to half a sheet of paper last time, evidently to accentuate the modest request that I should address you as above, I cannot but give in and behold the familiarity.....

Only two months later, it had become 'My dear Charlie'. Give a man an inch....

In 1883, Dr Buck kept two dogs, Potiphar and Scap. In 1885, while on one of his visits to Settle, Elgar was presented with Scap, who was proudly taken home to Worcester, where he settled in with Elgar, his sister Lucy and her husband, Charlie Pipe. From this point, until Elgar's marriage in 1889, the correspondence is dominated by Scap, whose exploits are gleefully recounted, resulting in a series of Elgar's longest and most delightful letters. Music is forgotten as Elgar tells Buck about his former pet.

October 7th 1885

. . . Scap now fares forth in his collar of great price on which is now engraved a short legend, so that if his abductors be honest they will know whither to lead him . . .

. . . the creature's advent has curiously changed our relationship - my father who has been a respectable citizen for 40 years is now no more than Scap's grandfather. Charles is an uncle of his . . . and I hide my important personality under the style and title of Scap's Master - I am no more & bear my effacement with equanimity.

Writing on January 8th 1886, Elgar told how he had hit a large dog, which had been growling at Scap, thereby knocking the handle off his walking stick. The handle had been found, bearing Elgar's name . . .

. . . I had the owner of the cur after me, threatening police court &c. &c. I talked to him like a man & came off with flying colours; my knowledge of the law, real & *pretended*, startled him (& well it might) - he touches his hat to me now and keeps his dog tied up.

Following an encounter with a St. Bernard in Malvern . . .

. . . I did not know Scap could fight, but I was rejoiced to see that he pulled 3 good lumps of wool out of the enemy, which floated gaily on the breeze.

On September 26th 1888, Elgar gave two violin recitals in Malvern. Between them, to kill a little time, he wrote to Buck (on Beauchamp Hotel notepaper) as follows:

Dear Charlie,

I cannot refrain from filling up some of this dreary waiting (between *those* two concerts) by scrawling to you. Tell Mrs. Buck the pieces she taught me have gone fairly well to a very thin audience. I am now all alone in a dismal coffee room waiting for the next horror, that is at eight o'clock.

What think you of this for the visitor's book - unfinished as yet?

Elgar's poetic contribution to the visitor's book ended with this . . .

A Kidney (nicely browned) set off
with ringlets four of ham,
With toast and tea & buttered cakes
& every sort of jam,
A fair sight truly - but, alas!
it brings no joy to me,
'You may not eat', it seems to say,
'Dyspeptic! turn and flee!'

That's all at present and quite enough too.

Love to all
Yours
Ed Elgar

(PS) I am as nervous as a mouse;
old Rubini can't play my
accpts as well as Mrs. B.

Elgar and Buck occasionally exchanged photographs of each other. Having been asked for one in 1888, Elgar wrote 'I am, at request, having some killers done and one shall wend Settlewards in due course'. Perhaps he had his hair cut prior to the sitting, since he sent the eventual photograph along with the words:

Enclosed I send one of the Barber of Tenbury's productions; the proof was *excellently* finished, but these are awful.

Elgar's period of engagement to Helen Weaver occurred during the most prolific years of this correspondence and one might expect her to feature prominently. In fact, references to Helen have to be searched for, one 'Helen', two 'Miss W's and one 'Miss Weaver' being about the lot, but she *is* there and we may ask why she didn't assume her place in the Elgar history many years ago. The answer may lie in Elgar's liking for the German language. Helen was studying music at Leipzig Conservatory in 1883 and was due to return to Worcester in early July for the vacation. Elgar told Buck this in his letter of July 1st, but he sometimes slipped German words or phrases into his letters and he referred to her only as 'my Braut'. Helen had so far never been referred to by name and if we read no further it is quite conceivable that the Leipzig lady was indeed, as Percy Young said in 'Elgar OM', 'a Fraulein who, much taken with the young Englishman, came to visit him in Worcester . . . '.

However, further letters on November 11th 1883 and January 14th 1884 - neither of them recent finds - confirm that she is Helen Weaver, if not that she and Elgar are engaged. Elgar had told Buck that his 'Braut' would remain in Worcester only until the first week in September (obviously then returning to Leipzig for the new term). Two months after the start of term, he tells Buck 'Well, Helen has come back!!', explaining that Mrs Weaver is very ill and Helen has returned to look after her. He adds '...so we are together a little now and consequently happy'. Things are surely clear when, on January 14th 1884, Elgar writes 'Miss Weaver is remaining in Worcester and the little music that we get together is the only enjoyment I get . . . '.

On August 10th 1885, Elgar told Buck that a small piece had been dedicated to him...

I write to inform you that I have dedicated to you, without permission, but of course with every respect, a violin solo in memory of the old days. Schott's have it; I don't know *when* they will get it out. I write to ask if this will suit your worship?

à son ami
Dr. C. W. Buck
Settle

If not there will be time to alter it to
suit your advanced tastes if I know at once.

The above appeared in 'Letters of Edward Elgar', but Dr. Young missed the sequel, on February 3rd 1886, after Elgar's instructions were misread and Schott's printed Buck's name as 'Buché' . . .

. . . I do not know what to say about the dedication. I hesitated, when I saw the mess they had made of it, between swearing and laughing; I chose the latter and hope you will . . . I need not say how sorry I am that what I intended as a mark of friendship and respect should have been so ruthlessly spoilt by my awful handwriting.

Perhaps Elgar thought a few cheery words about the dog would soften the blow. He continued:

Scap is well and flourishing. He is not happy today as in fact all this last week; my two little nieces are here - and the old dog sees they are made more fuss of than he is, and as a natural consequence he wishes them anywhere

Thanks are due to The North Craven Heritage Trust for access to facsimile letters.

EXCERPTS FROM Notes of a Tour in North America by Ian and Elizabeth Parrott.

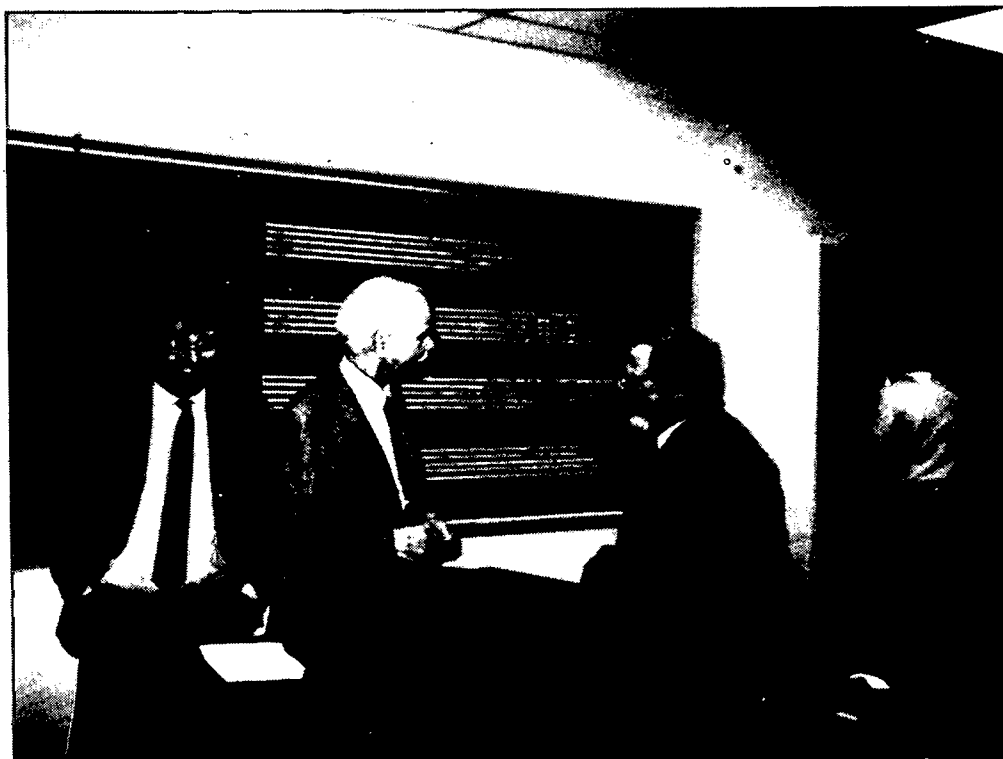
Between 23 Oct, and 10 Nov, 1986 Prof. and Mrs. Ian Parrott were on a tour of some of the Eastern States of the USA and Canada. They started at the impressive Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, with its huge campus dominated by the Harkness Tower, behind which is the replica of Wrexham church where Elihu Yale is buried. Elizabeth Parrott was particularly attracted by the New England 'colonial' architecture as well as the art galleries and the 'fall' colours When he gave his illustrated talk 'Elgar's Enigma Solved', Prof. Ian Parrott reminded the Yale audience that Elgar had heard the Welsh voices at Llangranog in 1901 and had dedicated the completed *Introduction and Allegro* (with its 'Welsh' second subject) to Prof. S.S. Sanford of Yale in 1905 - a historic transatlantic link being renewed. A visit was made to Norfolk, Conn, where Yale summer schools take place, and where Sibelius wrote some of his *The Oceanides*. With a munificent benefaction by the Battell family, one was reminded of Gregynog and the University of Wales.

A long distance bus journey via New York then took Ian and Elizabeth to Danville in the centre of Pennsylvania, where they were shown where Joseph Parry (composer of *Aberystwyth*), as a boy with his parents, settled on 'Welsh Hill'. After that an enjoyable time was spent on the campus of Bucknell University at Lewisburg, where the fall colours were still in evidence. Once again Ian gave his talk on 'The Enigma' (an old Aberystwyth student, Suzanne Schiavone, travelled 200 miles to hear it), but he was also called upon to talk to the composition students and to rehearse the chapel choir.....

Then travelling by air via Pittsburgh to Canada, Ian and Elizabeth were met by Peter Smith of the music staff of the University of Western Ontario, who acted as host for the next few days, when they met other members of the staff. On Sunday, 2 Nov, they were at St. Paul's Cathedral, London. But this was, of course, London, Ontario! After the

Elgar talk at UWO at 12.30 on 3 November, a fast car got the lecturer and his wife to Wilfrid Laurier University at Waterloo, where Ian gave a second lecture on the same day at 4pm. This time, however, he was asked to talk on Rosemary Brown, on whom he wrote in 1978....

The next stage of the tour was by train from Toronto to Montreal in the French-speaking province of Quebec.... The chairman for the final delivery of the Elgar talk at the famous McGill University was Prof. John Rea of the Dept. of Music.... The Sunday service on 9 November was at the Union Church (United Church of Canada) at Ste. Anne de Bellevue where the choir was enjoyed and contact was made with the organist Brian P. Smith.... And so a very enjoyable - and mostly sunny - three weeks drew to a close, as the weather started to get colder, and the visitors flew back across the Atlantic



Prof. Ian Parrott at the University of Western Ontario, London, Ont, in November 1986. On the left of Prof. Parrott is Peter Smith of the Music Faculty, and to the right Prof. Philip G. Downs, Chairman, Music History Dept.

If one is going to do things badly it is as well to make as many mistakes as possible. This piece of self-criticism is prompted by the unpardonable mass of errors we made in our printing of Elgar's letter on pp. 19 & 20 of the January Journal. Even the end of the letter was sliced off and did not appear in print! We have therefore decided to print it again - accurately this time - and we apologise to members for making such a mess of it the first time. This revised printing should be read in conjunction with the article by Geoffrey Hodgkins on 'Elgar's Notes on *In the South*'.

The Editor

IN THE SOUTH

I do not wish it to be thought that, presuming on a three months' acquaintance - or rather, friendship, - I have attempted to depict or epitomise in one movement a musical picture of Italy.

I wove this music in the valley of Andora during a long & lovely day *alfresco* (9 January) and it does not pretend to go beyond the impressions then received.

(1)(A) Maybe the exhilarating *out-of-doors* feeling arising from the gloriously beautiful surroundings - streams, flowers, hills; the distant snow mountains in one direction & the blue Mediterranean in the other.

(4)(B) A shepherd with his flock straying about the ruins of the old church - he piping softly & reedily and occasionally singing (B2)(5)

The second theme proper (C)(6) may be my own personal feelings - romance if you like - amongst congenial surroundings & in congenial company. It dies softly away.

(7)(C2) Across the valley goes the old Roman stone track; the massive bridge still used: here a vision came of the old days the grand, *relentless* force which made its way through & endured (E)(9)

Leading to (E)(9) & also used in carrying on the working out section in (D)(8)

The strife (D)(8) dies away (F)(10) & we are again in the present - the Shepherd singing softly his *Canto-popolare* (G)(11) & the peace & the sunshine once more take the chief place in the picture.

recapitulation follows [,] the Coda being chiefly built upon the themes (A)(1) augmented, (B2)(5), & (A3)(3) also augmented.

The work follows generally the ordinary overture form: new matter (the Roman section & the Shepherd's song) being introduced in the working out section.

!!!!
Oh! Pitt!

On oath! So help me!
Ed. Elgar

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 30TH MAY 1987
PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE SOCIETY'S CONSTITUTION

AN EXPLANATION

You will find attached a list of amendments which it is proposed should be made to the constitution. This is, of necessity, phrased in somewhat formal terms and may be found somewhat intimidating, especially to those not used to the legal language employed. It is hoped that the following notes will assist members to understand the changes and why they are sought.

Why do we need to make these changes?

We have applied to be registered as a charity. The amendments are required by the Charity Commissioners in order that we may obtain approval.

Why do we wish to be a charity?

Several reasons. Firstly, we would be able to recover the income tax paid by members covenanting their annual subscriptions and this would be a valuable addition to the Society's income - if every member paid by covenant, our income would increase by over £2,000 per annum! Secondly, we would have access to many sponsorship and other funds which are only available to charities. Thirdly, the Elgar Foundation is a charity and, if we obtain a similar status, there will be greater opportunity for co-operation between the two organisations.

What does the Committee think of the proposed amendments?

This has been considered very carefully over a long period by the Executive Sub-Committee, to whom the matter was entrusted by the General Committee. Detailed discussions have taken place with the Charity Commission and various amendments made to their requirements. The Executive Sub-Committee is satisfied that the amendments required by the Commissioners are in no way harmful to the Society or its aims and are largely of a cosmetic nature reflecting the fact that the General Committee will be the charity trustees, defined in the appropriate legislation as having general control and management. The Executive Sub-Committee recommends members to approve the amendments.

What do all the amendments actually mean?

The change to clause 2 is very small and we are satisfied that the meaning is for all practical purposes identical with the existing.

The change to clause 3 gives a person refused membership (or having membership cancelled) because of their conduct the right to appear before the General Committee and defend themselves.

Cont/...

Clause 5(c) (power to establish sub-committees) is deleted because the powers are now to be contained in another clause.

Clauses 6, 7 and 8 are completely re-written but this is done in order to make clear the new role of the General Committee as the charity trustees. The Executive Sub-Committee is satisfied that the alterations do not entail any change to the day-to-day administration of the Society.

The amendment to Clause 14 merely changes the quorum at General Committee meetings from 6 members to 6 members or one third of the committee's membership if greater. This will have little practical effect.

Clause 20 deals with the winding-up of Branches. The deleted words required the Society's Treasurer to keep, in a separate account, any funds received from a wound-up branch. The new words enable the funds to be "held for the purposes of the Society": this is regarded as an improvement.

Clause 21 deals with the dissolution of the Society itself. The Executive Sub-Committee has no objection to the proposals which mainly provide for a two-thirds majority (rather than the current simple majority) for a motion to dissolve the Society to succeed. In addition there are fresh requirements regarding the disposal of surplus funds; these are considered reasonable and acceptable.

Clause 22 deals with amendments to the constitution. It again increases the majority required from a simple one to two-thirds and makes other small changes which the Executive Sub-Committee approves. The need to obtain the approval of the Charity Commission to any future changes to certain important clauses is inevitable for any body seeking charitable status: the Executive Sub-Committee is satisfied that this is acceptable.

It is hoped that this, inevitably, brief explanatory note has assisted members to understand the changes proposed. If any member has any specific enquiry to make and would like to contact me before the AGM, I will be pleased to try to assist.

DAVID MORRIS
TREASURER

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 30TH MAY 1987
PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE SOCIETY'S CONSTITUTION

A motion for the amendment of the constitution will be proposed at the forthcoming AGM. The proposed changes are as follows:-

Clause 2

Change to read: "The Society is founded in honour of the memory of Edward Elgar with the object of promoting a wider interest in his life and music".

Clause 3

Add the words "provided that the member or proposed member shall have the opportunity to attend a meeting of the General Committee and be heard in his own defence" after the word "society" in the fourth line.

Clause 5(c)

Shall be entirely deleted.

Clauses 6, 7 & 8

Shall be deleted and replaced with the following: "The General Committee shall be responsible for the general control and management of the administration of the Society. The General Committee shall have power to appoint an Executive Sub-Committee and other sub-committees comprised of such persons (whether or not being members of the General Committee) as the General Committee may in its absolute discretion determine - provided always that the majority of members of such sub-committee or sub-committees shall be members of the General Committee and provided also that the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and the Editor of the Elgar Society Journal shall always be members of the Executive Sub-Committee and to delegate any of its powers to such sub-committee or sub-committees provided that all acts and proceedings of the sub-committee or sub-committees to whom such powers are delegated shall be reported back to the General Committee as soon as is reasonably practicable."

Clause 14

The words "or one third of the membership of the General Committee, whichever is the greater" shall be inserted after the words "6 members" in line 1.

Cont/...

Clause 20

The words "kept by the latter in a separate account" shall be deleted and replaced by the words "held for the purpose of the society".

Clause 21

This shall be amended to read: "The Society may be dissolved by a Resolution passed by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at an Extra-ordinary General Meeting convened for the purpose of which 21 days' notice shall have been given to the members. Such resolution may give instructions for the disposal of any assets held by or in the name of the society, provided that if any property remains after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities such properties shall not be paid to or distributed among the members of the Society but shall be given or transferred to such other charitable institution or institutions having objects similar to some or all of the objects of the Society as the Society may determine and if and in so far as effect cannot be given to this provision then to some other charitable purpose."

Clause 22

This shall be amended to read: "Alteration to this constitution shall require the assent of two-thirds of the members present and voting at an Annual General Meeting or an Extra-ordinary General Meeting. A resolution for the alteration of the constitution must be received by the Secretary of the Society at least 30 days before the meeting at which the resolution is to be brought forward. At least 21 days' notice of such a meeting must be given by the Secretary to the membership and must include notice of the alteration proposed. Provided that no alteration made to clause 2 (objects) clause 21 (dissolution) or this clause, shall take effect until the approval in writing of the Charity Commissioners or other authority having charitable jurisdiction shall have been obtained; and no alteration shall be made which would have the effect of causing the society to cease to be a charity in law."

As a result of the above alterations, essential changes will be required to the numbering of certain clauses of the constitution and where renumbered clauses are referred to in other clauses.

Geoffrey Hodgkins wishes to explain that the circled numbers in his transcription of the Elgar letter on 'In the South' refer to the facsimiles of Elgar's manuscript notes issued in the January Journal. The circled letters, with some sub-numbers, are Elgar's references to the music as set out in the notes. The numbers 1 to 11 refer to cue numbers in the published score, put in by Mr. Hodgkins to make the references clear. In order the score cues are: Opening; 1; 6; 10; 11; 13; 16; 20; six bars before 34; 34.

AN INTERESTING FIND!

Many of us are collectors - some are compulsive pickers-up of trifles, others have a deep and scholarly interest in one particular field. Wherever you are between those two extremes you know that you are not alone! There are rivals to be faced, and feared, and he (or she) who hesitates is lost! It is satisfying then to acquire something which you know is very rare, or which you had no hope of ever finding. This happened to me recently, and it has an Elgar connection. My 'find' was a copy of the souvenir programme of a special Royal Occasion at the London Coliseum on October 11th, 1913. The performance was promoted by Sarah Bernhardt as a 'Good Samaritan' in aid of the French Hospital in London and Lord Lonsdale's Appeal for the Charing Cross Hospital. King George V and Queen Mary had already honoured the previously despised music-hall with their presence at a Royal Command performance, and for this special Royal appearance Sir Oswald Stoll, owner of the Coliseum, determined no expense was to be spared, and it would be an event to be remembered. Throughout his career in the theatre Stoll had a genius for persuading many branches of the performing arts to meet together on the same stage, usually with highly successful results. Remember it was Stoll who persuaded Elgar to write the music for the *Crown of India Pageant* and also to conduct the orchestra at the London Coliseum. It is worth remembering that Alfred Dove, the house conductor, was a first-class musician who collaborated with Elgar on a number of occasions, such as the performances of *Carillon* and *The Fringes of the Fleet*, and the Royal Command Peace Celebration in 1919.

The night of October 11th, 1913, must have been a glittering one both before and behind the curtain. The theatre programme was a suitably elaborate production, gold printed pages, with tipped-in photographs of every artist, and theatrical personnel, as well as a view of the theatre interior, together with photographs of some of the distinguished patrons of the occasion - headed by Their Majesties. For the evening a special Royal Box had been constructed at the back of the stalls, approached by a short stairway from the rear so that those artists so honoured could have a private audience with the King and Queen. There are several stories of that night - Sarah Bernhardt tumbling into the Royal box, and almost the Royal arms, by tripping over the last step on the aforementioned stairway; of George Robey, in full stage make-up, strolling out of the stage-door and doing an impromptu performance, before an admiring audience of poor children clustered round the door hoping for a glimpse of the magnificence within. He was joined by the American W.C. Fields, then a rising young juggler and not the acid comedian of his later years, who also delighted the youngsters with a dazzling display. On stage and in the orchestra pit there was a remarkable feast of talent: The prologue, written by Owen Seaman, recited by Ellen Terry, then the *Britannia Overture* conducted by the composer Sir Alexander Mackenzie, followed by artists of the French theatre brought over by Mme Bernhardt. Then in succession Robert

Hale, W.C. Fields, Yvette Guilbert, a miniature music-hall bill with stars such as Robey, Billy Merson, George Formby senior, Arthur Roberts, Mark Sheridan, Fred Emney senior. Two stars of the ballet - Lydia Kyasht and M.L.Joukoff, followed by the lugubrious Harry Tate in his Fishing sketch. Then came the appearance of Sir Edward Elgar at the rostrum to conduct his *Coronation March*. Sir Edward then passed the baton to Landon Ronald who conducted the *Pomp and Circumstance in D*.

After the interval another sketch was followed by Mme. Kirkby Lunn singing 'Mon Coeur s'ouvre a ta Voix', conducted by Landon Ronald. Then Mme. Bernhardt took the stage again with part of Racine's *Phedre*. A further comic sketch then led to a miniature musical play, written for the occasion by Seymour Hicks and Max Pemberton, and starring George Grossmith and a famous 'Savoyard' C.H. Workman. For a finale to the whole occasion 'The Marseillaise' and the National Anthem were played by the orchestra conducted by Sir Henry Wood, with a contingent from the Royal Choral Society, and Ivor Foster as soloist. Quite an evening!

My copy of the programme is especially interesting as it is inscribed by the manager of the Coliseum, Arthur Croxton. He wrote a book of memoirs, and worked closely with Elgar during the latter's appearances there. The portrait of Elgar which the programme uses was taken at Severn House, and shows the composer in his court robes, wearing the Order of Merit.

The Editor

Elgar's "Top Ten" on Radio 3

compiled by Thomas Whalley Rowbotham
from 'Radio Times' week by week

It is recorded that Elgar in his last days of life said to W. H. Reed, leader of the London Symphony Orchestra, his most intimate friend after the death of 'Nimrod': "In 20 years from now my music will be forgotten".

How wonderful to know that Elgar in his imperishable music is still with us, more than half a century later! I have with scrupulous care and devotion been through every copy of the Radio Times Radio 3 programmes for the past 12 months, and it is splendid to tell my fellow-Elgarians that the total number of performances of his works in 1986 was: 149.

Of course some have been repeated, and if the younger generation can have their Top Ten, why not us? So here they are:

Symphony no.1	9 performances
Serenade for Strings	8
Symphony no.2	7
Enigma Variations	7
Cockaigne Overture	6
Violin Sonata	6

Introduction and Allegro	6
Violin Concerto	6
Cello Concerto	5
Falstaff	5

It is to me particularly exhilarating to see *Falstaff* in such a high place. I have loved this masterpiece for over 40 years, and did not Elgar himself, in all modesty, consider it to be his greatest purely orchestral work? Then the other works: In the South (4); String Quartet (4); The Wand of Youth Suites (or excerpts) (4). Rarities: *Mina*, for small orchestra; Anthem *Light out of Darkness*; Concert Allegro for piano; and excerpts from *The Starlight Express*. After all this musical feast we had just one refreshing dose of his very early piece for Wind Quintet - *Adagio Cantabile - Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup*.

NEWS ITEMS

A paperback edition of Jerrold Northrop Moore's 'Elgar, a creative life' was issued by the Oxford University Press in February. This is available at £12.50 from any bookseller.

A NEW, Third, Edition of Michael Kennedy's 'Portrait of Elgar' is coming from Oxford University Press in July. The text has been brought up to date, and the book has been expanded to take account of recent research. The new edition is to be issued in paperback at £6.95.

Barry Collett advised us several months back of a performance of *Gerontius* at Caen in Normandy, performed in the Abbaye aux Hommes. The Coventry Choir, soloists and conductor were accompanied by the local Caen orchestra. How many other performances of this oratorio have there been in France?

So successful was the one-day school held in Northampton by Barry and Pauline Collett that it had to be repeated again last March! The subject: 'Edward Elgar, his life, music and times'.

We are advised of a correction to our note of the Vienna production of *Gerontius* in our May 1986 issue. This was not the first production in Vienna - there was one in the 1950s with the Austrian Radio Symphony Orchestra and chorus, conducted by Hans Swarowsky, with Julius Patzak, Ira Malarink and Ludwig Welter.

David Pizarro has sent us the details and programme of a special benefit organ concert at the Emanuel Lutheran Church at Pleasantville, New York. Mr Pizarro was the organist on this occasion, and in sacred music which included works by Handel and Bach he used Elgar's hymn tune *Drakes Boughton* and married to it words by James Edmeston, dating from 1820, 'Saviour, breathe an evening blessing . . .' Mr Pizarro has compiled a 'Hymn Anthology and Descant Book', as yet unpublished, which will include this combination of words and music.

The Elgar Day-School on 30th May will form part of the 1987 Portsmouth Festival, with concerts, exhibitions and drama. The day-school will be held in the Menuhin Room,

Portsmouth Central Library, and will be conducted by Dr. Jerrold Northrop Moore, Ronald Taylor, and Terry Barfoot. Advance booking has already been heavy, but details may be obtained from the Festival Office, Guildhall, Portsmouth.

The day-course run by Pauline and Barry Collett on "Elgar-his music, life and times" is to be repeated on Saturday, November 21st at the Dept of Adult Education, Northampton University.

Before that on September 25th, the Rutland Sinfonia, under their conductor Barry Collett, plans an ambitious concert consisting of the Great War works, *Carillon*, *Le Drapeau Belge*, *Une Voix dans le Desert*, *Polonia*, and *Fringes of the Fleet*. Soloists will be Teresa Cahill (soprano) and Richard Pasco (narrator), and the works will then be recorded for release on the Pearl label. The concert will also include the *Imperial and Empire Marches*, and the *Prelude*, and aria 'The Sun Goeth Down' from *The Kingdom*. Details of tickets, etc, from Corby Festival Hall Box Office (Corby 203482) or the Orchestra secretary (Oakham 56211). A remarkable Elgar feast which deserves the strongest support.

May 17th marks the 75th birthday of our distinguished Vice-President Dr. Percy Young. Dr. Young's services to music scholarship, and Elgar studies in particular, are remarkable, and we send him our very best wishes for his birthday coupled with wishes for his continued good health.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ELGAR SOCIETY will take place, as already announced, on May 30th, 1987 at the Edward Herbert Hall, Loughborough University, Loughborough, Leics, at 2.30 p.m. Following the meeting, at 5.30 p.m, the Third A.T. Shaw Memorial Lecture will be given by Professor Ivor Keys. He will speak on Elgar's *The Apostles* and contrast it with other settings of the Passion.

Following the lecture we are to hear a performance, by kind permission of the local authority, of Elgar's 'Memorial Chimes'. This will be played on the Loughborough Carillon, for which it was composed, and will be performed by the resident Carillonneur. Further details will be given at the meeting.

One matter which is likely to be on the Agenda for this AGM is the question of obtaining for the Society status as a Charity by registration under the Charities Act 1960. This would have as its main advantages (a) the recovery of Income Tax deducted from subscriptions paid net by members under covenant, and (b) the facilitating of fund-raising by taking advantage of tax reliefs available to individuals and companies in respect of the sponsorship of charitable activities and of donations to Charities.

The Officers are currently in touch with the Charity Commissioners to ascertain what amendments to the Society's constitution would be necessary to bring about what they consider to be a very desirable change.

THREE CHOIRS FESTIVAL

WORCESTER 22 - 29 August 1987

The Festival returns to Worcester this year and at the time of writing the advance information shows that there are a number of Elgar performances to be enjoyed. On the 22nd August *The Enigma Variations* are in the same programme as the Berlioz *Te Deum*. On the following day Elgar's *First Symphony* shares the programme with Britten's *Spring Symphony*. On the 24th August *In the South* opens the programme which will include a new work by Richard Rodney Bennett, as yet untitled, which is the new 'Elgar Commission'. The presentation 'Wood Magic' will be performed on the morning of 26th August, and on the last day, the 29th, the final performance will be *The Dream of Gerontius*. Full details will be available from the Festival Box Office, Gaudeamus, 8 Park View Terrace, Worcester WR3 7AG

THREE CHOIRS ELGAR SOCIETY TEA

Tea for members this year will be from 4.30 p.m, onwards in the Friends Meeting House, Sansome Place, Worcester, on Sunday, August 23rd. The Meeting House is almost opposite St. George's R.C. Church, where Elgar played the organ and has proved to be a most attractive venue. No money in advance is required, but Alan Boon (address under West Midlands on back cover) would be glad to have prior knowledge of your attendance.

An Elgar Society Badge?

For some time the Society has considered the possibility of a badge to indicate membership. This has been a controversial subject for a number of years - some members very much in favour, others against. If we decide to institute such a badge (and wearing it would be voluntary!) we are concerned that the design should be 'right'. It should look dignified, but not, we hope, dull, and should equally indicate to other people that this is the badge of the Elgar Society.

Various ideas have been put forward, but we are still not entirely happy with what has been suggested so far. If any members have ideas or designs then let us have them - a competition in fact for the best design representing the Elgar Society. The size of the badge would be approximately that of a ten-pence piece, i.e, just over 1 inch across. Designs to the Secretary please, NOT to the Journal, Mrs. Carol Holt, 20 Geraldine Road, Malvern, Worcs, WR14 3PA.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

9 May	<p>Dream of Gerontius <i>CBSO & City of Birmingham Choir/Robinson, with Penelope Walker, Maldwyn Davies, Matthew Best</i></p>	Birmingham Town Hall
12 May	<p>Chanson de Matin/Nuit <i>Insurance Orchestra/P. White</i></p>	Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank
16 May	<p>The Music-Makers <i>Tewkesbury Choral Society/Fox</i></p>	Tewkesbury Abbey at 7.30 p.m.
17 May	<p>Banner of St. George (with Vaughan Williams' Sea Symphony) <i>Plymouth Philharmonic Choir</i></p>	Guildhall, Plymouth at 2.30 p.m.
23 May	<p>Symphony no. 1 <i>Los Angeles PO/Previn</i></p>	Royal Festival Hall
28 May	<p>Cello Concerto <i>Julian Lloyd Webber (cello)/ cond. by E. Batiz</i></p>	Royal Festival Hall
30 May	<p>Froissart Overture <i>Sheffield PO/A. Penny</i></p>	St. John's Church, Ranmoor, Sheffield at 7.00 p.m.
6 June	<p>In the South <i>Rutland Sinfonia/Collett</i></p>	Corby Festival Hall, Northants at 7.30 p.m.
13 June	<p>Falstaff <i>Guildhall SO</i></p>	Royal Festival Hall
20 June	<p>The Kingdom <i>Finchley & Barnet Choral Societies/Barbican Sinfonia/Michael Hamm/with H. Charnock, J. Shell, P. Badley, B. Rayner Cook</i></p>	St. Barnabus Church, Holden Road, Woodside Park, London N12 at 7.45 p.m.
10 July	<p>Falstaff (and works by Maxwell Davies, Birtwhistle, Getty and Walton) <i>BBC PO/Edward Downes</i></p>	Royal Festival Hall at 7.30 p.m.
24 Aug.	<p>In the South <i>BBC PO/Edward Downes</i></p>	Worcester Cathedral at 8.00 p.m.

BOOK REVIEWS

Caractacus. *Elgar Complete Edition: volume 5, 1985,*

Novello, £54.95

It is one of the more curious conflicts of inclination against opportunity, muse against the marketplace - call it what you will - that cheated us of *English Mottoes* by Edward Elgar: 1. King Canute, 2. St. Augustine, 3. Boadicea, 4. Caractacus. Elgar would have liked to compose such an orchestral suite for Leeds, 1898, but that staunchly choral city wanted something to sing. So we have the cantata.

Caractacus and St. Augustine, in the Foreword by Dr. Moore and Robert Anderson, appear linked. But is there a confusion of saints here? The Augustine suggested by Dyke Acland in connection with the ancient Britons, druids, mistletoe, and ancient Rome, sounds like the Augustine sent from Rome to convert the English in 597, who became first Archbishop of Canterbury. Wasn't it Augustine of Hippo (354-430) who wrote *De Civitate Dei*, which Elgar at one point considered, and whose writings inspired Vaughan Williams and Tippett?

It is interesting to know that Novello had another *Caractacus* on their lists, by John F.H. Reed; and that Elgar read *The Aeneid* for his 'imperial background', inscribing early proofs with 'a land/Pregnant with empires; who the ancient race/should exalt, and bend the world/Under the yoke of laws'. (I would add, discursively, that Caractacus was also the subject of settings by Arne and Charles Wesley).

As in previous volumes, the edition is based on material from sketches through to full score, meticulously checked and the discrepancies listed by Robert Anderson. It is good to see the record ELG 001 cited in footnotes. It is good also to have more facsimiles than ever before, though I must repeat my small plea for more cross references: if in the sources we can be directed to see facsimile p.x' for Elgar's delightful pinman drawings of a conductor, could we not also have directions (now pencilled into my margins) to the other four facsimiles.

Anyone curious about where Elgar meant to use saxophones may now be satisfied. Other, more creative processes may be traced: for instance, 'O my warriors' was at first a solo for Caractacus - what an emotional charge was added with the chorus! And how fascinating that Elgar was not conscious of the thematic link of this Lament with the Invocation, but did observe it when correcting proofs.

(P.S. No, scholars, I have not a shred of evidence for Boadicea)

Diana McVeagh

The Music Makers; The Spirit of England; With Proud Thanksgiving.

Elgar Complete Edition: volume 10. 1986

Novello, £54.95

The original table of contents gave two works for volume 10. Here we have three - showing what major finds can be thrown up during routine research. *With Proud Thanksgiving* is recognizably *For the Fallen* but cut, simplified, and with some new music, all done by Elgar. He revised it for the unveiling of the Cenotaph in 1920, and produced - to quote Anderson and Moore - a reworking 'that cut the number of verses from eight to five (and bars from 218 to 98), eliminated the solo part, abridged the orchestral contribution, and involved the rethinking of the middle section into a more consoling major key rather than the minor key of the original'. A vocal score was published, and so were military and brass band parts by Frank Winterbottom; but then it was not used at the ceremony. In March 1921 it was performed, rescored by Elgar for full orchestra. The manuscript full score is in the British Library, where Anderson found it.

To the listener, the real surprises would be to miss altogether the 'idealised' march for 'They went with songs to the battle' and the twisting, chromatic accompaniment at 'They shall not grow old' (though Elgar's 'consoling' new setting is touching). I would not want to hear this new version often, but I do want to hear it once, and soon; and it has made the work available to all sorts of groups that might not tackle the original.

It is valuable to have the material for *The Music Makers* gathered together - Elgar's own preface, and his list for Newman (writing the programme notes) of quoted themes, here filled out with bar and word references. In his covering letter Elgar says 'All true art is, to a great extent egotism', and in another letter, on the Binyon work, describes why he used music from the *Gerontius* demons in *The Fourth of August* in a moving passage which links back to his early experience of the lunatic asylum.

In the list of sources we can trace one passage through 'Praise to the Holiest', *The Apostles*, *The Crown of India* - discarded each time - to end in *Music Makers* as bars 247-255. Before you rush to your vocal scores let me maliciously point out that you will have to count. One change in editorial method between this and all previous volumes is that references are now to numbered bars, not rehearsal figures. It is an improvement, but sneaked in without warning, and so baffling for a moment.

I could write a testy paragraph on Chase the Footnote - try footnote 5 - but to do so in the face of so much excellence would be trivial and graceless. So I wish the editors well in their search for the source of the Tasso quotation: may they find it before Volume 27 is printed; and say that as the Edition grows in shelf-length so it grows in depth and value

Diana McVeagh

This is the third appearance of Barry Collett's handy guide to 'Elgarland', but is none the less welcome for that. The last, enlarged, edition, was in 1981, and now it reappears in a slightly expanded form, with a new portrait, and a section of early photographs inserted in the middle. Curiously there has been no revision of the list of illustrations, so that these photographs are not mentioned, nor is the entry for the portrait corrected. A page caption is similarly incorrect now. However, these are mere details, easily corrected in a reprint. The book has several emendations in the light of later information, and the reading list has been expanded. In five years the price has inevitably increased, but it is still good value, and a necessary guide for all those who wish to visit those places which meant so much to the composer

R.P.T.

RECORD REVIEWS

Elgar Miniatures

Northern Sinfonia of England/Richard Hickox

HMV EL 2704931

The title of this new record calls to mind Lawrance Collingwood's 1964 compilation 'The Miniature Elgar', most recently available on HMV 'Greensleeve' ESD 7068. In content, however, it duplicates eight of the items on Neville Marriner's 1970 'The Lighter Elgar', also with the Northern Sinfonia, and currently also available on Greensleeve number ESD 7008. Of the items *not* on the Marriner disc, *Dream Children*, *Salut d'Amour*, *Chanson de Matin*, and *Chanson de Nuit* are readily available in alternative versions. The two *Falstaff* interludes are of limited interest out of the context of the complete work, and only the *Caractacus* woodland interlude strikes me as being a real gain to the Elgar discography. On the other hand, the Marriner disc, although somewhat shorter (eleven tracks as opposed to Hickox fourteen) includes a fine performance of the rarely heard *Romance for Bassoon and Orchestra* (with Michael Chapman as soloist), the only currently available alternative (other than recordings with piano accompaniment) being the Martin Gatt/Barenboim version which can only be purchased on the two disc Elgar compilation in CBS's 'Diamond Cut' series, number DC 40146.

Marriner's recording still sounds well in its most recent incarnation. I have to say that the sound on the new Hickox disc disappointed me. The recording was made by the freelance producer Brian Culverhouse, who has done so much to make unfamiliar Elgar available on record. This is not one of his most successful recordings, however. It was made in a rather resonant Newcastle church, and the result is a rather thick heavy sound, lacking in internal clarity. Too often these delicate miniatures seem totally swamped by their environment. The Marriner recording, too, was made in a rather resonant hall, and may lack the detailed clarity of a modern digital recording. On the other hand the impression of intimate music making is far more effectively conveyed.

G.H.L.

Introduction and Allegro, op 47; Serenade in E minor, op 20; Mazurka, op 10, no 1; Elegy, op 58; Chanson de Nuit; Chanson de Matin; Salut d'Amour. (The latter three works in arrangements by Donald Fraser).

English Chamber Orch/Sir Yehudi Menuhin.

Arabesque ABQ6563

Introduction & Allegro, op 47; Serenade in E minor, op 20; Elegy, op 58; (coupled with Vaughan Williams: Fantasia on 'Greensleeves', and Fantasia on a theme by Thomas Tallis).

Orpheus Chamber Orchestra of New York

Deutsche Grammophon 419 191-1

Our distinguished president's career as a conductor now goes back nearly thirty years - yet there is still a tendency to think of him as a world-renowned instrumentalist who has latterly taken to wielding the baton! In view of his special association with Elgar and his music, it is good news that he is being given an opportunity to record some of his Elgar interpretations. The Arabesque disc contains generally relaxed, easy-going performances, mostly played with all the warmth and understanding one would expect from the ECO strings. However, I cannot give the record an unreserved recommendation for several reasons. The *Serenade* responds well to Menuhin's affectionate approach. The *Introduction and Allegro*, however, needs a firmer grip and tighter rhythmic control. I doubt whether any new recording is going to sound entirely satisfactory now that Boult's brisk, rhythmically alert 1937 recording is back in circulation (HMV Treasury ED 2907251) - yet one could imagine a performance more relaxed than Boult, which holds together rather more securely than this one.

There are other problems, however, which perhaps accentuate the problems with the performances. The recording was made during an ECO American tour in the acoustically rather dry hall of Concordia College, Bronxville, New York. The richness of the string playing generally overcomes the limitation of the acoustic in most of the items, but *Introduction & Allegro* is rather less satisfactory. Here the orchestra seems to have been given a rather close microphone balance which does not allow the sound to expand as it should, and the members of the solo quartet appear to have been individually miked, and stand apart from the main body of the strings rather more than is appropriate to the music.

Then there is the problem of the programme chosen. To compile a disc devoted entirely to Elgar string music is a tall order. At 48 minutes, the disc is not great value, and, in any case, the two major string works and the *Elegy* have been supplemented by arrangements of popular Elgar works, better known, and readily available on disc in their original orchestration. Here they can only be regarded as 'makeweights'.

Actually the Deutsche Grammophon disc is no better filled - but I enjoyed it rather more. The conductorless group of about 26 young players, based in New York, plays with crisper rhythms and more precise ensemble than the ECO under Menuhin, and they benefit from very fine recording quality (another American college: this time the Performing Art Center of the State University of New York at Purchase). If there is a

weakness in their performances, it is just the common American fault of slightly over-sentimentalising Elgar's more languid melodies - yet, having said that, the *Elegy*, taken quite slowly, is played with steady rhythm and is a model of restraint and Elgarian understatement.

Without quite matching the very finest performances of *Introduction & Allegro* these young players show an excellent understanding of the music, and the subtle interplay between the soloists and the main body of strings is perfectly judged both by the players and the engineers.

The big disappointment for me was the Vaughan Williams *Tallis Fantasia*, which lacks any real sense of mystery. Perhaps such a modest body of players would not be able to produce the lush and resonant sound required for this unique and elusive piece of string writing. On the other hand, I was delighted to hear this middle section of the 'Greensleeves' fantasia, in which the strings are joined by flutes and harp, played unusually briskly and rhythmically, emphasising its country dance origin

G.H.L.

ELGAR ON COMPACT DISC. Part II.

I anticipated that by the time the first part of my survey appeared in print, new releases would have already made it slightly out of date. Such proved to be the case. As an example, I had only one CD of the *Second Symphony* to mention (Philharmonia/Haitink - a guarded recommendation). Earlier this year, however, two alternatives appeared. Chandos has issued the Bryden Thomson slow and intensely emotional version (CHAN 8452), with glorious playing from the LPO and wonderfully sonorous sound. Not perhaps a first choice recommendation, but I have found Thomson's interpretations of both symphonies growing on me. At completely the opposite pole is Boult's 1956 Pye recording, now available on a fascinating mid-price series of CDs from PRT (PVCD 8382). The recorded sound, although better than the LP version, is a bit muddy, but the performance is Boult at his best. A bargain for the Elgar CD collector - although presumably Boult's later EMI recording will appear on CD soon.

The revelation on the PRT series of reissues from Pye originals is the Halle/Barbirolli *Variations*, recorded in genuine stereo as early as 1955. The sound quality is astonishingly good - detailed and natural - and the performance is one of the best ever - dynamic and strongly characterised. Possibly the best version so far on CD, and even marginally preferable to Mackerras on EMI. Barbirolli's *Variations* is coupled with the Andre Navarra *Cello Concerto*, recorded two years later. Sadly, by the mid-1970s, the original stereo tapes had deteriorated and this recording is in mono (mercifully not 'electronically enhanced' as were later LP issues). The performance, as well as the sound quality, has been superseded, but the disc (PVCD 8384) is worth the reasonable price for the *Variations*. Well worth the price, too, is the *First Symphony*, recorded by Barbirolli six months after the *Variations*. The sound is more close-miked, resulting in a less well integrated string sound and flatter perspectives, but stunning dynamic range. This is a tighter, brisker performance than Barbirolli's later Philharmonia version, and many people consider it his finest Elgar recording. A strong recommendation on PVCD 8379.

Two other new CDs include the *Cello Concerto*: Ralph Kirchbaum (with Gibson and the SNO) on Chandos (CHAN 8384) gives a performance which cannot compete with his illustrious rivals. His coupling is the Walton concerto - which brings him firmly into competition with Yo-Yo Ma (on CBS), who is much preferable. One of the finest recordings of the *Concerto* is on Philips, and features Heinrich Schiff and the Dresden Staatskapelle under Marriner. The CD version drops the orchestral Elgar couplings, and adds Schiff's outstanding Dvorak concerto (Concertgebouw/Haitink), making recommendable CD (412-880-2).

I have to apologise for a silly error in my discussion of the Chandos/Gibson recording of Elgar overtures (CHAN 8309). It does *not* include *Falstaff*, being more than adequately filled by *Cockaigne*, *In the South*, *Froissart* and the Handel/Elgar *Overture in D minor*. I was confusing this issue with Gibson's earlier recording, now on CHAN 8431, coupling a vivid *Falstaff* with a well-characterised *Variations*. This latter is one of an enterprising new batch of Chandos CDs reissuing some of their important Elgar material recorded a decade or so ago. This includes Gibson's fine *Coronation Ode* coupled with the only *Spirit of England* (CHAN 8430), an earlier Gibson *Cockaigne*, sharing a disc with the *P & C Marches* and the *Crown of India* suite, and there are two discs conducted by George Hurst: CHAN 8428 couples suites drawn from *The Starlight Express* and the incidental music from Binyon's play *King Arthur*, while CHAN 8432 gives us the orchestral version of *The Starlight Express* waltzes, music from *Beau Brummel*, and *The Spanish Lady*, *Adieu*, and the only recording of the remarkable early *Sursum Corda*. The rest of the disc is filled with equally rarely-heard Vaughan Williams pieces. Chandos have already issued Norman del Mar's *Elgar Miniatures* disc (also with the Bournemouth Orchestra), which contains mostly popular items, but includes the *Soliloquy* for oboe and orchestra, with Leon Goossens as soloist, (CHAN 8371) and a more recent recording by Bryden Thomson and the Ulster Orchestra of both *Wand of Youth Suites* and the *Nursery Suite* - an exceptionally well-filled disc (CHAN 8318).

In the first part of this survey I mentioned that the EMI CD reissue of the Boult *First Symphony* also included the *Serenade for Strings*. There are a variety of recordings of this delightful work to chose from on CD, on many of which it is appropriately joined by Elgar's other major work for strings, *Introduction and Allegro*. Both these works appear on the very successful CD transfer of Barbirolli's classic 1962 recording *English Music for Strings*, with the Sinfonia of London (CDC 7-47537-2). This was originally completed by fine Vaughan Williams performances, but is now enhanced by the inclusion of *Elegy for Strings* and *Sospiri*, extracted from 1966 sessions with the New Philharmonia.

Barbirolli uses a large string body of 'symphonic' sonority. An almost identical programme (*Sospiri* only is absent) in relaxed performances, beautifully recorded by the smaller conductorless Orpheus Chamber Orchestra of New York, on Deutsche Grammophon (419 191-2) is reviewed in its LP form elsewhere in this issue. The English String Orchestra under William Boughton (Nimbus NMI 5008) is a slightly larger group of players, resonantly, but clearly, recorded. By comparison with the DG issue, the strings seem to lack depth of tone. Enjoyable, nevertheless, and an interesting programme, entirely Elgar. The *Serenade* is brusquely played; the *Introduction and Allegro* is well-judged and rhythmically crisp. The other works are *Elegy*, *Sospiri*, *Chanson de Matin/Nuit* and the *Spanish Lady* suite. In conclusion, two other CDs include the *Serenade* as part of a recital of British music: Chandos CHAN 8374 features Hurst and the Bournemouth Sinfonietta (the other music is by Holst, Ireland, and Warlock), while ASV CDDCA 518 is by Marriner and the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields (with Vaughan Williams and Tippett).

At the time of writing we still have only one recording each, on CD, of the late chamber works. The Medici Quartet's Meridian version of the *String Quartet* and *Piano Quintet* (with John Bingham) is exceptionally well-recorded on ECD 84082 and the performances very good if a trifle too 'rhapsodic' in the *Quintet*. The *Violin Sonata* has been recorded for Chandos by Nigel Kennedy and Peter Pettinger (CHAN 8380) in a slightly too resonant acoustic, coupled with a fascinating selection of early violin pieces and arrangements. One of the most interesting Elgar recordings in recent years, in superb sound, was Peter Pettinger's survey of just about everything Elgar wrote for solo piano - highly recommended in its CD issue, CHAN 8438. There is just one other CD recording which I have not yet mentioned - an excellent version of *The Severn Suite* in its original brass band scoring, played by the London Collegiate Brass, under James Stobart (on CRD 3434). We are lucky to have so much Elgar music available in the new medium so soon after its introduction (compare the situation three years after the first LP discs in the early 1950s). Yet there are still gaps. There is little vocal music available, for example - just the two *Gerontius* recordings and the Janet Baker *Sea Pictures*, coupled with the du Pre *Cello Concerto* on EMI CDC 7-47329-2. I understand from EMI that there are no plans to transfer to CD either of the Boulton recordings of the other two great oratorios, nor the fine Groves *Caractacus* - although Handley's *King Olaf*, which should be available in LP form by the time this appears in print, will be issued CD as well.

I will try to update this survey of Elgar on CD from time to time as new issues are released.

Gareth H. Lewis

NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES

The SOUTH WALES Branch announce that a Day-School on Elgar will be conducted by Vernon Handley on 20th June. The venue will be Friendship House, Swansea, (near the Railway Station). Fuller details are available from the Branch Treasurer, Ken Wallace, 6 Ridgeway, Newport, Gwent. The EAST MIDLANDS Branch report that in December last Donald Hunt was unable to be present, due to illness, and at extremely short notice Raymond Monk stepped into the breach and presented tapes of programmes made some years ago by Jerrold Northrop Moore for American radio. They now look forward to their joint meeting with the Leicester Recorded Music Society on June 15th, when Michael Kennedy will speak on "Elgar the Edwardian". This will be held at 7.30 p.m, at the Holy Cross Centre, Wellington Street, Leicester.

From LONDON Branch we learn that there was a spectacular improvement in audio-presentation at its December meeting. Brian Couzens, Managing Director of Chandos Records, brought his own equipment! In consequence 'we were treated to a quite remarkable compact disc presentation interspersed with amusing and fascinating anecdotes giving an insight into the working of a company which has done so much for Elgar and English music in general.' In January Kenneth Loveland, though barely recovered from flu', made the long journey from Wales and spoke wittily and wisely about "Elgar and his Contemporaries." In February another eminent and senior Elgarian, Dr. Percy Young, also made a long winter journey to be present. It was wonderful to hear again, on Dr. Young's tape, last summer's Smith Square performance of *The Spanish Lady* and to learn about the detective work into the sources of both words and music which has enabled Dr. Young to produce a performing version of at least part of Elgar's only opera. The London Branch Secretary gives notice that the Branch AGM will be held in the Read Theatre, Imperial College, London, on Monday, 1st June at 7.30

p.m. Agendas and Minutes will be available at the meeting. Nominations for officers and committee in writing, signed by two members and countersigned by the nominee, should be sent to the Branch Secretary (address on back cover) to arrive by May 30th. The AGM will be followed by 'Another Dip in the Archives.' Two special outings are being arranged by the Branch, and the first may well interest other members. On 13th June a visit is being arranged to Cambridge, leaving in the morning and returning to London at about 10.30 p.m. Included in the day's events is Evensong at King's College, at 5.30 p.m, when Elgar's anthem *Give unto the Lord* will be performed, followed at 6.30 p.m, by a performance of both *Organ Sonatas* by Stephen Cleobury. The Yorkshire Excursion described in our last issue will take place from 26/28 June. Full details of both events from the Branch Secretary.

EAST ANGLIAN Winter and Spring events have continued as programmed though, sadly, with reduced attendances, - attributable, (we trust) rather to the severity of the weather than to general decline of concernment. Even so, attendance at the AGM (never a popular favourite!) was particularly disappointing this year, and although the "faithful" did succeed in producing a new Committee we are now, alas, lacking a general Secretary: a volunteer is pressingly needed! Meanwhile, Branch affairs will go forward as usual, whilst the current continuity problems (which seem to afflict most Societies periodically, in this day and age) will be solved in our own way.

Events after Easter consist of: a programme of the music of Elgar's earlier Victorian predecessors by David Barker; then, in May, a concert by the Broadland Singers in the St. Peter Mancroft Church in Norwich, at which some Elgar choral works, also selections from his church and organ music, will be performed, followed later in the month by another Members' Evening; a visit by Prof. Bernard Keffe in June to speak on "Elgar's Handling of the Orchestra"; and finally the traditional Summer Garden Party in July. It is also hoped to form a party to hear "The Kingdom" in St. Edmundsbury Cathedral on June 6th.

WEST MIDLANDS report on a number of activities which concern the whole Society rather than just the Branch. First the Wreath Laying Ceremony at Worcester Cathedral on Sunday, May 31st. As usual this follows Evensong at 4 p.m. Immediately after members and friends may make their way to the Birthplace at Broadheath by about 5.30 p.m, to partake of sherry and a slice of E.E's 130th anniversary birthday cake. At Birchwood Lodge, Storridge, Malvern, Mrs. Eileen Vockins is again offering coffee at this favourite Elgar home from 10.30 a.m, to noon on Saturday, Sunday and Monday, May 23rd to 25th. Also tea on the same days from 3 to 5 p.m. Coffee will also be available on Saturday and Sunday. May 30th and 31st, with tea also on the 30th.

As for the Branch, the first meeting of the Autumn season will be on September 26th, at 2.30 p.m, when Jerrold Northrop Moore will talk on 'Elgar's Correspondence with Publishers' at the Friends Meeting House, Sansome Place, Worcester. Finally, a branch member for many years, Miss E. Smith, of Wolverhampton, left the Society a generous bequest in her will. She was also secretary of the Wolverhampton Arts Society, and one of the last events she organised was a local meeting on March 24th when Prof. Ian Parrott spoke on "Elgar, Delius and Holst Fifty Years On."

YORKSHIRE Branch continues to have well-attended meetings and we have been pleased in recent times to see new faces in the meeting-room, attracted along by mentions in the local press. Some have joined, others not. But they may well come again, and it is up to us to provide attractive fare, which we do to the limit of our funds.

Our current season's programme has been described as the best to date and the presentations have been living up to the promise in the print. Speaking on incidental music on December 1st television writer John Finch made it clear that if Elgar's music is not featured in all his productions, it is clearly not his fault! The meetings of December, January and February (Christmas Social, Chariman's Evening and Request Evening respectively) did not succumb to the colder weather of those months, although the snow which fell while we were meeting on Jan. 12th sent us scurrying home quicker than usual.

The outstanding evening was undoubtedly Mar. 9th, when Ian Parrott spoke on 'Elgar's Enigma Solved'. With only 32 members on the books, the branch provided Prof. Parrott with an audience of 40! - a fine lecture indeed; erudite, yet presented in a manner greatly appreciated by even the least academic of our members. Prof. Parrott's style and delivery was envied by many, admired by all, and members will be pleased to learn that he agreed to come again in the season commencing Sept. 1988. Of the meetings yet to come we look forward particularly to May 11th, when Winifred German will give a talk about her 'Uncle Edward' entitled 'A Shropshire Lad'. Live music is promised.

LETTERS

From Andrew Neill

In your September 1986 issue GHL reviewed the reissue by EMI of ELGS 002, Sir Adrian Boult's studio recording of Elgar's Choral Songs. He raised several questions which I thought I might answer through the courtesy of your columns.

When John Knowles negotiated with the BBC for the original tapes the members of the Committee, of which he was Treasurer and I Secretary, did not anticipate that we would suffer considerable distribution difficulties shortly after the record was released. Therefore when EMI proposed taking over the tapes and issuing the material under their own label, the Committee was naturally attracted to the idea. We were very keen to ensure that these unique performances reached as wide a public as possible. However, much hard work and thought had gone into the Society record and we were hopeful of preserving the original spirit of that issue. EMI agreed to publish the sleeve notes as written by John Knowles and Michael Pope, who quite rightly felt his original note should be amended slightly. The story behind the inclusion of a photograph taken by me is also quite interesting. The photograph of San Miniato on the sleeve of ELGS002 was chosen by John Knowles and myself from the large collection of slides in the Italian Tourist Office in Regent Street. We spent a frustrating few hours attempting to meet our criteria: Firstly the photograph should convey something of the spirit of the landscape which so inspired Elgar, secondly it should be suitable for overprinting, and finally it should be satisfactorily reproduced. The photograph of San Miniato was the only one which was suitable, and even then its colours had begun to fade. Unfortunately we were working against a tight deadline and had no time to search elsewhere.

Some time later I was on holiday in Italy and naturally took time to seek out San Miniato of which I knew nothing. I was not disappointed and found the hill-town to be as photogenic as that faded picture we had found the previous year had suggested. When the time came to discuss EMI's own production of the new record it seemed sensible to substitute one of my photographs, with improved colours, for the original. Incidentally,

because of this and EMI's generosity a further contribution to the King Olaf Fund was ensured.

From John Hayes, Director, National Portrait Gallery

A paragraph in the Society's JOURNAL for January 1987 has been drawn to my attention. It says that 'there is no portrait of Elgar in the Musician's Room at the National Portrait Gallery. It does seem a remarkable omission, and we hope that the Gallery officials will take steps to remedy the situation.'

Your correspondent is misinformed. There is no Musicians Room at the National Portrait Gallery, but the bronze bust of Elgar, dated 1927, by Percival Hedley, is on permanent display in the Edwardian Gallery, where it has been appreciated by a wide public (we had 625,000 visitors last year) for a considerable time.

From Margaret Lawrence

With regard to Lady Hull's comment in your January issue, about the National Portrait Gallery: my daughter, whose work is connected with the art world, has access to, and has provided, the following information: there is a bronze cast of a bust of Elgar by Percival Hedley in the Gallery: the Gallery will consider this a portrait; there is also a chalk (11in x 11 5/8in) by Sir William Rothenstein, and the Herbert Lambert photograph.

According to the Dictionary of British Portraiture 3 (Victorians) pub. in 1981 by the Gallery, only one painting of Elgar exists (that by Sir Philip Burne-Jones, which is in the Guildhall, Worcester). The drawings in existence are:

William Strang, 1911, head & shoulders, profile, chalk, at the Royal College.

Edmond Kapp, 1913 & 1914, two studies conducting, at the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, Birmingham.

Sir William Rothenstein, 1919, head & shoulders, chalk, at the City Museum & Art Gallery, Birmingham.

The rest are photographs, some of which are available in print or postcard form from the National Portrait Gallery.

From Eliot.B. Levin, Symposium Records

I am grateful to you for the publicity you have given to our forthcoming issue of some Elgar recordings. May I, however, correct and add a few trifles?

The piano recordings are of his 'Improvisations', the orchestral record is his 'Transcription'. There are five 'Improvisations'. The sixth side of this set will carry a photograph, as nearly contemporary with the recordings as could be found, of Elgar seated at the piano.

From Richard Turbet

May I draw readers' attention to an Elgarian item from an unusual source?

Holroyd, James. The Second Quartet: Cesar Franck, Bruckner, Elgar, Brahms (sic): four sermons preached during Advent 1980. Brighton, St. Bartholomew's Church, 1980.

The sermon entitled 'Elgar' was preached on Advent III: 14 December 1980. The pamphlet is unpaginated, but this sermon covers what would be pages 20-27. It is still on sale from the Church in Anne Street, at 50p, also presumably by post for the additional cost of a stamp; but no-one should forego the excuse for visiting this veritable cathedral of London, Brighton and South Coast Anglicanism.

From Miss T.M. Cullis

As a girl at St. Rose's Convent School in Stroud in the late 20s and early 30s I knew Mother Mary Reginald, O.P., the youngest sister of Sir Edward Elgar, who became a Dominican sister and spent the last years of her life at Stroud. Like most of the sisters in the Stroud community Mother Reginald was buried in the graveyard of the Dominican Priory at Woodchester, the church of which I am now a parishioner. I often pass the grave, and am reminded of her.

The church is now in need of major repairs. Work is in progress, and much generous help has now been given by trusts, charities and individuals, but about £30,000 is still required. In view of our link with the Elgar family, I wonder whether any of your members would help us. I should be glad to send further information to anyone interested.

*(*The address to write to is: St. Mary's Hill House, St. Mary's Hill, Inchbrook, Stroud, Glos, GL5 5HP)*

A SEAT ON THE MALVERN HILLS

Members will be glad to know that donations received to date total some £410. It has been thought desirable that any surplus should be kept in the Fund to cover necessary maintenance or repairs in the years ahead. The Branch Treasurer, Jim Holt, will be glad to go on receiving your donations. Dedication of the installation will be at noon on Sunday, May 31st. The site is on Malvern Wells Common, on the left after leaving Malvern, about a quarter of a mile short of 'Craeg Lea'. There is a bus shelter on the right hand side of the road.

THE ELGAR SOCIETY

[President: Sir YEHUDI MENUHIN, O.M., 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, Derringstone 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.

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- Subscription £2
- South Wales *All correspondence to the Branch Treasurer, Ken Wallace, 6 Ridgeway, Newport, Gwent, NP1 5AF.*
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