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*The Editor does not necessarily agree with the views expressed by contributors,
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Front Cover: The Norbury coat of arms superimposed on the start of Variation VIII (W.N.) (the latter courtesy of British Library Board (Add MS 58003-58004)).

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Dates: use the form 2 June 1857. Decades: 1930s, no apostrophe.

Plurals: no apostrophe (CDs not CD's).

Foreign words: if well established in English (sic, crescendo) in Roman, otherwise italics.

Numbers: spell out up to and including twenty, then 21 (etc.) in figures.

Quotations: in 'single quotes' as standard. Double quotes for quotes within quotes.

Longer quotations in a separate paragraph, *not* in italic, *not* in quotes; please leave a blank line before and after.

Emphasis: ensure emphasis is attributed as '[original emphasis]' or '[my emphasis]'. Emphasized text *italic*.

References: Please position footnote markers *after* punctuation – wherever possible at the end of a sentence.

In footnotes, please adhere as far as possible to these forms (more fully expounded in the longer version of these notes):

Books: Author, *Title* (Place of publication: Publisher, year of publication), page[s]. Thus: Robert Anderson, *Elgar* (London: Dent, 1993), 199.

Periodicals: Author, 'Title of article', *Title of periodical*, issue number and date sufficient to identify, page[s]. Thus: Michael Allis, 'Elgar, Lytton, and the Piano Quintet, Op. 84', *Music & Letters*, 85 (May 2004), 198.

End a footnote with a full stop, please, and never put a comma before a parenthesis.

Titles that are 'generic' in Roman: e.g. Violin Concerto. Others in *italics* (e.g. *Sea Pictures*; the *Musical Times*). Units within a longer work in single quotes, e.g. 'Sanctus fortis' from *The Dream of Gerontius*.

Editorial

Pride of place in this issue goes to a fascinating essay by that most prolific of Elgarians, Kevin Allen, on his researches into the Norbury family and much else. It serves as a taster to his forthcoming book on the family, and reveals what an unexpected treasure trove of material – both on Elgar and on the Malvern social scene at the end of the nineteenth century – he discovered at Sherridge, the Norbury family home just down the road from Birchwood cottage. I for one can't wait until the book appears next year, and those interested should note that details are enclosed with this issue.

The indefatigable John Norris writes of the inevitable trials and tribulations surrounding the production of the next two volumes in the Elgar Complete Edition: the solo songs with orchestral accompaniment and the first volume of solo songs with piano accompaniment. The casual observer might have thought that compiling two lists of works to be included in the volumes would prove a simple task. Nothing could be further from the truth. With publishers wanting to cash in on sales of sheet music by issuing songs in every conceivable key and arrangement, and with the popular singers of the day requiring orchestral arrangements, not necessarily by Elgar, to use at their concerts, John has faced an enormous task. Add the various song titles that crop up in the diaries and correspondence which may or may not have resulted in a completed song ... well, I won't steal any more of John's thunder.

The centenary of the first performance of Elgar's setting of Psalm 48, *Great is the Lord*, has just passed, and I have contributed a short essay to celebrate that event: one that concentrates on its dedicatee, Dean Armitage Robinson. It was quite fortuitous that research for the 'Collected Correspondence' project has brought to light a hitherto unknown letter from Elgar to Dean Robinson about the Psalm in the Westminster Abbey Library just at the moment when it was needed.

Finally, a plug for the reissue of the Louis Halsey Singers' collection of Elgar part-songs reviewed in this issue. Both my wife and I were members of the choir in the late '60s and early '70s (and Jane is on the recording). I know I'm thoroughly biased, but there really hasn't been a better recording of these songs, a fact brought home to us recently when we heard a rival recording under a distinguished Elgar conductor at the Birthplace. Chris Bennett tells me he's only ordered two copies: please make him realise that he's sadly underestimated demand!

Martin Bird

Researching the Norbury Papers; or, One Thing Leads to Another

Kevin Allen

I found myself asking ... what is History about? And the conclusion I reached was that the real, central theme of History is not what happened, but what people felt about it when it was happening.

G. M. Young, *Victorian England: Portrait of an Age*.

I've had my first [violin lesson] only today. Poor little Mr Elgar, he's only quite a boy, & very shy. When we came into his little room, where he was twiddling little twiddles on his violin, he didn't know what to say at all, & when he wanted to correct me, he hesitated as if he didn't know how to say what he wanted to say. However I think he's a nicemannered little fellow, & I always thought he played well.

Diary of Madge Martin, 21 October 1880.¹

I need not say a word here as to any regret ... I am truly sorry for the Hon: Secs. Well, we tried.

Edward Elgar to Martina Hyde, 17 January, 1905.²

In the beginning: Catherine Moody and Lorne Lodge

One of the strongest and most frequent recommendations I was lucky enough to be given in my search for a starting-point in Elgar research was that I should meet with Catherine Moody (1920-2009) a Malvern painter and writer who had known Troyte Griffith, having been taught perspective by him at the Malvern College of Art. Catherine had lived in Malvern since the mid-1930s, when her father Victor Moody had been appointed the College's Head. He was an accomplished and successful painter, specialising in portraits, conversation-pieces and scenes of a quasi-mythological or classical nature. Catherine herself had studied at the Royal College of Art, and taught initially at Manchester before joining her father at the Malvern College. Subsequently she followed in his footsteps as its Director.

My first meeting with Catherine took place in August 1991, during the week of the attempted coup against Mikhail Gorbachev in Russia. The media were full of the clamour, but I never had

1 Worcester Record Office (hereafter WRO) BA 8397.

2 Elgar Birthplace Museum (hereafter EBM) letter 10793.

such a feeling of leaving the world behind as when I arrived at Lorne Lodge, the handsome three-storey Victorian-Gothic detached house of Malvern stone where the Moody family had lived for well over fifty years. An ornate bell-pull (I discovered later that it had been designed by Catherine herself, for metalwork and silversmithing were among her varied accomplishments) produced a faint tinkling from somewhere in the deep recesses of the house. I almost expected a maid in uniform to answer the imposing arched door, but Catherine proved homely and unpretentious as she led me into a large, well-lit drawing room. I had a fleeting impression of a red-tiled corridor, its walls lined with paintings and decorated with elegant lapidary curlicues. The drawing-room likewise was crammed from floor to ceiling with her father's paintings, as well as an imposing bust of Catherine herself in a green-coloured stone, surveying us calmly from a corner. The atmosphere was enhanced by the furniture, much of it of 18th century vintage; a mahogany folio stand, deep-buttoned armchairs, a huge break-front satin birch bookcase, and a handsome red tortoiseshell writing table on ormolu-mounted cabriole legs. I learnt later that every room in the house was like this – exquisite antique furniture, walls covered with richly coloured, beautifully framed paintings, and cupboards of books, books, books. As an introduction to my planned investigations into the past, the experience of visiting this 'time-capsule' house could not have been bettered. Elgar's 'old-world state' came irrepressibly to mind. It seemed a good omen.

On that first visit, coffee was poured from Catherine's silver pot and chocolate biscuits were produced as she related her memories of Troyte, and of Malvern's social and cultural life in the 1930s. Catherine spoke in a leisured, stately way – a total absence of any feeling of hurry was a feature of life at Lorne Lodge – and she used curiously old-fashioned figures of speech. One that has remained with me is that she would never talk about Troyte Griffith's bicycle, for example, rather always 'the bicycle of Troyte Griffith'. Catherine's pronunciation, too, had a kind of Edwardian drawl – in discussing Elgar's Op. 36 she would always refer to it as 'the EnigMAH'. Further

Outline drawing of Lorne Lodge by Catherine Moody (reproduced by permission)



charm was added to the conversation when it was regularly punctuated by the delightfully non-synchronous chiming of the quarters of Catherine's three clocks, two of them antique long-case specimens, standing sentinel around the spacious house.

Victor Moody's name may be largely unknown today, but he was widely admired in his time and it is difficult to escape the feeling that Lorne Lodge must have been the centre of a pre-war élite of writers, actors and artists, with a 'house party' atmosphere during Barry Jackson's Malvern Festivals, most notably of course including Bernard Shaw. Catherine vividly recalled his appearance at lunch one day, in the room where we were talking; she pointed out where he sat, and recalled something of his bantering conversation with Charlotte and his hosts over the food he preferred. A portrait of the man himself, wearing a cloth cap, was among the collection on the wall. Victor Moody was the last person to be overawed by celebrity; living into his nineties, he maintained a certain style – friends spoke to me of invitations where one dressed for dinner at a table gleaming with silver cutlery and polished glassware, with the ladies retiring to the drawing-room after the meal, leaving the gentlemen to their port.

Catherine had organised a local research project on Troyte to mark the Queen's Silver Jubilee, accumulating a great deal of reminiscence and information. Conversation drifted on to the question of research on other 'variants' with Malvern associations. Here Catherine's decades of local knowledge, her network of contacts and her gift of almost total recall were brought to the fore. One by one, and with many an anecdote, she listed possibilities – the Fittons, the Lygons of Madresfield Court, the Nevinsons (one of their descendants had married Malvern's former Chief Librarian) and finally, the Norbury family of Variation Eight. I ticked some boxes mentally. The Fitton family had died out in Malvern, the Lygons seemed rather daunting, and any continuing connection between Basil and Edward Bonney Nevinson and Malvern seemed rather slim. So the Norburys, still living I gathered in the old family house that Elgar knew, seemed the best bet. The current incumbent was Winifred Norbury's great-nephew, and he was the person to be in touch with, said Catherine. What was his full address, I wondered, anxious to be properly efficient over an all-important first contact. 'Oh', said Catherine from her armchair, and with a careless wave of the hand as if dismissing such a mere detail, 'Peter Norbury, Sherridge, near Malvern, should find him.' Anything more exact, and especially the new-fangled postcode, seemed unnecessary. The house was there well before postcodes were thought of, after all. Once again I was had a strong sense of the continuity of the past into the present; and I later learnt that Catherine's formula was the one used by Edward Elgar himself in writing to the Norburys.

Sherridge

Postcodes or no, my letter of enquiry found its way to Sherridge, the 'eighteenth-century house' of Elgar's music and the 'seat', as Burke's *Landed Gentry* might have put it, of the Norbury family for generations. This totally inexperienced researcher was stunned to receive a prompt reply from the owner. 'With regard to my great-aunt Winifred', Peter Norbury wrote, 'I have a portrait photograph of her and several family photographs in which she is present. I also have several scores with her name in, her umbrella – a prize for archery, inscribed with her name. Of most interest may be her diaries & her sister Florence's diaries ... I have several drawers & boxes of family letters but they need an Archivist to sort out. All this material has not been published before. If you are interested, please get in touch.' I replied with a more formal version of 'will a duck swim' and it was not long before I rang another bell (this time a white porcelain one set in a shiny brass lozenge fitting – might it have been the one that Elgar would have pressed, I wondered!) and crossed another



Gertrude Norbury and grandchildren embark on a carriage outing, Sherridge 1909. (Sherridge Archive)

historic threshold, to be welcomed at Sherridge. I was soon given a privileged opportunity of inspecting that accumulation of diaries and letters, typical of the long-term continuity of a family in one house, and emerged somewhat goggle-eyed. The suggested need for an Archivist was nothing less than the truth. First the diaries: they were mustered along shelf after shelf downstairs, decade after decade of them, the dates on their spines merging into one another, from the 1880s to the 1930s, making an immediate impact as I realised that they represented virtually the entire lifetimes of those who had lived in the very rooms I was walking through. Once again the past seemed very much in the present. We picked out a few volumes at random, and skimmed the closely-written but always legible pages. Several references to 'Mr Elgar' and 'Dr Elgar' leapt from the page. A check on entries for 19 June, 1899, showed that Florence Norbury (but not her sister Winifred) had been present at the first performance of the Variations, and another memorable discovery was provided when a diary was opened and something fell to the floor. It proved to be a ticket for one of Hans Richter's London concerts of the 1890s, evidently a special evening. Another time some blotting-paper of the same vintage, and still perfectly usable, fell out. Diaries inspected, there then came a visit to a large upstairs room with an imposing and very ancient Welsh Dresser occupying virtually one wall. With some difficulty my host manhandled one of its deep drawers open, to reveal a mass of papers and documents of all kinds. The drawer was so full that the topmost material began to skim off on to the floor; it was with difficulty closed, and two more full drawers underneath were similarly 'investigated', as Catherine might have put it. Together with the diaries, it was a veritable archival cornucopia, and (apart from some passing references in Professor Parrott's 'Master Musicians' book on Elgar) it had indeed not been looked at before.

Knowing now that the diaries contained references to Elgar, I was happy to agree to sort and catalogue the family papers, in return for the opportunity to make use of any material of interest to me. I drew a deep breath, and soon realised that it was one thing to be allowed access to such a goldmine, and another to organise, read, study, and process the material in such a way as to make the best use of it. Its sheer bulk proved forbidding. On first investigation the numerous diaries proved to be those of 'W.N.' from 1883 to 1938, and her sisters Florence, from 1875 to 1919, and Beatrice, from 1889 to 1917: over one hundred and twenty volumes in all. Subsequently I came across their mother Gertrude's diaries as well, ranging from the early 1850s to the Great War. Then there were the papers in the drawers, which proved to amount to several thousand items of all kinds. There were family letters in plenty going back to the late 1700s, the kind that were written over again crossways before being folded and sealed, and a mass of business documents – legal correspondence, rent bills, tithe documents, wills, leases, contracts, inventories, stock and share certificates, parish council papers – themselves amounting to an unique source for Worcestershire's social and political history. Sadly I have not the kind of specialised knowledge to fully appreciate the value and significance of this kind of material, and I found it easier to respond to unexpected delights I found in the shape of extensive amounts of other material with a more human touch – handwritten receipt (recipe) books and collections of medicinal remedies, together with much prose, poetry and drama in manuscript, sketches, watercolours, silhouettes, and hundreds of postcards and spare bookplates. I began to wonder what on earth there might remain to be discovered in this box of delights, and it presented itself in the form of a rather dingy flat paper parcel, tied round with ancient string. On it was inscribed in an elegant scrawl, 'Paper from the *écritoire* of Napoleon Bonaparte'. The parcel proved to contain several large, off-white sheets of paper with a Napoleon's head watermark and its presence at Sherridge I can only surmise to be connected with Napoleon's brother Lucien, who lived near Worcester for a time. That is another story, the first of several encountered in my research that I have been unable to resist following up.

Henry and Priscilla

It was not the only artefact that suggested an unusual and long-running family history, for Peter Norbury reached into a cupboard one day and produced a chain mail shirt and a pair of spurs; and a pleasing symmetry was created when I came across a more recent example of protective wear, a 'Dad's Army' style tin hat of Second World War vintage. And it was the War that formed the background to my final, totally unexpected documentary discovery at Sherridge. This was a separate cache of papers from the late 1930s and 1940 – an appointment diary, personal, not to say intimate, letters, official correspondence and carbon copies of typed memoranda and reports. These papers cried out for explanation as much as the earlier ones did, and – to cut a long story short – they belonged to two clerks from the Ministry of Information, Henry Novy and Priscilla Feare, who had been sent to an empty Sherridge during 1940 by the celebrated and notorious Tom Harrisson, one of the founders of Mass-Observation, now subsumed into the Ministry of Information at Whitehall. Henry and Priscilla's official task was to remove files from the danger of London's bombs, and undertake discreet Observation work among the local population, attempting to assess morale. That was one reason for their presence at Sherridge; another one was that Henry and Priscilla were lovers and Henry was due for call-up later that year. So Harrisson, hard taskmaster as he was, proved warm-hearted enough to give the pair an opportunity to be together in safety and to have the whole of Sherridge to themselves during that famous hot summer of 1940. I was subsequently privileged to meet with Priscilla, then an indomitable nonagenarian, largely immobile through

polio. She sat with her memories in a large sunny room in her West Hampstead flat, dominated by the sculptures and paintings of her second husband, an Irish *littérateur* who features as MacDoon in J.P. Donleavy's *The Ginger Man*. But that, and Priscilla's own remarkable life, is yet other story.³

She told of sleeping with a rifle under her bed, and later kindly provided a beautifully-crafted and poignant written reminiscence of her days at Sherridge. I later learnt that Sherridge was to be the base of a Resistance cell in case of invasion; and indeed that the county of Worcestershire was to play an important role in that eventuality. Under plans known as 'Operation Black Move', dating back to before the Munich Agreement, the Royal family would have been accommodated at Madresfield Court, Parliament at Stratford, Winston Churchill, his family and Private Office at Spetchley House, and the War Cabinet and Secretariat would have been based at Hindlip Hall, just outside Worcester, very much familiar to the Norburys as the home of their friend Lady Allsopp, widow of the brewing magnate who was one of the first of that background to be raised to the 'peerage'. Various other departments would have moved to Malvern and Worcester, among other places, and it seems strange to think of 'Elgar Country' and all its associations in this grim context. But Worcestershire's many schools, hotels and country houses would have provided emergency accommodation in plenty. Croome Court, the seat of the Earls of Coventry, was earmarked for the Dutch Royal Family. Later, when I knew of Norbury connections with Waterloo, the Crimea and earlier conflicts (there are Norburys in the pages of *Froissart*, appropriately enough) the wartime connection seemed all of a piece when viewed on the grand scale.

In the Ladies' Boudoir

The story of Sherridge in 1940 was a straightforward and self-contained subject of research, something of a diversion from the task of devising a strategy for dealing with the bulk of the Norbury papers, a task that had to be faced. There was no great sophistication about my methods, and certainly no archival training. I read and made notes from the diaries, which I borrowed in batches. The three drawers of papers I emptied into a huge pyramid on the floor of the room where they had been kept, and sat myself down, sorting the letters into separate piles around me according to type or signature. It encouraged me to learn later on that this large room whose floor I occupied, with its Venetian window looking over toward the Malvern Hills, was a favourite retreat of Winifred and her sisters. With a glance back their grandfather's spell as Private Secretary to the English Ambassador in Paris, these very Victorian ladies ironically dubbed it their 'Boudoir', and they retreated there to sit, gossip, read, sew, sing and play the piano. Elgar and Troyte Griffith took tea there on Christmas Day, 1898, and Winifred remembered that 'afterwards

**Winifred and Pug, a photograph by
Troyte Griffith (Sherridge Archive)**



3 See 'The Shire Edge' (reading copy available in WRO).

Mr Elgar played the p.f. for us which was a treat'.⁴ There seemed to be no piano-tuner's son inhibitions about the instrument as far as the composer was concerned, or any snobbery on the part of the musical ladies of Sherridge. One of the first letters I came across, from the 1860s, mentioned that 'Mr Elgar came to tune the pianos today', and I would read in one of the diaries of later years how Sir Edward Elgar personally escorted the sisters to Elgar Brothers in Worcester and advise them on the choice of a new instrument.

It took me three working days just to remove the letters from their envelopes, and three weeks altogether to go through all the documents. I finished surrounded by an ever-widening circle of papers on the floor, having to contort myself into all kinds of shapes to reach those on the outer radius. Having sorted the family letters by author, I then sorted them again into chronological order, and then felt ready to actually read them. But how to process the information? Gradually I evolved a system whereby I photocopied all the letters, collected them together for each year, and added a preliminary sheet of information summarised from the diaries. These I then further collected into piles, each one for a decade, ranging from the 1850s to the 1930s. Even with the material boiled down in this way, I began to have storage problems. At that point I was planning to write what the archive seemed so fully to support: an account of the Victorian generation of the Norbury family as representatives of the Worcestershire county gentry, with as much emphasis as I could find on the Elgar connection, and in particular the Worcestershire Philharmonic Society, of which, as everyone knows, Winifred Norbury was Co-Secretary. A well-meaning friend advised me to write 'a short book' about Winifred and the Society, but my feeling was that only the fullest of treatments would match the generosity of spirit which allowed me full access to such a large amount of historic family material.

So I decided my account of the family would cover in detail the lives of the main members of the Norbury family from the 1850s to the 1930s, with references to Elgar and the Worcestershire Philharmonic where possible. This meant exploring not only the lives of Winifred and Florence, the most familiar names to Elgarians, but also the well-documented lives of their three sisters and brothers, all in their differing ways interesting Victorians. The middle girl, Kitty, was the only one to do the conventional thing, marrying young and producing a large family; the eldest, Nelly, withdrew from an engagement, trained as a nurse and became Matron of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea before marrying a much younger man at the age of 61; and the youngest girl, Betty, like Winifred and Florence, seemed set for a life of active spinsterhood at Sherridge before a late love-match marriage to a 'ne'er do well' who seems to have left her to cope with a Down's Syndrome daughter. Of the three brothers, the eldest, Coningsby, was a career soldier, rising to the rank of Major and seeing action in Egypt; the second, Frederick Paget, always known as Tommy, farmed successfully in British Columbia for many years; and the third, Wilfred Arthur, known subsequently as 'Billy Button', proved something of a skeleton in the family cupboard, refreshingly enough. The baby of the family, he may well have been a Down's child. Frequently unwell, he proved a slow learner at Hereford Choir School and adopted no profession, undertaking odd jobs around the house and farms, for which in return he received an allowance calculated to restrict his major fault, a fondness for the bottle.

Before long I found sufficient evidence, too, to add some family pre-history, for the Norburys had originally come over from France shortly after the Conquest, to settle as salt-merchants in Cheshire. The commodity was an important one and the family prospered and found preferment in the Law and the Army, as well as Royal patronage, before a branch moved south to Worcestershire.

4 Diary of Winifred Norbury, 25 December 1898, Sherridge Papers.

And through Winifred's partly Irish mother and her husband, the family could trace descent from Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine, through the Paget, Devereux, Buckingham and Stafford families, with various murders and beheadings *en route*. Familiar names from the saga include those of Richard Rich, Henry VIII's Chancellor, Lady Mary Boleyn, Ann's sister and the original object of his attentions: Lettice Knollys, the cousin of Elizabeth I who married her favourite, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester; and Henry Rich, Earl of Holland, the celebrated Cavalier, who was imprisoned with King Charles and beheaded by Oliver Cromwell. No wonder the Norbury Coat of Arms fascinated Elgar, with his love of heraldry and chivalry.



Members of the Hyde Family: Martina is third from the right. (Hyde Family/Elgar Birthplace Museum)

The Hyde Letters

I was to find, as I had hoped, that the Norbury sisters' diaries would yield valuable information about the Worcestershire Philharmonic Society, the Conductorship of which remains an under-researched aspect of Elgar's career. But it became clear to me that Winifred's rôle as Co-Secretary was markedly secondary that of her colleague, Martina Hyde. Miss Hyde was the musical and sporting daughter of a prominent Worcester Solicitor. She had been a violin pupil of Elgar, played frequently in local orchestras during the 1880s and '90s, and had several times taken initiatives to build vocal or string classes for him to direct. She knew him of old, therefore, and in all his moods. Miss Hyde was also one of Winifred's closest musical and personal friends, one of the very few

people outside her family referred to in the diaries by her Christian name. Perhaps it was her long acquaintance with Elgar, her location 'on the spot' in Worcester, and a background somehow more 'professional' than Winifred's more patrician one, that led Martina Hyde to be the hardest-worked of the two Secretaries.

I was intrigued therefore to be told by Michael Trott, former Chairman of Elgar Society West Midlands Branch, of the existence of a batch of letters from Elgar to Martina Hyde in private hands, information subsequently repeated in the *Journal*. The letters were in the possession of Timothy Shaw, a son of the Worcester musician (and first Chairman of the Elgar Society) A.T. Shaw. Timothy most kindly allowed me to photocopy the many letters, and I returned with another mountain of paper to sort and evaluate. Back to the floor! It did not take long to realise that I had again been given access to a priceless amount of unpublished material, the bulk of it directly related to the WPS, amounting to nearly three hundred items – letters, notes and postcards. Any single item may not have been of much interest, but taken as a whole the letters give us a full picture of Elgar's work for a body specifically set up for him to conduct. Putting the material into chronological order was once more a commonsense first step towards studying and transcribing it, but I have to confess that even so practised a one in deciphering the Elgarian 'fist' as I fondly fancied myself to be, was frequently frustrated. Many of the letters were undated, and many of them were hard to read, evidently dashed off in a hurry late at night by a tired man. A great deal of Sherlockian groundwork, aided by the Editor, was necessary to try to place difficult items. Although a stubborn hard core of 'undateds' remain, these letters tell the story of Elgar and the WPS, from enthusiastic beginning to bad-tempered end, as no other sources do. I began to see how they could be integrated into my planned account of Elgar and the Norburys, making an uniquely valuable contribution.

On Thursday, 23 September 1897, Florence Norbury noted in her diary that 'Martina Hyde ... called here early. [She] wants to start a new Musical Society with Mr Elgar for conductor.'⁵ The new body became the Worcestershire Philharmonic Society, hereinafter the WPS. As has been said, Miss Hyde's suggestion was not her first initiative in supporting her former teacher's ambitions. She evidently realised that the direction of the best performing bodies the locality could provide, almost by definition consisting of the middle classes and above, provided recognition of his talents, a way of allowing him to explore music that he was interested in, and a stimulus to composition. It was a way too, of tempting him to stay in the area at a time when he was making noises about a return to London, although I can find no record of his telling his London friends of such a plan. But certainly as 1897 drew to a close, Elgar's reputation, local and, increasingly, national, had never stood higher, with the appearance in recent years of the Organ Sonata, *The Light of Life*, and *Scenes from the Saga of King Olaf*, which was starting to receive repeat performances round the country. Now Novello's had offered him paying commissions for the Diamond Jubilee year, the *Imperial March* and *The Banner of St George*; and the Worcester press was beginning to refer to him quite openly as a genius. A new musical body under his direction would have the kind of prestige needed to attract membership, and could be relied upon to explore the kind of modern repertoire that was largely and deliberately shunned by Worcester's major musical body (other than the Festival Choral Society), the Musical Union. This had long provided a worthy contribution to the City's cultural life under its capable, if somewhat abrasive and musically conservative conductor and one-time Cathedral Precentor, the Reverend Edward Vine Hall. Martina was a member (as were Alice Elgar and Harriet Fitton), and her deep frustration with its repertoire led her to offer the Conductorship to Elgar if Vine Hall could be persuaded to step down. Wisely Elgar refused to

5 Sherridge Papers.

become involved; he often played in Hall's orchestra and the man had given his music several opportunities of performance.

Cometh the Hour, Cometh the Man

But Martina failed to abandon her vision, and chose her timing well when seeking to resurrect it. The summer of 1897 had seen the tragic departure of the brilliant, erratic Hugh Blair from the Cathedral organ loft and from his innovative Conductorship of the Festival Choral Society. His replacement, Ivor Atkins, was barely appointed and too much of an unknown quantity to be relied on to fill the vacuum. Now surely there was real scope for Elgar, Martina reasoned, and she must too have been influenced by the gradual opening-up of music to wider participation which had been taking place over recent years in Worcester. An example was the gradual death of a long-running series of subscription concerts organised by the City's major musical entrepreneur, Edward Spark, whose business must have been Elgar Brothers' biggest rival. Mr Spark's concerts were aimed at the gentry and aristocracy, and consisted largely of vocal and instrumental recitals given by leading artists, especially those with fashionably foreign-sounding names, genuine or not. Mr Spark had little hesitation in pandering to the kind of musical and social pretension which automatically elevated the foreign musician above the English, a phenomenon of which Elgar, as we know, was well aware. (It has to be said, however, that among his motley crew of Signor this and Madame that, Spark could claim to have brought such distinguished figures as Bottesini and Albéniz to Worcester). Nonetheless attendances gradually dwindled, much to Mr Spark's dismay. Ultimately he was forced to announce the permanent cessation of the concerts in what emerges as a somewhat peevish letter to the local press. The associated editorial comment was in the style of 'people are too busy making music for themselves to bother to provide audiences', couched very much in the tone of a complaint. More or less at the same time, Mary Lygon was successfully stimulating active music-making in the county through the inauguration of her Madresfield Musical Competitions, and Hugh Blair was outlining the need to develop town and village choirs throughout the County in order to do without the embarrassing necessity of importing singers from Leeds and elsewhere to join the local contingents during Festival weeks.⁶ In a sign of the times, Vine Hall helped found a series of well-attended free Corporation Organ Recitals for working people; and the City was proving capable of sustaining several large choral bodies supported by orchestral players, to say nothing of innumerable small-scale fund-raising parish concerts and recitals featuring talented amateurs like Martina Hyde and the Fitton and Norbury sisters.

In suggesting Elgar to conduct the new body, Martina was choosing someone who as an excited nine-year-old boy hearing an orchestra for the first time, ran down the street afterward to tell a friend, 'Oh, my. I had no idea what a band was like ... If I had that orchestra under my own control & given a free hand I could make it play whatever I liked.'⁷ Now he had that chance. It came at a crucial point in his composing career. Some have compartmentalised Elgar's involvement with the WPS as distraction, a side-issue in his creative life. There were times when he saw it that way himself. But is undeniable that the years of his closest connection with it were precisely the years of his emergence as a truly great composer.

Martina Hyde's original suggestion that he take over the Musical Union had been, if

6 Article in *The New Musical Courier*, undated, quoted in *Berrow's Worcester Journal* (hereafter BWJ) 29 September 1894. (Worcester Cathedral Library).

7 Jerrold Northrop Moore, *Edward Elgar: A Creative Life* (Oxford University Press, 1984) 30-31.

unproductive, flattering at any rate: ‘... how gratified I am that some people think highly enough of me to pleasantly imagine me in such a position’,⁸ Elgar replied. The Conductorship of the new body, especially now in Blair’s absence, gave him power as well as musical scope as such, and made him virtually the leader of music in the county. It was at the other end of the scale from the Bandmastership of the Powick Asylum. And Elgar had also told Martina how he ‘... should love to be at the head of something which might lean to the artistic even if it did not attain to it.’⁹ Now he had the chance to raise standards of taste and performance, to eradicate the kind of shallow dilettantism with which his years of teaching and small-scale local music-making had made him depressingly familiar. Alongside his unhappy experience of violin teaching, Elgar may surely be said to have felt a wider educational mission, as for example when as a younger man he had felt compelled to offer a Malvern newspaper an article about Brahms’ chamber works. He needed to stimulate and mould the artistic environment in which he worked.

‘Given a Free Hand.’

It is clear from his letters to Martina Hyde that for all these reasons Elgar was utterly determined to make a success of the WPS, and that he ran it in a very ‘hands-on’ style therefore, trusting to his instincts and his experience. There was a committee, but their approach seems to have been to give their conductor the ‘free hand’ that he wanted. Elgar chose the works to be performed and the singers and instrumentalists to perform them through his contacts with agents. He knew which publishers to approach for the hire of scores and parts and advised on how to keep their fees to a minimum. He advised too on the fees of soloists and the professional players needed to stiffen the local personnel, and how and when they should be paid. He chose dates of concerts and times of rehearsals, planned and sometimes wrote the programme notes, advised on their layout and insisted on reading proofs. He advised knowledgeably on press publicity both local and national, and knew and wrote to all the best people to approach to give the new Society the special imprimatur of accepting honorary membership. (One thing he burdened others with as much as he could was the tiresome necessity of testing voices.) For the rest he worried about the behaviour of audiences, attendance at rehearsals, ticket sales, and the quality of the choir’s singing. He also fussed about the need for a good firm music-stand and the provision of a cup of tea in rehearsal breaks; as anyone who has been involved in large-scale amateur music-making knows, apparently petty organisational matters can be vital. And he did it all through dozens and dozens of letters to Martina Hyde – terse scribbled notes, many of them, very promptly and reliably despatched through the efficient Victorian postal system. Through their essentially businesslike nature these Hyde letters are a world away from Elgar’s greatest and most personal ones. But they remain highly characteristic and unique in his correspondence. Their moods vary, calm, exultant, demanding, grateful, exasperated, punning, apologetic, with occasional flashes of the dark, self-dramatising side.

The precise details Elgar’s WPS programmes are of course of great interest. In addition to standard classic and romantic fare, it is clear that the composer was keen to investigate works of particular interest to him and find opportunities for the performance of contemporary works, English and European, although in doing so, as I came to realise, he was often no more than following in the footsteps of Hugh Blair’s own concerts with the Worcester Festival Choral Society.

8 Elgar to Martina Hyde, 27 July 1892, EBM letter 11083.

9 Ibid.

The Chamber Concerts

For the purposes of this article and for an opportunity of offering some necessarily brief quotations from the Hyde letters, I would like to focus on the occasional Chamber Concerts which Elgar deliberately built into the overall WPS series. Amid all the music-making great and small that was going on in Worcester and Malvern, such concerts were comparative rarities and the evangelising zeal of Elgar's letter about the 1886 Brahms concert again comes to mind. Now again, Elgar had an opportunity of elevating local taste in the highest of all classical forms, the string quartet. In accordance with his general WPS philosophy that only the best would do whatever the cost, Elgar found the best ensemble he could, from 'somewhere further north', Manchester, where the eminent Russian violinist Adolf Brodsky had recently settled as leader of the Hallé Orchestra and Professor of Violin at the College of Music. Having successfully organised a series of quartet concerts during an earlier posting at Leipzig, he embarked on a similarly acclaimed project at Manchester.

For any ambitious concert-promoter, Brodsky's quartet would be a 'catch', and Elgar approached him personally, not through Martina Hyde. The correspondence tells us much of the conductor's business method. The first WPS Chamber Concert took place on 13 March, 1901, and the first surviving reference to it is in a letter dated 28 January – uncomfortably close by modern standards. (Many WPS decisions and plans have a pressured 'last-minute' feel about them, especially as Elgar's fame and commitments grew). Mrs Brodsky evidently handled her husband's arrangements; her suggested date for the recital was problematic.

Dear Miss Hyde: Here, at last, is Frau Brodsky's letter: I have replied that the date is rather late for us & ask if any other day than a Thursday could be suggested earlier in March: please however find out if we can have the P[ublic] Hall on Ap 18th &c &c – I think the day will do as it seems to interfere with nothing – if B & Co cannot come earlier.

I have said that the terms will do providing a date could be arranged.¹⁰

A few days later, in a letter to Martina covering various other WPS matters, Elgar began to think ahead about the proper presentation and accommodation of Brodsky's personnel.

... I want the P[ublic] Hall arranged quite differently to the usual plan: can we have a platform for the Quartett – about 3ft from the floor to stand according to the (lovely) drawn plan overleaf.

Please enquire.¹¹

Four days later, more and more warming to his theme, Elgar wrote to Martina again, actually proposing to give a public lecture to enhance the value of Brodsky's concert. His plans seemed pretty well considered, although the suggestion itself was couched in diffident terms.

Dear Miss Hyde: if you think it wd. interest anyone I wd preach on Quartetts either on Feb 26 or 28 at 2.30 (or perhaps better 3.0) for an hour or so.

Let me know at once what you think. I shd. want a good piano.

... Could we have the lecture Theatre at Victoria Institute? Or High School room if not perhaps upstairs at Foregate Hall.¹²

10 Elgar to Martina Hyde, 28 January 1901, EBM letter 10920.

11 Elgar to Martina Hyde, 2 February 1901, EBM letter 11045.

12 Elgar to Martina Hyde, 6 February 1902, EBM letter 10953.

As requested, the efficient Martina replied by return of post, evidently pointing out problems with the proposed lecture. Elgar responded equally promptly, if irritably; now pre-publicity and the layout and costs of the programme book were his priority.

Dear Miss Hyde: I have the printer's estimate & they will be about £6 for 200 so we must charge a shilling hoping that the mean wretches will buy the book.

I suppose you will get out a circular: - call the artists

The Brodsky Quartet

(Manchester)

Adolf Brodsky, 1st violin

Rawdon Briggs, 2nd violin

Simon Speelman, viola

Carl Fuchs, violoncello

I enclose my idea of the first page of book. I am ordering 200.

Having got that out of the way, there was now a chance to vent some spleen. There had evidently been some discussion of the relative merits of two famous musical venues –

You must not talk to me as if you knew anything. St James's Hall is the height of vulgarity & bad taste & the Gewandhaus was built for music by musicians.

Do not trouble about the platform – I am tired of you all.

I do not now see any way to give my lecture: so let it drop.¹³

Poor Martina! She duly produced the circular, while Elgar corrected proofs of the programme book and optimistically increased the order to 250. But the book did not turn out as Elgar wanted and there was a blunt complaint: 'We shall lose heavily on these books & you have not put 'one shilling' on them', she was told.¹⁴ After that all seems to have gone smoothly. There was just one more instruction for the hard-worked 'Half- Secretary', when two days before the concert Elgar returned to details of the players' comfort.

Please have at Public Hall

Fire in ante-room

4 good stands that can be used with chairs – (some are too high)

4 good solid chairs

Cello seat

Piano seat ¹⁵

After all Elgar's efforts, this first chamber concert under the aegis of the WPS, the realization of a cherished personal project, was reviewed with praise and a pleasing degree of understanding. *Berrow's Worcester Journal* thought it was 'an eminently interesting and instructive departure on the part of the society ... a musical treat ... of distinctly educational value.' Despite his

13 Elgar to Martina Hyde, 7 February 1901, EBM letter 10910.

14 Elgar to Martina Hyde, c. February 1901, EBM letter 11042.

15 Elgar to Martina Hyde, 11 March, 1901, EBM letter 11037.

disappointment with the programme books, Elgar's intentions for them, and his active promotion of them, were recognised. The writer continued, 'It must have been a pleasure to the performers to play to an audience more than usually appreciative of their own musical knowledge, aided in appreciation as they were by the analytical programme, copied, by permission given to Dr Edward Elgar ... by Mr Chappell from the Monday Popular Concert programmes. This the members had been recommended to obtain and study beforehand to enable themselves the better to enjoy and understand.'¹⁶ The reviewer of *Birmingham Gazette* offered excited and knowledgeable praise of the performers, the music, and the occasion, and concluded, 'the Hall was well filled and the artistes were frequently recalled. A singularly fine concert, and one that speaks eloquently for the musical culture which conceived the scheme.'¹⁷

Success! No wonder that Elgar was keen to pursue the idea of further chamber concerts. He managed to arrange two more under the aegis of the WPS, one in April 1902, and the other in March 1903. It did not prove easy. At one point in January 1902 it seemed unlikely that the planned return of Brodsky and his men would take place at all. A peevish letter to Martina cancelled a meeting in Worcester ('I see no chance of coming in: too ill & only out of my room for five minutes'), and continued, 'I know we cannot have the Chamber Concert & I am sick of the whole Society in consequence.'¹⁸ It is not clear what the problem was, but it seems to have been a temporary one and soon the concert was 'on' again. References in the letters are scarce, but it is clear that Elgar's almost obsessive concern for a proper atmosphere for the concert had not diminished. Now Martina was asked to engage with the forces of law and order in Worcester. The day before the performance, she received this.

Dear Miss Hyde: Don't forget the police. Do ask the superintendant to send a lot & let them keep the streets quiet round the hall during the Concert – no quick driving &c & street cries.¹⁹

This time Elgar evidently felt a little charm was called for. Unusually, he signed off with a 'please', and added a sketch of a mouse for good measure. When the time came for the March 1903 concert, Worcester's Public Hall was unavailable and the Assembly Rooms at Malvern were chosen as an alternative, altogether quieter and more pleasant than city-centre Worcester. In all these difficulties of organisation and venue there surely lie the origins of Elgar's determination to preserve his hard-fought creation more securely in the shape of a dedicated local society, the celebrated Malvern Concert Club. Discussions about its formation took place soon after March, and its first concert took place on 31 October that year.²⁰

In this aspect, as in various others, the Elgar-Hyde letters emerge as a unique source for Elgar the composer – conductor – organiser – educator, greatly enhancing the account for this period which I had originally gleaned from the Norbury sources. At a time when Elgar letters are bought and sold purely for their investment value, sometimes disappearing abroad, it is pleasant to be able to record that Timothy Shaw has recently most generously donated his complete Elgar-Hyde letters collection to the Elgar Birthplace Museum.

16 BWJ, 16 March, 1901 (WRO).

17 *Birmingham Gazette*, 14 March 1901 (WRO).

18 Elgar to Martina Hyde, 12? January 1902, EBM letter 10819.

19 Elgar to Martina Hyde, 22 April, 1902, EBM letter 10962.

20 For a full account of this Club see Michael Messenger, *Elgar's Legacy: A Centennial History of the Malvern Concert Club* (Rickmansworth: Elgar Editions, 2003) .

The County Record Office

Stimulated to research the WPS concerts in more detail, I began visit the Worcester County Record Office to trace reviews. I found them in plenty, for the Worcester of the late Victorian period boasted several newspapers, evidence of the City's busy commercial and cultural life. *Berrow's Worcester Journal*, *The Worcestershire Echo*, *The Worcester Herald*, *The Worcester Daily Times*, *The Worcestershire Chronicle*, *The Worcestershire Advertiser*, all provided a valuable source for local reaction to Elgar's efforts. But, wider than that, gathering review material proved to be but the first step in another journey of discovery, for even a casual browsing of past newspapers can bring rich and varied rewards. Going back no earlier than the 1880s, I began to discover something of Worcester's thriving musical past, as demonstrated by reviews of Mr Spark's concerts, and those of the Worcester Musical Society, the Worcester Philharmonic Society, the Worcester Amateur Instrumental Society, the Worcestershire Musical Union, the Worcester Amateur Vocal Union, the Glee Clubs, and of course the Triennial Festival. Here the proud local press coverage, extending over many full pages, enabled me to appreciate more fully the civic, religious and commercial nature of the Festivals, as well as the musical one. Many of these musical events were attended by Winifred Norbury, either as listener or performer, alongside Edward Elgar himself, although the social gap between them ensured that for many years it was very much a case of 'ships that pass in the night'. The Norbury sisters always recorded their opinions of their concert experiences, Florence and Betty usually more frankly than the reviews provided by the newspapers. One is tempted to speculate on the elusive question of the performance standards of the time, and the integrity of the reviews. Too anxious not to give offence, perhaps, the local press fell back time after time on a formulaic phrase – '*on the whole* [my italics] it was a successful evening', while at the same time the Norbury ladies might comment more specifically on poor intonation, rhythmic breakdown, or pretentious and unintentionally humorous performers. And being respectable Victorian ladies, sensibly dress-conscious, they could not resist commenting, too, on the sometimes overly impressive headwear of their friends and acquaintances in the audience. Such concerts consisted after all, of what the local press often referred to as 'high-class' music, a judgement as much social as musical. But Victorian-style philanthropy was never lacking in Worcester, and music-making by and for an élite was complimented by various worthy initiatives – Saturday Evening Concerts for 'artisans', Corporation Concerts and Vine Hall's Free Organ Recitals.

Vine Hall's name, in fact, is one of many which appear in the Worcester newspapers over and over again, and not only in a musical context. His sermons and lectures were frequently reported, and he seems to have been a Christian of the muscular kind, earnest and sincere in his efforts to improve the lot of the working class, but unable to understand why its members failed to show gratitude by attending the socially segregated Church services of those days. He was for many years an efficient and successful Cathedral Precentor, and, as I went on to discover, an occasional composer of church and orchestral music. Other frequently-appearing names from Worcester's, and Elgar's, musical background which have proved of interest are those of Caldicott, Hubert Wareing and the Quartermann family, but above all, the newspapers have enabled me to trace the career of Elgar's closest musical friend and collaborator before August Jaeger, Hugh Blair. For many years his reputation stood high in Worcester and even the usually formal Winifred Norbury came to refer to him in her diaries as 'Hughie'.

Hugh Blair

Blair (1864-1932) was very much the talented local boy; the eldest of seven children of the Reverend Robert Blair, Vicar of St Martin's, Worcester, and a founder of the City's celebrated Blind College. Hugh attended the Cathedral School and became a pupil of the long-serving Organist, William Done, subsequently gaining a Choral Scholarship by open competition from 80 other candidates at Christ's College, Cambridge, where he became Chapel Organist. His brilliant start was threatened when the Reverend Blair died. His widow having previously impoverished herself through generous support of the Blind College, the Bishop, no less, convened a meeting to plan a campaign to raise funds to support the family. *Berrow's Worcester Journal* reported that 'a sum of £976 4s was raised in the room',²¹ an enormous sum for those days, even before subscription lists were opened at the banks. His Cambridge studies now guaranteed, Blair graduated BA in 1886 and Mus. Bac. in 1887, the year he was appointed Deputy Organist of Worcester Cathedral under the ageing Done, who, unable to persuade the Dean and Chapter to improve his pension, would not fully resign his post until 1895. William Done was a respected man, a good teacher, and had the reputation of being a capable musician but no more, and the young and progressive Blair's time as heir-in-waiting must have been a frustrating one, especially after he was made 'organist-in-charge' in 1889. Now Cathedral Organist in all but name, he undertook more and more of the daily burden without the salary or status which went with it. He made other contributions, too, to other aspects of Worcester's musical life, instigating a series of weekly organ recitals, contributing piano solos to parish concerts and, significantly, playing French Horn in various local orchestras. The instrument was his entry to the orchestral world, a world remote to many occupants of the organ loft in those days.

Blair was given further scope when at the instigation of the musical Canon Thomas Leigh Claughton, one of various influential members of the Cathedral clergy, the old Worcester Philharmonic Society, a body which seems to have periodically risen and fallen under Done, was reconstituted as the Worcester Festival Choral Society under the patronage of the Dean and Chapter. Its objects, according to *Berrow's*, were 'to promote the study and practice of music, to give concerts, to provide assistance in the special services in the cathedral, and to furnish a chorus for the Festivals'. William Done was appointed conductor, the inextinguishable Spark 'business agent', and Hugh Blair organist. The newspaper announcement welcomed him as a young man 'winning his way to a high place as performer and composer'.²² The Society's first concert vindicated the judgement. Done's conducting of *Judas Maccabeus* was generously reviewed, but the master seemed to be outshone by his pupil. Blair's organ accompaniments were played with 'delicate perception', and much attention was given to his Ode, 'Weep,

Hugh Blair (Bennet and Sons, Worcester)



21 BWJ, 26 September, 1885, (WRO).

22 BWJ, 3 March, 1888, (WRO).

Mourner, for the Joys that Fade', in memory of the late Arthur Quarterman, which was performed before the Handel work. *Berrow's* pronounced it a definite 'hit': 'The music, which was specially composed by Mr Hugh Blair, who conducted the performance of the Ode, was wholly in keeping with the serious beauty of the poem penetrated with a requiem sadness, yet not inexpressive of a wistful hope of better things. The band succeeded admirably in interpreting these characteristics of the composition, and at the conclusion of this touching prelude to the evening's programme, Mr Blair, as composer, was re-called, and bowed his acknowledgements.'²³ His local reputation was now firmly established, all the more perhaps among those whose financial support had enabled him to appear as the local boy made good. At the second concert Blair played a Handel Organ Concerto, pronounced 'completely artistic in the best sense' – one may perhaps be permitted to wonder if it is possible to be 'completely artistic' in any other sense – and by the time of the new society's third concert, in December 1889, Done had thought it best to hand over the conductorship to his deputy. The handover came on the verge of the 1890 Worcester Three Choirs Festival; Done was unwilling to take charge, but if Blair had any thoughts of the conductorship for himself, they were frustrated when presumably, it was decided that he was too young and inexperienced for the task. In an unprecedented move, Charles Lee Williams, the Gloucester Organist, was invited to direct it instead.

Blair was presumably thus unable to influence the content of the Festival programme as directly as he may have wanted, and it may be no coincidence that *Berrow's* featured an anonymous 'specially contributed' article, 'Some Suggestions for the Next Festival',²⁴ which quite outspokenly argued for its modernisation, recommending for example the inclusion of the less familiar oratorios of Handel, together with works by Gluck, Hummel and Beethoven, and the modernists Brahms and Dvořák and Berlioz. It was even asked whether 'it is possible some arrangement could be made with Sir Charles Hallé for a performance at Worcester' of the Frenchman's *Faust*. The writer also made sure to acknowledge 'that Worcester has been preeminent in bringing forward the works of rising English musicians', citing performances of Sullivan, Mackenzie, and Parry, and insisted that there were plenty of gifted English composers who could produce short compositions for the occasion. And however much he may have had to retreat from active direction of the 1890 Festival, William Done made it a historic one through his somewhat 'out-of-the blue' suggestion to the Committee that Edward Elgar be asked to write an orchestral work for it; *Froissart* was the result. One wonders if the idea may have originated with Blair, whose acquaintance with the Worcester musician must have stretched well back before his unhappy period in London.

Whatever his immediate frustrations with that Festival, Blair's conductorship of the Worcester Festival Choral Society during the 1890s gave him the power to move with the musical times, choose new repertoire, English and European, and promote the music of his friend Edward Elgar. As has been noted elsewhere,²⁵ Blair was a very frequent visitor to 'Forli' during these years, often staying overnight, and the two men had ample opportunity to talk and plan. They were of like mind in their musical tastes and their determination to make things happen in Worcester; 'Blair (of the Cathedral) & I are pulling together & making things lively here', Elgar told Charles Buck.²⁶ Blair may have been the lesser composer but that offers no grounds to assume that he was necessarily the

23 BWJ, 2 February, 1889, (WRO).

24 BWJ, 26 October, 1889, (WRO).

25 Jerrold Northrop Moore, *Edward Elgar: A Creative Life* (Oxford University Press, 1984) 161-162.

26 Elgar to Charles Buck, 20 December, 1891, EBM letter 10523.

lesser partner in their enterprise. During the sixteen Worcester Festival Choral Society concerts that he conducted, Blair included choral and orchestral works by Stanford, Parry, Cowen, Mackenzie, Sullivan, Auber, Massenet, Gade, Gounod, Brahms, Schumann, Rubinstein, Wagner, Donizetti, Goldmark, Raff, Rossini and Leoncavallo, admirably balanced with established favourites by Handel and Mendelssohn and by occasional delving further back into works by Ravenscroft and Lassus. There can be no doubt that the concerts gave Elgar scope to continue to pursue his creative self-education, exploring works in which he was particularly interested and from which he might learn. Gade's C Minor Symphony and Massenet's *Scènes Pittoresques*, for example, performed at the November 1891 concert, may have been introduced at Elgar's suggestion: the programme notes for these works appear over his initials.

In Worcester today Hugh Blair seems to have been written out of the script almost entirely. I spoke recently with a member of the Worcester Festival Chorus who had never heard of him; if he is remembered at all it is as the man who quitted the organ loft in circumstances still only reluctantly discussed in polite company. Otherwise, he lives on in Elgarian biography as the conductor who clinched the completion of *The Black Knight* and the organist who gave the first performance of the Organ Sonata. Apart from an Evening Service, 'Blair in B Minor', as it has come to be fondly known, his own music remains largely unperformed. The British Library Catalogue lists some two hundred works by him – Cantatas, Anthems, Services, a Mass, 'Mags and Nuns', songs and part-songs, compositions and transcriptions for organ, and a piano trio dedicated to another stalwart supporter of music in Worcester, Richard Penrose Arnold. Hugh Blair is a composer well overdue for rediscovery.

All Human Life Was There.

I have dwelt on Blair as an important example of just one valuable strand of Worcester's (and Edward Elgar's) musical background freshly discernible from the local newspapers, an essential source in this respect as in so many others. Once again I felt forced to widen my original scope. While tracing concert reviews it was impossible not to be aware of other, non-musical, items that swam into view, and my eyes were opened to a vast amount of further background material of all kinds related to the daily lives of the Norburys and their friends. There were reports of Hunt Balls, Bazaars, Garden Parties and Archery Meetings – the Norbury sisters were discriminating frequenters of them all, and Martina Hyde and Winifred were prize-winning archers; there were obituaries and accounts of weddings conveniently providing all kinds of personal information; there were accounts of Worcester's Exhibition in the wake of Prince Albert's – the family lent some paintings for the Art Exhibition; there were gradually more frequent discussions of female emancipation and suffrage – the *Herald* introduced a 'Ladies' Letter', all the sisters took up cycling, and Nelly became a Suffragette; and there were reports of the Quarter Sessions and the cases brought up before the local Bench – Winifred's father Thomas was a Magistrate. There were accounts of the University Extension Lectures which Winifred and sometimes Alice attended, and there was much, too, of politics and religion. True Conservatives, Winifred and her sisters participated in politics as much as they could, becoming active members of the Primrose League and canvassing at election times after the extension of the franchise to rural householders; no doubt they studied admiringly a lengthy verbatim account provided by *Berrow's* of a brilliant speech Lord Randolph Church made in Worcester.²⁷ And no doubt they read with a different kind of pleasure an account of a

27 BWJ, 7 November, 1885, (WRO).

Birmingham speech by public enemy number one, William Ewart Gladstone, which claimed that his eyes had 'lost their lustre and his voice its ring'.²⁸ Winifred, like Queen Victoria, seems to have believed that the 'G.O.M.' was literally mad, and became so ungracious when mentioning his name in her diary on one occasion, as to add the simple comment 'Ugh'.

The newspapers provided much evidence of Worcester's religious life, too, with frequent reports of sermons, accounts of the clergy's participation in charitable and educational bodies, and the publication of their letters on matters of concern. The City was lucky in its Cathedral Canons, many of them distinguished scholars and preachers who made their civilising contributions to Worcester's social, educational and cultural life. By virtue of their social position and orthodox churchmanship the Norburys became well acquainted with many of the clergy, often taking tea at the Deanery and availing themselves of the 'open house' hospitality which prevailed there and around the Cathedral Close at Festival times. As so often in this and other ways, the names which appear so often in the columns of the Worcester newspapers are repeated in the Norbury diaries, enabling me to put the ladies firmly into their context.

Madge Martin of Ham Court, near Upton

I had often been intrigued by references in Alice's diary to the Martin family of Ham Court, references which to my knowledge have never been followed up in any Elgar biography. While working on the newspapers at the Worcester County Record Office I was lucky to have my curiosity satisfied, and my Norbury narrative even more enriched, by reading the letters of Madeleine Martin (1865-1945), one of the four daughters of George Edward Martin, a major landowner in the Upton district. Like Winifred, Madge, as she was always known, was one of a bevy of cultured sisters, and, like Winifred, the highly musical Madge founded and conducted a local choir. There resemblances seem to weaken. For one thing, unlike Winifred's retired-soldier-come-country-squire father, George Martin, like Thomas Garmston Hyde, was more of a 'professional': he had stood for the House, been called to the Bar, and held a partnership in the Worcester Bank of Messrs Berwick, Lechmere, Isaacs, Martin & Co. And while Madge and her sisters were brought up to be cultivated, responsible and proper ladies just as the Norburys were, something about their family ethos led them to be different. The Martins were notably less reserved than Winifred and her sisters. Martin letters, often opening with 'My darling', seem vivid, chattily informal and uninhibited in a way those of the Norburys are not. And all the four Martin girls undertook some form of higher education (perhaps being among the first generation of Worcestershire girls to do so), whereas by contrast only one of the Norbury girls did. The Martin girls' studies led to independent success in various fields. Madge's sisters were Susan (1864-1946), an accomplished singer who studied at the Royal College of Music; Eleanor (1869-1955), who studied at Oxford's Somerville Hall, and Annora (1872-1949), who attended the Slade School of Art and became an exhibited painter. As a teenager Madge herself studied violin with Elgar, and subsequently took voice lessons in France and Germany. Later she joined Susan for a period at South Kensington. Madge developed into a formidable musician, able to play violin solos with Elgar's ladies' string ensembles while once acting as rehearsal pianist in Beethoven's Fourth Concerto, singing, and composing songs which her erstwhile violin master thought well enough of to scrutinise and comment on. Madge's friendship with Elgar was in fact a life-long one, and their unknown correspondence, which will find its place in my book, shows her to have been one of those of his private circle dignified by a nickname, and a revealing one, at that;

28 BWJ, 10 November, 1888, (WRO).



The young Madge Martin (Bridgeman Art Library)

Madge became 'Sabrina', the Roman name for the mythological Welsh Goddess of the River Severn.

Madge's independent nature and supportive parents gave her a breadth of musical background unusual among the ladies of Worcestershire at that time. During her European travels (chaperoned by an evidently rather indulgent Aunt) she not only sought the best teachers, but made pilgrimages to the shrine of the newest music, the Bayreuth Festival Theatre. Excited letters home record an invitation to Wahnfried, and offer, too, a memorable account of Liszt's funeral. Alongside the serious business at Bayreuth, Madge and her Aunt soon made German friends and were invited to convivial beer-drinking sessions at local hostelrys, expeditions that were fully and amusingly reported home in letters which must have caused some eyebrow-raising in Victorian Worcestershire. Be that as it may, Madge made one important continuing personal contact at Bayreuth, with the German musician Otto Lessmann. A pianist and minor composer, Lessmann (1844-1918) was more importantly an influential music critic

and journalist (he owned and edited the *Allgemeine Musik-Zeitung*), and Madge subsequently invited him to Ham Court to sample life in an English country house and learn something of English music. A 'House Party' concert was laid on for him to rehearse and conduct, with Winifred among the singers in the Brahms *Liebeslieder* Waltzes. The ploy worked, for instead of the 'there is no such thing as English music' attitude characteristic of many German musicians, Lessmann became an early advocate of Elgar and was responsible for supportive early reviews of *The Dream of Gerontius*.²⁹ It was one example of the powerful influence that a gradually developing network of independent, active music-loving ladies exerted on Worcestershire's music and on Elgar himself, for Madge was a friend of Winifred, both ladies were friends of Martina Hyde and all three were friends of Mary Lygon of Madresfield Court. Madge and Winifred acted as joint secretaries and co-organisers of Lady Mary's Madresfield Musical Competitions, established with the aim of fostering the development of music in church, school and village; both ladies entered their choirs for it. Martina was the original instigator of the Worcestershire Philharmonic Society, of which she was Co-Secretary with Winifred; and Madge was an active supporter and performing member.

Madge Martin and her sisters were remarkable ladies and I am under no illusion that I have

29 Lessmann was present, with Julius Butts, at the work's first performance at Birmingham. A review he originally wrote for the *Allgemeine Musik-Zeitung* was translated for the *Musical Times* of January, 1901, and is quoted in Donald Hunt, *Elgar and the Three Choirs Festival* (Logaston Press, 1999) 65.

remotely done justice to them here. Given their unfamiliarity to scholars, and their close musical and personal associations with Elgar and the Norburys, I considered their vivid and revealing letters an essential addition to 'Gracious Ladies' and have found places for them throughout the narrative.

Madge herself remains something of a 'discovery' in the Elgarian *dramatis personae*. It was characteristic of her many-sided energies that she helped run a hospital on France for the wounded of the Great War – the subject of separate specialist research – surely helping Elgar glean first-hand knowledge of conditions on the Front. Next time you are in 'Elgar Country' if you take the road from Malvern Wells to Hanley Swan, as Elgar would often have done on his bicycle, turn right by the village pond and then take the third left, you will come to the Church of the Good Shepherd, Hook, just outside Upton. Madge Martin's grave in the Churchyard is marked by a simple wooden cross inscribed with her name and dates and the one word, 'Love'.

To Worcester Cathedral, 'after many a dusty mile'.

That meeting with Catherine Moody and Russia's troubles seem a long way away; I can now claim to be in the third decade of 'Gracious Ladies' research. The ever-increasing paper mountain has been on such a scale as to force me to develop my crude earlier methods of working and spend considerable amounts of time devising systems of transcription and indexing, and I have decided to split the book into two volumes.

Even with all this accumulation – the Norbury papers, the Hyde letters, the newspaper background and the Martin letters, further material has continued to appear almost unbidden. I discovered further Norbury family letters in the Worcester County Record Office, and elderly descendants of Winifred's sister Kitty kindly provided more, including some letters of Mary Lygon to Winifred. Then I began to see how Alice's diary would lend support to the narrative, as might too the published volumes of Elgar letters and the memories of Robert Buckley, Wulstan Atkins, Rosa Burley and Dora Powell. And here I was reminded that Winifred Norbury was one 'Variation' among many, and that the story of Elgar's creative progress through the 1890s is partly the story of his frequent encounters and deepening relationships with the characters of Op. 36. Who were they, and what were they really like? Elgar's own notes, endlessly and often inaccurately recycled in countless sleeve and programme notes, tell us little. One might expect there to have been extensive correspondence between composer and 'variants', but intriguingly the Birthplace archive contains comparatively little evidence of it. (Likewise, Elgar seems not to have preserved what must have been an extensive collection of letters from Martina Hyde.) So I have built into my narrative, even if only in passing, as much new evidence as I can find about the lives of many of the 'Enigma' gallery.

One final series of discoveries remained to be made when I felt I needed background information on some of Cathedral divines the Norburys, and Elgar, knew so well – particularly Canons Claughton and Melville, the Reverends Littleton-Wheeler, father and son – many of them important musical figures of their day. Uncertain how to start, I enjoyed a cup of tea in the Cathedral Tea Rooms and went for a walk round. Chance led my steps to the Cloister Garth, where I found the graves of the very people I was interested in, together with their dates, ultimately enabling me to trace obituaries. While in the Cathedral, too, it occurred to me to see if it might be possible to explore Hugh Blair's career further, and here again I was not disappointed. Various documents in the Cathedral Library enabled me not only to learn a fuller story of his resignation-cum-sacking, but to discover something more of the uncertain start of his successor, Ivor Atkins. I already knew

that his first experience of conducting the Festival Choral Society was a disaster. (Winifred's account reads, 'We elected Mr Ivor Atkins conductor & do not foresee a very brilliant future for the Society.'³⁰) Three years after his appointment, the Dean and Chapter asked Atkins to tender his resignation of the Office of Organist, on the grounds that his training of the choir, and the quality of the musical aspect of the Services, was simply not up to the standard required. That, of course, is yet a further story; suffice to say that Atkins put up a spirited defence and won the day, with the results that we know. (The immediate problem was Atkins' wish to devote his energies to scholarly research in the Cathedral Library and to the preparation of a series of virtuoso organ recitals.)

Where Next?

The Director of the Elgar Birthplace, Cathy Sloan, was quoted in *The Times* of 11 November 2011, emphasizing the need for a wider study of the local history surrounding Elgar: 'we ought to be able to look at what Worcester was like when he was growing up'. While I admit that a major reason for undertaking research of any kind lies undoubtedly in the satisfaction it brings to the researcher, I hope that my interlinked investigations may offer something towards just such a wider but integrated view, seeing Elgar afresh in his local social and musical contexts, demonstrated not so much by any kind of 'academic' approach, but brought alive through the words and feelings expressed in the many letters and documents to which I have been given such ready and kind access.

Catherine Moody died a little while ago, and, sadly, the treasures of her house and, one is tempted to add, her way of life, ended up in the auction rooms. One can feel confident that no such fate will befall the documents from which I have worked, many of which are preserved in institutions. For their help I thank Cathy Sloan and Sue Fairchild of the Elgar Birthplace Museum, the staff of the Worcester County Record Office under Robin Whittaker, and Dr David Morrison of the Worcester Cathedral Library. I would like to thank Robin Holland-Martin for his most kind and hospitable help in my researches into his remarkable family, and would like to repeat my appreciation of Timothy Shaw's donation of the Elgar-Hyde correspondence to the Elgar Birthplace. I continue to find myself unable to find the words with which to do justice to my gratitude to Peter and Katrina Norbury for their endless kindness, hospitality and support over many years. It has been a heady privilege to have been entrusted with the private papers of their family, to have crossed the threshold of that 'eighteenth-century house' and to have experienced something of that kindly and gracious world so perfectly evoked in the eighth of the 'Enigma' Variations.

I would like to repeat, too, my appreciation of the Worcester County Record Office and indeed various other Record Offices around the country that I have approached in connection with this project. Perhaps we still don't know how lucky we are to have free access to the treasures of these establishments, many of them boasting extended opening hours and impeccably professional staff expertise. Here Worcester is particularly well off, even at a time when libraries are being closed and University courses, particularly in the Arts and Humanities, are being cut. By the time this article appears the Worcester County Record Office will have moved to an impressive new award-winning building in Worcester, 'The Hive'. This centre will also house a re-stocked Public Library and the Library of the University of Worcester, the first fully integrated public and university library in Europe; it might seem an ideal base, together with the Elgar Birthplace, from which to launch a fresh collaborative approach to researching the City's musical and social history in the way that

30 Diary of Winifred Norbury, 25 October, 1897, Sherridge Papers.

Cathy Sloan suggests.

Finally I would like to acknowledge the debt I owe to the Editor not only for finding space for this article, but for his most generous support in making so freely available his transcriptions of a wide variety of documents towards this and other projects.

For further information on the rôle planned for 'Elgar Country' during the 1935-1949 War, interested readers are referred to *The Defence of Worcestershire and the Southern Approaches to Birmingham* by Mick Wilks, (Logaston Press, 2007), and to *Finest Hour: Winston Churchill 1939-1941*, by Martin Gilbert, (London: Heinemann 1983). As far as Mass-Observation is concerned, Tom Harrisson's extraordinary career is told in *The Most Offending Soul Alive*, by Judith Heiman (London: Aurum Press, 2003), and Priscilla Feare's M-O Report, 'Women and Morale, December 1940' appears in *Wartime Women: A Mass-Observation Anthology*, edited by Dorothy Sheridan, (London: Mandarin Paperbacks, 1991).

One of Kevin Allen's treasured Elgarian memories is of a family expedition to Malvern sometime in the late 1970s to stay 'B&B' at 'Forli', and hearing a performance of the 'Enigma' Variations via a portable radio there one evening. In addition to chronicling Elgar's outdoor activities in the saddle and on the golf course, he has made a special study of various members of Elgar's circle, notably August Jaeger ('Portrait of Nimrod') and Vera Hockman ('Elgar in Love'), and is a contributor to the New DNB. A Subscription Form for his forthcoming documentary study of the Norbury family, their Worcestershire friends, and their relationships with Elgar, is enclosed with this number of the Journal.

Tales from the Complete Edition – 7

Going for a Song

John Norris

The key requirement of an editor of a volume of the Elgar Complete Edition is to produce, for each piece in the volume, an edited score which corresponds as precisely as possible to Elgar's final wishes. This the editor does by comparing all available material for each work – the published score, fair copies and proofs, working drafts, sketches and fragments – and, where there are discrepancies or uncertainties, taking an expert view on Elgar's most likely intention at these points. But alongside this somewhat cerebral exercise, the editor also faces the rather more mundane challenge of recording decisions in a way that can be reproduced in the Complete Edition volume so that the preferred interpretation is immediately clear to the performer while at the same time conveying precisely (and concisely) to the academic the reasons for reaching each decision.

In common with most other academic editions, the method used by the Elgar Complete Edition centres around the 'copy text' – a score for each work in the volume on which the editor marks up 'corrections' – and a 'critical commentary'. The aim is always to make the score printed in the Complete Edition as self-sufficient as possible. Editorial *additions* – notes, rests, dynamic and tempo markings and other musical features which the editor intuitively considers to have been unintentionally omitted from the copy text and all other scores – appear in the Complete Edition score in square brackets, which usually fully informs the reader of the reason for the addition, leaving nothing more to be said. But editorial *deletions* cannot be shown in the same way since nothing remains in the score to place the brackets around. And with *replacements* – where an item in the score is replaced by another of different value – there are similar difficulties in showing what appeared in the copy text before the change was made. Moreover, for changes which the editor makes not on intuition but to bring the score into line with a another source, the score would become over-complicated and cluttered if a different type of bracket or other convention was used to show in the score itself the particular source in which the preferred reading was to be found.

This is where the critical commentary comes in, to record in a highly condensed format those aspects of changes to the copy text which cannot readily be shown in the score. So a typical commentary entry which reads:

38 iii-vi Vio.II **P** .s, replaced by –

informs the reader that, whereas the third, fourth, fifth and sixth notes in bar 38 of the second violins stave in the copy text carry staccato dots, the same notes in the corresponding orchestral part carry tenutos; and that the editor, considering the latter to be Elgar's more likely intention, has amended the Complete Edition score to match the part.

Now it will be clear that the correction of the copy text score and the compilation of the

commentary can be a laborious process, and selection of the right copy text is crucial if effort is not to be expended unnecessarily. Usually, identification of the most appropriate copy text presents little difficulty: since the aim of the Complete Edition is to present Elgar's final thoughts on a work, it is axiomatic that the last edition of the work to be published during his lifetime must come closest to the 'final thoughts' version we wish to publish (unless there are reasons to believe that the publisher made changes without the composer's consent) and so should be adopted as our copy text. But for two Complete Edition volumes both now proceeding speedily towards completion, the choice of copy text for certain works has proved unusually challenging. Although both are volumes of solo songs, our difficulties stem from quite different causes for each volume.

The first of the two volumes, to be published later this year, comprises the fourteen solo songs for which Elgar provided an orchestral accompaniment: the five *Sea Pictures*, the five completed songs of Opp.59 and 60, *The Wind at Dawn*, *The Pipes of Pan*, *Follow the Colours* and *The King's Way*... but not *A War Song* (the orchestration of which is assessed not to be Elgar's own) or *Pleading*. For this volume, our usual strategy – choosing as copy text the last full-score edition of each work to be published during the composer's life time – falls at the first hurdle for until now most of these songs have never been published in full score. This should not surprise us: for solo songs with piano accompaniment and other salon pieces capable of performance in the front parlour, publishers make their money from sales of thousands of copies of the sheet music; but orchestral full scores will sell in far more limited numbers. Publishers are therefore inclined to publish only the orchestral parts and a piano-conductor score, making these available only for hire at prices considerably higher than the publisher could contemplate selling the full score.

Thus we began this volume believing that only *Sea Pictures* and *Pleading* had ever been published in the form of a full orchestral score, leaving us with just Elgar's orchestral manuscript and a set of parts for each of the other songs. This in itself creates something of a dilemma. For most of the orchestral songs, the parts were never 'engraved' (that is, printed), being created in manuscript in a copyist's hand (and readers may be surprised to learn that, even for some major works such as *Caractacus*, to this day the orchestral parts for woodwind, brass and percussion have similarly never been printed). It seems unlikely that Elgar had the opportunity to check manuscript parts – if he had, these parts would surely carry occasional annotations in his own hand – so manuscript parts carry no advantage (and the potential disadvantage of copying errors) over the autograph full score.

In contrast, at least for the major works, we know that Elgar's publishers usually required him to check parts before they were printed, and Elgar was usually adept at doing so. Thus we might expect printed parts to be at least as good as the autograph score; they may even incorporate late improvements made during the proof-reading process. But our problem is that the creation and proofing of parts is only sketchily recorded, mainly in Alice's diaries; and since a composer as punctilious as Elgar would surely have updated the autograph full score at the same time, we have adopted the autograph score as copy text in preference to the printed parts for the one work in this volume – *Follow the Colours* – for which a full set of orchestral parts were printed.

Which brings us to *Sea Pictures* and *Pleading*. The former presented no problems once we had satisfied ourselves that the 1926 edition was no more than a reprint of the original 1900 edition, probably to satisfy US copyright law where, in those days, copyright had to be renewed after 28 years. But *Pleading* presented a sterner challenge.

Regarded by some as Elgar's finest solo song, one might think that the published orchestral score would have sold well and copies would therefore be easy to track down in libraries and archives; and to help us do so, we already had the number – 12937 – of the Novello plates from

which the full score was printed. But the British Library on-line catalogue, our usual first port of call, indicated that the library held no copy of the full score, only a set of the orchestral parts. A search of Encore, the on-line catalogue of the combined holding of scores and parts in UK public lending libraries, produced an even more surprising result: not only did it appear that not one lending library in the UK held a copy of the full score, but that the solitary set of orchestral parts came with a *harp-conductor* score.

Let me explain the significance of this. Sets of orchestral parts should include a score for use by the conductor of the orchestra. Where the full score of the work has been published, a copy would normally be included with the parts; but if the full score has never been published, the usual practice is to provide the conductor with a short (generally two-stave) score or piano reduction of the work; and for a song such as *Pleading*, already published with a piano accompaniment, publishers usually save money by providing a copy of the latter for the conductor's use. A visit to the British Library beckoned to examine the set of parts they held.

This quickly resolved one mystery: the parts carried the Novello plate number – 12937 – that we had down for the full score. Clearly our source had confused the two and there was no longer any reason to believe the full score of *Pleading* had ever been published. No wonder it had proved impossible to track down. But the second mystery deepened when we found this set of parts also included not a copy of the song as published with piano accompaniment to serve as piano-conductor but a part marked 'HARP or PIANO', presumably the part described as 'harp-conductor' that had excited our interest in the on-line catalogue. This part lacked the words of the song, so how, we wondered, was the conductor expected to keep orchestra and soloist in step with each other. And the British Library's set of parts also included, in addition to the expected string parts, a separate part for solo violin.

The perceptive reader may by now realise where this tale is heading, but it took a perusal of Elgar's autograph manuscript of the orchestral version, held in the Birthplace archive, for us to come to a full understanding. The manuscript, six neat if in places cramped sheets of handwritten score, also lacks words – not an oversight on Elgar's part: the vocal stave is there but it is marked for 'Solo Violin, or Flute, or Hautboy'. In other words, to maximise his return on the version for solo voice with piano accompaniment, Elgar decided not to add an orchestral accompaniment but to turn the song into an orchestral miniature, akin to the *Three Bavarian Dances* and much as Haydn Wood later turned four of Elgar's other solo songs into orchestral miniatures.¹

So where did the idea of *Pleading* as a song with orchestral accompaniment come from? Possibly from an alcoholic revelry one night in December 1932, for Jerrold Northrop Moore's *Elgar on Record*² contains the following exchange between Elgar and Fred Gaisberg. A letter from Elgar to Gaisberg dated 9 December 1932 contains the following paragraph:

Count John [McCormack]'s supper was very jolly—I got home to the Hotel in a highly dissolute condition at 1.45 a.m. & was up again at 7.30 to catch my train. I wish he wd. really record 'Pleading'—he spoke of it & I was glad: if John really wd. do it a very slight string accept wd. be the thing—the piano does not sustain enough

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- 1 The four songs transcribed by Haydn Wood are 'Rondel', 'Queen Mary's Song', 'The Shepherd's Song' and 'Like to a Damask Rose'. They can be heard, performed by the BBC Concert Orchestra conducted by David Lloyd-Jones, on Dutton CDLX 7148.
 - 2 Jerrold Northrop Moore: *Elgar on Record: the Composer and the Gramophone* (London: OUP, 1974) p.185. I am indebted to Brian Trowell for drawing my attention to this exchange.

to which Gaisberg replied the following day:

I am dropping a line to Count John to tell him that we are ready at any time to record 'Pleading' with a light string orchestra accompaniment. He had spoken to me about it. I think the idea is excellent.

Elgar scored his orchestral arrangement for more than strings – there are also parts for a flute, clarinets, bassoons and horns – and the song has since been recorded with this larger orchestral backing on several occasions. But (Lewis Foreman please note!) it has never been recorded, and possibly never even performed, in the form Elgar intended – as an orchestral miniature. The somewhat dramatic consequence for the Complete Edition is that the replacement of the voice by a solo violin, flute or 'hautboy' moves the orchestral version from the forthcoming Volume 14 (*Songs with Orchestra*) to Volume 23 (*Works for Small Orchestra*).

* * * * *

Having identified all the copy texts needed for the *orchestral* songs, we move on to the first volume of solo songs with *piano* accompaniment, scheduled for publication in 2013, which covers those published up to 1900. The problem here is the reverse of that for the orchestral songs: not a dearth of published scores but a plethora since for most of the songs there is more than one. We first encountered this in the second volume of solo songs, published in October 2010, where, to broaden their appeal and range of singers able to perform them, most of the songs were published in three or four keys. Since Elgar was unlikely to have had direct involvement in other than the 'original key' version, we faced the challenge of identifying which this was. For songs for which the publishers had waited to assess the song's appeal before publishing subsequent versions in different keys, the plate numbers were a guide to their order of publication; for songs published simultaneously in a number of keys with consecutive plate numbers, the key of Elgar's manuscript provided the only clue. But for a song with consecutive plate numbers and no surviving manuscript material, there was nothing to guide us to Elgar's intended key.

Fortunately, for the second volume of solo songs, this uncertainty proved to be of little concern since the differences between the versions in different keys proved to be minimal. In one – *The Torch* – published in three keys (F, G and A), the antepenultimate note of the piano left-hand accompaniment in the version in A fell below the bottom note on the keyboard when transposed into the two lower keys, so Elgar raised this and the note following it by an octave in the versions in F and G. In another song – *The Chariots of the Lord* – Elgar exhibited uncertainty over whether to phrase one pair of notes as quaver-quaver or as dotted quaver-semiquaver. Eventually he plumped for the dotted quaver-semiquaver variant which appeared throughout three of the published versions, but at just one point in the version in D his original thought of a quaver-quaver pair survives, to significant effect. But no other discrepancies of any significance were found between versions in different keys in the second volume.

In the first volume of solo songs, however, the problem assumes an added dimension, since many of the songs, written before Elgar had achieved any measure of fame, were originally published in magazines or by minor publishers. With the growth of his reputation and the takeover of the original publishers, the songs were republished, often many years later, by a publisher of greater influence, giving Elgar the opportunity to revise the songs with the benefit of experience gained in the intervening period.

The most notable example of this was in the *7 Lieder* (should that be *Seven Lieder* or *Sieben Lieder*? – the publisher appears to have hedged his bets and used only the numeral), a collection of seven of Elgar's songs originally published separately between 1885 and 1893 by Stanley Lucas, Weber & Co or Charles Tuckwood (formerly Orsborn Tuckwood). Copyright in all seven songs passed in 1900 to Hopwood & Crew, the latter company merging seven years later with Ascherberg. Recognising their unrealised commercial potential, in 1907 Ascherberg republished the seven songs with, below the original English words, a German translation by 'Ed. Sachs' in albums for both high and low voices. The key apart, there are no significant differences between the corresponding versions in high and low key; nor were there any between the original and Ascherberg editions of one of the seven songs (*Through the Long Days*), and copies of the original Tuckwood editions of two of the songs (*Queen Mary's Song* and *A Poet's Life*) could not be located. But there were a hugely varying number of differences between the original and *7 Lieder* editions of the other four songs – 14 in the case of *Rondel*; 28 for *A Song of Autumn*, and over 50 each for *Like to a Damask Rose* and *The Shepherd's Song*.

Now I hasten to add that, in the *7 Lieder*, none of these differences are hugely significant – leaving aside differences in house style (Ascherberg preferring the more precise '*colla voce*' to '*colla parte*'), most differences, such as the slight repositioning of slurs and hairpins, would pass unnoticed to all but the keenest musical ear – but they are important to an editor of a Complete Edition volume challenged with capturing Elgar's final thoughts. The intriguing aspect is the variability from one song to the next in the number of differences between versions. It is quite clear from a quick visual comparison that, rather than re-using the original plates, Ascherberg had all seven songs re-engraved for publication as the *7 Lieder*, which would provide the opportunity for the introduction of differences, intentional or otherwise; but if introduced through casual error, we might expect the error rate to be more consistent and, as the near-perfect re-engraving of *Through the Long Days* suggests, low. This leads to the presumption that differences between the original and Ascherberg versions were intentional, the product of re-editing in preparation for the publication of the *7 Lieder* – but by whom? If by Elgar, the Ascherberg alterations should appear in the Complete Edition volume; but if by some Ascherberg editor, they should not.

Alice's diaries do not help here – there are no entries to record that Edward spent an occasional day revising songs for publication by Ascherberg – but despite this lack of recorded evidence, we are strongly inclined towards the view that the differences are the product of Elgar's own re-editing. Although we tend to be somewhat dismissive of Elgar's solo songs, positioning them towards the more trivial end of his output, dashed off as a form of relaxation after completion of a major work, there is no doubt that he took great care over their smallest detail. It thus seems unlikely that he would willingly leave such matters as the repositioning of slurs to the Ascherberg house editor; and Ascherberg would certainly not take the decision to do so unilaterally for fear of offending him. Evidence to support Elgar's inclination, even enthusiasm, to re-edit before republication comes from a comparison of two other songs which will appear in the first volume of songs, in one of which the significance of the differences is of a far higher order.

The first of the two songs is *The Pipes of Pan*, published by Boosey in three keys – B minor (plate number H.2736), A minor (H.3292) and G minor (H.4282) – in the first years of the twentieth century. There is no autograph score of the piano accompaniment version but the well-spaced plate numbers of the three published versions and comparison of these with other Boosey songs suggest lengthy periods between the appearance of each version, during which time Elgar was working on an orchestral accompaniment for the song, completed in 1902. Unusually, for this song there are a significant number of differences in points of detail between the piano accompaniment versions in

different keys. Our assumption is that, as work on the orchestral accompaniment progressed and Elgar's preferences changed, he ensured that his latest thoughts were incorporated in the next piano accompaniment version to be published.

The second song, providing the more striking evidence, is *The Wind at Dawn*, composed in 1888 when Elgar's reputation was still so slight that he could only get the song published in one of the regular supplements to *The Magazine of Music*. It wasn't until 1907 that Boosey published the song separately as sheet music, and a further five years before Elgar got round to orchestrating the accompaniment. If the chronology were reversed, one might expect that Elgar's reworkings for the orchestration would find their way into the later piano accompaniment edition. But it is clear that, even without such experience to guide him, Elgar put substantial effort into revising the piece for the 1907 Boosey edition, coming close in places to recomposition. The slurring is thoroughly revised throughout, with Elgar replacing long, overarching slurs two and occasionally three bars in length by a succession of much shorter slurs. But the more arresting difference is in the phrasing of certain passages in which Elgar changes the emphasis to heighten dramatic impact. Indeed, to the opening line of the 1907 revision, 'And the wind went out to meet with the sun', Elgar even adds a repeat of the words 'the wind'. But such simple and obvious examples trivialise the effort Elgar clearly put into the revision.

At least for the Complete Edition, there is no uncertainty here: the 1907 Boosey edition undoubtedly represents Elgar's later thoughts on the version with piano accompaniment, and Elgar retained the phrasing of the 1907 version when he added his orchestral accompaniment. Unsurprisingly it is this version which is familiar to us today: all of the recordings I have of the song use the 1907 phrasing, as Elgar would have wished. But putting the Complete Edition to one side for the moment, am I alone in feeling it would be nice to have just one recording of the 1888 version for comparison purposes? Are you listening, Lewis?

‘Oh – Praise the Lord!’

Martin Bird

Elgar’s setting of Psalm 48, ‘Great is the Lord’, was first performed on 16th July 1912 in Westminster Abbey at a service to commemorate 250th anniversary of the Royal Society. It is dedicated to Joseph Armitage Robinson (1858-1933), who was Dean of Westminster from 1902 to 1911.

Robinson was born in Keynsham, near Bath, the third son among the thirteen children of the Reverend George Robinson, vicar of Keynsham, six of whom were to become ordained. A classics graduate of Christ’s College, Cambridge, he was ordained in 1881. A fellow of the college from 1881 to 1899, he spent much of his time in teaching and research, whilst also being curate of St. Mary the Great (1885–8) and the vicar of All Saints (1888–92). With a growing reputation as scholar and preacher he was appointed in 1899 rector of St. Margaret’s, Westminster and a canon of Westminster Abbey, where he was much involved in preparations for the coronation of Edward VII. After the coronation the Dean, George Granville Bradley (1821-1903), resigned and Robinson was appointed to succeed him at the young age of forty-four.

Elgar had first met Robinson in Alassio in 1904.

E. & C. & Miss B. to the Madonna della Guardia, through Alassio Antica. Glorious view – safe back. D.G. A. to pay calls – E. met the Dean of Westminster on the very summit, they walked down together.¹

Alice described the day to Frank Schuster ...

I am going out, I’m afraid in Alassio to pay a series of calls – E. & Carice & our friend who brought her out are gone for one of the usual wild afternoon walks, up precipitous mule track, ‘Salitas’, frightfully steep & wild but leading to lovely spots & views. I feel as if I shd. have to learn to walk on a proper road again. One has really to be a sort of athlete to walk at all here –²

... and ‘our friend’ Rosa Burley recalled the meeting.

Edward and Carice and I were on the hills above the town when we suddenly came on our clergyman walking alone. He waved an arm towards the sea and said, ‘Isn’t this glorious?’ And without any more ado we continued our walk together ... This was a happy encounter since, by some lucky chance, the two men liked each other at first sight, and only parted after expressing a hope that they would soon meet again.³

1 Alice Elgar diary, 7 January 1904, Martin Bird transcript.

2 Letter from Alice to Frank Schuster, 7 January 1904, Elgar Birthplace Museum letter 9611.

3 Rosa Burley and Frank Carruthers, *Edward Elgar; the Record of a Friendship* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1972), 168.



“An erudite Dean”, from a caricature by “Spy” (Leslie Ward), *Vanity Fair*, 14 December 1905.

They met regularly during their remaining time in Italy. Elgar wrote to Troyte Griffith from the Villa San Giovanni.

I met the Dean of Westminster on the top of the mountain here & we conversed – he came to lunch & we had walks & talks together which was nice – for me – he is a real good sort I think & approves of much of my libretto notions & we jawed over the remainder of the Apostles which is still in the womb of time (classic phrase). I have suspended a large iron jug in a Caruba tree over our garden seat; – about 6 cats think this garden is theirs & sit in pairs on the seat – at least they used to: they don’t now, cos I used to look up from my work – pull the string & drench them ...⁴

The friendship was maintained on the Elgars return to England, facilitated, no doubt, by the fact that the Deanery was but a few hundred yards from Frank Schuster’s home in Old Queen Street.

4 Letter from Elgar to Arthur Troyte Griffith, 20 January 1904, EBM letter 7345.

Elgar continued to consult Robinson about *The Kingdom*, and he was happy to make detailed comments ...

My dear Sir Edward,

One or two comments: I like the play upon words in the Authorised Version of James i 6. 'He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea' &c. It is not justified by a play upon words in the Greek: but there is something poetical in it, & so it gives the feeling of the passage better than 'doubteth' and 'surge' – and I shd think it would be more musical. But you may prefer 'doubteth' for the constant between 'faith' & 'doubt'. Then as to 'Rejoice' in 1 Pet. I 6. It is not an imperative. It ranges with 'love' in v. 8. 'Ye rejoice ... ye love'. I do not say that it is illegitimate to make the change – but it is a change.

These are trifling notes, & probably both points have already had your consideration & determination. I attach no importance to them.

I like the words. There is a stir of confidence about them.

Yours very sincerely
J. Armitage Robinson⁵

... and when Elgar was unsure about calling the oratorio *The Kingdom* was quick to give his approval.

... 'The Kingdom' is an excellent name. Its touch of vagueness is an advantage: it suggests more than it says, and it cannot be misunderstood. I cannot think of anything else half so good. The Men and the Society into which by a natural process they grew – these are your topics. And nothing can hint at them better than the vague titles. The Apostles and The Kingdom. The Kingdom is vague, the Church definite. The latter is the initial embodiment of the former; not complete; not intended to be complete, until the End.⁶

Elgar had started work on his setting of Psalm 48 shortly after completion of the Violin Concerto. The first mention of it in the diary is in August, 1910.

E. dug potatoes went on with his Anthem, pleased with his flying Kings – 48th Psalm A. & Miss [Mary] Paget to pay calls – Then for walk by river – lovely –⁷

Alice's comment about 'flying Kings' is a reference to the verse 'the kings ... were troubled, and hasted away'. It then seems to have been put away until March 1912, when we read: 'E. very interested in his Anthem –',⁸ and at the end of the month he wrote to Novello about it,

I have nothing really to say. I am sending a gigantic Anthem to the firm which I fear will be commercially not much to you – the organ part is important & must be on three staves: it is very big stuff of Wesley length but alas! not of Wesley grandeur.⁹

5 Letter from Joseph Armitage Robinson to Elgar, 22 February 1905, EBM letter 3869.

6 Letter from Joseph Armitage Robinson to Elgar, April 1906, quoted in Revd. Thomas Fish Taylor, *J. Armitage Robinson, Eccentric, scholar and churchman 1858-1933* (Cambridge: James Clarke, 1991), 33.

7 Alice Elgar diary, 24 August 1910, Martin Bird transcript.

8 *Ibid.*, 20 March 1912.

9 Letter from Elgar to Henry Clayton, 29 March 1912, published in Jerrold Northrop Moore, *Elgar and his Publishers* (Oxford University Press, 1987), 765-6.

Elgar had decided to offer the dedication to Dean Robinson who, after a protracted period of argument with his Chapter over who was 'in charge' at the Abbey – he or they – (and in which his stance was entirely vindicated), had decided that he could do without such mind-numbing church politics. He resigned from Westminster at the end of 1911 and took up the offer of the position of Dean of Wells.

Dear Sir Edward Elgar,

It is a pleasure to hear from you again. I gladly accept your kind and honorific proposal. I often think of that walk above Alassio, when the wonderful scene made me let myself go and address a stranger!

Here is inspiring beauty, like nothing else that I know. Will you not come & stay with me? It is lovely all the spring & summer – and always. I have a large & ancient house, and would welcome you if you could come, say for a fortnight. You would be really quiet & could work.

I send you two Maundy tickets in case you may like to make use of them, or find a use for them ...¹⁰

It was during the visit to Alassio that 'Dr. Armitage Robinson had been asked to suggest a subject and had said with a vague wave of his arm "Oh – Praise the Lord!"'.¹¹ The tickets, now preserved in an Elgar scrapbook, were indeed made use of.

A. & May [Grafton] to Westminster Abbey, Dean Robinson gave tickets for the Maundy Distribution – Very nice & interesting to see –¹²

Before publication Elgar, in a letter that has only recently come to light, wrote once more to the Dean to check the wording of both the dedication and the psalm. He had culled the text from a number of different sources.

My dear Mr. Dean:

Will you have the goodness to look at the enclosed two sheets & (pitying my ignorance) tell me if I have the dedication worded accurately: I am so anxious to have it quite correctly expressed & I am in doubt about it – should your name come first & Dean of Wells after? & on this page is it proper to say 'Bath & Wells'

I send the ps: as I propose to print it: you will see I have used R.V. margin in one place & 'they saw' from Jennings & Lowe. I do not want to make you responsible for it but I do want to know if there is anything in its 'setting forth' that you dislike or disapprove

With very kind regards

Believe me to be

Yours very sincerely

Edward Elgar¹³

10 Letter from Joseph Armitage Robinson to Elgar, 1 April 1912, EBM letter 1397.

11 Rosa Burley and Frank Carruthers, *Edward Elgar, the Record of a Friendship* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1972), 168.

12 Alice Elgar diary, 4 April 1912, Martin Bird transcript.

13 Letter from Elgar to Dean Armitage Robinson, 16 May 1912, Westminster Abbey Muniment Room and Library, J. A. Robinson collection Box 5, folder 3.

On 3 June Elgar went to the Temple Church in the afternoon where ‘Dr. Walford Davies played his Anthem to him. Very pleased –’.¹⁴ Later that month he sent a proof copy to Canon Gorton.

I venture to send you a very rough proof – which is not worth returning – of the new Anthem. I believe it is to be done first at Westminster Abbey which I shall like very much in view of the dedication ... That dear good fellow Walford Davies has revised the organ part very lovingly & tenderly for me.¹⁵

The anthem was to be performed at the service on 16 July to celebrate the 250th anniversary of Royal Society.

A. to Westminster Abbey ... Service for Royal Socy. E.’s Anthem given for 1st time – Very tamely performed. Picturesque robed figures coming out – E. to banquet in evening at Guildhall. Wonderful gathering of celebrated men –¹⁶

The commemorative banquet took place in the Guildhall.

Hardly a university or other seat of learning or scientific society of mark in the world was unrepresented. The Government’s recognition of the work of the Royal Society was shown in the presence of the Prime Minister, who sat at the right hand of the president, Sir Archibald Geikie, and Viscount Morley, the Lord President of the Council. Five members of the order of Merit were in the hall – Lord Rayleigh, Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, Viscount Morley, Sir William Crookes, Sir J. J. Thomson, and Sir Edward Elgar.¹⁷

The anthem was not orchestrated until the following year: ‘I think there wd be no difficulty in letting you have the score of the Anthem by the second week of Sept or even a week earlier ...’¹⁸

Dean Robinson remained at Wells until 1933, resigning only a few weeks before his death on 7 May.

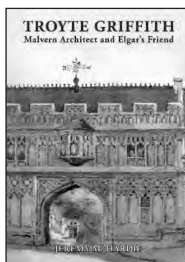
14 *Ibid.*, 3 June 1912.

15 Letter from Elgar to Canon Charles Gorton, c. 9 June 1912, EBM letter 8948.

16 Alice Elgar diary, 16 July 1912, Martin Bird transcript.

17 Unidentified report, EBM press cuttings album.

18 Letter from Elgar to Henry Clayton, 7 July 1913, Bloomsbury Auctions sale 474, lot 205.



BOOK REVIEWS

Jeremy M. Hardie:

Troyte Griffith -- Malvern Architect and Elgar's Friend

Malvern, Aspect Design, 2012

164 pp

ISBN

978-1-908832-10-8

Of all Elgar's coterie of friends, Troyte Griffith has long appealed to me as a fascinating character and someone I would like to have met. For that reason, coupled with my interest in the more nationally famous architect Charles Voysey - Troyte's contemporary who was also influenced by William Morris and the Arts & Crafts movement - I welcomed the opportunity to read Jeremy Hardie's book. It tells you all you need to know about the man and provides something of an insight into life in Malvern at the time.

If, by the way, you have ever wondered about the name Troyte, this book will give you the answer. Arthur Troyte Griffith was the eldest of eleven children, born into a distinguished family, his mother the daughter of a Baronet.

The subtitle of the book is 'Malvern Architect and Elgar's Friend' and the author refreshingly concentrates on the former, recognising that much has already been written about the latter. He has clearly undertaken extensive research and trawled many sources to bring together the various strands of Troyte's life, whilst not being afraid to admit when paths of enquiry have failed to provide answers. Each chapter deals with a different aspect: family, architect, artist and designer, the Malvern Concert Club; and it is not until Chapter 5 that his friendship with Elgar comes into focus. The closeness of the relationship is evident in, for instance, EE's letter to Troyte of 28 July 1928 in which he wrote: 'If you want anything at any time please let me know I think we know each other well enough for you to ask me to "back up" when required...'; and the fun Elgar had in a letter to Walter Koons (quoted in an article by Martin Bird in the August 2011 issue of the Journal) referring to '...the words of the philosopher Arthur Troyte Griffith ...'. Lady Elgar and Carice seem also to have been fond of 'Ninepin', their pet name for Troyte.

There is a lot of detail in this book which, given the way in which it is divided up, inevitably leads to some repetition. There are also helpful references to relevant websites in the text. The illustrations are excellent, and well-placed in the text: of particular note are the colour images of the houses Troyte designed and of his attractive watercolour paintings.

Michael Peach, an architect, has written a foreword to the book in which he describes Troyte as a modest man, and makes the delightful but telling remark: 'He wanted to retain his individuality and was somewhat reluctant to join organisations where there were people who might have advanced his career' (almost reminiscent of Groucho Marx's famous quote about not wanting to belong to a club which would accept him as a member!).

The book is dedicated to the memory of Catherine Moody, local artist, author, historian, and contributor to the *Journal*, who died in 2009. Jeremy Hardie first became interested in Troyte when he and his wife bought one of Troyte's houses in Malvern and discovered that much of the available information about the architect originated from Catherine. The book provides a wonderful tribute to her and I'm sure she would have been delighted with it.

Jeremy Hardie's book is written in an easy conversational style. Unfortunately there are rather a lot of minor proofreading errors but these do not detract from the overall enjoyment of the book. It will appeal to Elgarians who appreciate detail, and provides some fascinating insights into the life and times of Arthur Troyte Griffith.

Ann Vernau

Most of the subjects of the portrait-gallery which makes up Elgar's 'Enigma Variations' were musicians, some of them professionals (notably the organist of Hereford Cathedral), some of them gifted amateurs.

But another variation, 'Troyte', has as its subject someone who was, according to the music depicting him, endearingly maladroit in his attempts to master the piano, Exuberant timpani crash all over the place as the rest of the orchestra keep tight, crisp ensemble, until everything collapses in a heap. Elgar himself described the music as referring to 'some maladroit essays to play the pianoforte'. But for all the failure of Arthur Troyte Griffith's attempts to master the instrument, he made a massive contribution to the cultural life of Malvern, capital of Elgarshire.

After education at Harrow School and Oriel College, Oxford, and the award of touring scholarships in architecture (his chosen profession), Troyte never bothered to apply for the highest qualifications of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). Instead, after cutting his teeth at architects' offices in London, he moved to Malvern in 1896, working for Nevinson and Newton, an architectural firm situated in the imposing Priory Gateway, just above the Abbey Hotel (Nevinson was the brother of Basil Nevinson, who was to become one of Troyte's co-Variationees). Very soon Troyte became acquainted with Edward and Alice Elgar, assisting them in their various property transactions.

From this Priory Gateway office (which he eventually took over in 1908) Troyte designed many of the area's most impressive edifices, of which perhaps the best-known is the Toposcope erected on the summit of the Worcestershire Beacon, high in the Malvern Hills. Though intended to commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897, this device which has been pored over by hundreds of thousands of hill-walkers was not in fact inaugurated until June 1899.

The Toposcope houses an 'Indicator', pointing out over 360 degrees and a 67-mile radius all the locations which can certainly be seen from here. Around the rim are engraved the names of places further away which can possibly be

espied on a clear day. As Troyte himself wrote in a newspaper article printed in the *Malvern Gazette*, it was practically certain that 15 counties could be seen, but sightings of about seven others were less certain.

Probably the most spectacular of Troyte's designs was that for All Saints Church at Lower Wyche, Malvern Wells, dressed in Malvern stone, and with the benefit of stained glass by Henry Payne of the Bromsgrove Guild. The church was enthusiastically reviewed in Brooks and Pevsner's *The Buildings of England: Worcestershire* (Yale University Press, 2007).

Troyte designed many domestic residences, some of them humbly functional, others more commanding, with wonderful interior layouts within their striking exteriors, and there were other achievements as well, including an elegant sun-lounge over the entrance-hall to the Montrose Hotel in Malvern's Graham Road.

But architecture was not the only way Arthur Troyte Griffith made his mark upon Malvern. He was a founder-member of Malvern Chess Club, elected secretary and treasurer at its inaugural meeting on February 28 1899, and continuing as a fierce and accomplished player (and sometime President), occasionally representing Worcestershire, until his death in 1942.

Today Troyte's spirit lives on, not just as an 'Enigma Variation', not just as a knight of the chess-board, but also as one of the co-founders of the Malvern Concert Club Elgar spearheaded into existence in 1903 and still going strong, with enthusiastic audiences filling the town's Forum Theatre once a month for most of the year.

The heart-warming link between Elgar and Troyte ('Ninepin', as the composer affectionately nicknamed this rather gangling, lanky -- and with an uncanny resemblance to Robert Louis Stevenson -- individual pedalling around on his trusty bicycle) is preserved at the Church of St Wulstan, Little Malvern, where Edward and Alice Elgar are buried. Troyte selected the site for the grave, and designed the headstone.

Troyte's life and work is meticulously and lovingly detailed in a new book by Jeremy M. Hardie, who himself lives in a Troyte-designed house in Malvern. A little hawkeyed editing is needed, but the volume itself is a delight, with its many photographs and sketches, the latter by Troyte himself. It provides an unexpected insight into one of the most endearing Enigma Variations.

Christopher Morley
Chief music critic, *Birmingham Post*

Relf Clark: *Elgar and Keats and other essays*
Oxford, Positif Press, 2011

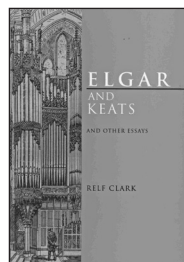
Dr Relf Clark was Chairman of the London Branch of the Elgar Society, and this nicely produced little book is dedicated to another former incumbent, David Bury. The author claims that the book is not about the major issues of Elgarian scholarship but deals with peripheral topics. It is a collection mainly of articles which have appeared in the *Elgar Society Journal* or delivered in earlier lectures.

To be honest, I'm not sure at whom the book is aimed. There is a chapter linking an abstruse point about consecutive fifths occurring in the theme of the *Enigma Variations* with discussion over whether Wulstan Atkins was Elgar's godson or not. Two further chapters headed 'The New Elgarians' are reviews of books that appeared five or six years ago and can hardly be relevant now. Programme notes for the three chamber works seem much too short to me, and I can't agree with some of Dr Clark's conclusions. He finds the String Quartet opens like Vaughan Williams before sounding like Brahms. I can find trace of neither composer in this most elusive and intimate of Elgar's scores, and is it really overshadowed by Bax's first Quartet? I very much doubt that. Dr Clark does not seem too impressed by the Piano Quintet, which many commentators feel is the finest of the chamber works. The slow movement, surely one of the loveliest in all chamber music, is dismissed in a sentence, and reference is made to a 'four-square fugato', a 'vulgar-sounding piano part' and an over-long finale reaching a 'noisy recapitulation'.

A longer chapter on 'Elgar and Keats' points out that the only reference to the poet in Elgar's output is the epigraph that heads the score of *Froissart*. But despite this tenuous link there is some interesting information on Elgar's use of the railways and general background to Keats's life. A slight chapter on the dating of the photograph of Elgar and G B Shaw provides a pleasant interlude before the final, and by far the longest, chapter on 'The Harrison & Harrison Organ of Worcester Cathedral'. Although I love the organ, the detailed and exhaustive commentary on the pipes, stops and pistons of the Worcester instrument will, I feel, only be of real interest to those who find the detailed innards of the organ a topic of fascination.

I should add that Dr Clark has composed a chorale-prelude for organ, based on Elgar's hymn tune 'Drakes Broughton', nine bars of quietly flowing counterpoint to the tune in continuous quavers, which I suppose is the reason for the quaint time-signature of 8/8.

Barry Collett



70 pp

ISBN
978-0-906894-48-4



166 pp + xxxii.

ISBN

978-1-904856-21-4

MUSIC REVIEWS

Elgar, *The Sanguine Fan*, *Beau Brummel*

Elgar Complete Edition Vol. 21 (2012), edited by David Lloyd-Jones
(Rickmansworth: Elgar Society Edition Ltd., 2012)

The quantity of Elgar's theatre music might surprise many music-lovers, who hardly associate him with grease-paint. The complications of its history are typical of theatre music, and are unlikely to be cleared up without more discoveries, for which, indeed, we must hope. The finished music in this fascinating volume is Elgar's only ballet score, plus both versions ('theatre' and 'concert') of the Minuet from the incidental music to *Beau Brummel*, of which Robert Kay's edition for Acuta Music has been reviewed here.¹ The Minuet is the sole survivor of an extensive score, but David Lloyd-Jones's edition contains transcriptions of sketches for other passages (plus one short sketch for the Minuet itself).

Apart from being dance music, what connects *Brummel* and *The Sanguine Fan*? Both were at one time in the hands of the publishers Elkin, one of the suspects in the criminal loss of the bulk of *Brummel*. But they were probably not guilty, and certainly they preserved *The Sanguine Fan*; we are indebted to Jerrold Northrop Moore for making sure it was conveyed to the British Library. A more certain connection is that these pieces begin identically, with a crotchet-minim rhythm preceding a violin tune. The opening of *The Sanguine Fan* could indeed have been marked 'Tempo di Minuetto'.

Never mind which *Brummel* edition was published first: they are so close in date that I assume neither editor was aware of the other's work. In comparing Lloyd-Jones's version with Kay's I am assisted by the former's inclusion of a facsimile of the first page of the MS (theatre version). Their editorial decisions suggest a radically different philosophy. Elgar marked the opening *piano* in the strings. Perhaps because this was insufficiently assertive for the theatre, he subsequently added wind instruments (as the facsimile makes clear). Both editors take the wind additions as authentic, but what about their dynamic level? In the facsimile, a single *f* (*forte*) appears on the cornet line; the other winds have no dynamic. Kay infers *f* for all wind, and writes it in, leaving the strings *piano* (and so perhaps inaudible, though balancing an ensemble by dynamics is not entirely foreign to Elgar's methods). Lloyd-Jones has [*p*] for all winds, the brackets indicating that *p* (*piano*) is an editorial suggestion; the cornet *f* disappears without trace. Unfortunately we can't settle the matter by listening to Elgar's recordings, which are of the concert version where the cornet is replaced by horns and, as both editions agree, all instruments are *piano*; this perhaps influenced Lloyd-Jones's decision with respect to the theatre version.

Lloyd-Jones also transfers details of articulation in the strings (staccato,

1 This Journal, April 2012, 52–3.

tenuto) to the wind, again scrupulously marking them as editorial suggestions. Kay doesn't do this; and so the differences between the editions amount to over a dozen in the first bar alone. When the violins enter, Kay adds a slur to the third and fourth notes of bar 3, inferred no doubt from similar pairs of quavers nearby.² Elgar didn't write that slur, and Lloyd-Jones presumably doesn't regard this as an omission. Following his edition, the two quavers would be bowed separately. Mentally bowing the whole phrase suggests to me that Lloyd-Jones is right (he also includes a staccato marking in this bar which Kay omits). I could go on, but shall not, except to say that if (or when) a third editor tackles the piece, different decisions may affect several such details. All the more important, then, to make clear what is in the source, and what is an editorial intervention.

Back to the opening dynamic: the cornet *f* implies that the theatre and concert version may intentionally be different (as they are at the end). And this seems reasonable. The theatre minuet is real ('diegetic') music, integral to the drama, heard and danced by members of the cast. Elgar's opening gesture is a call to attention for them as well as the audience; it may need to be loud, whereas in the concert-hall a quiet opening is feasible. Were we (a) lucky enough to find the rest of the score and (b) rash enough to stage the almost certain artistic turkey that is Matthews's play, the conductor might legitimately prefer Elgar's cornet *forte* to the uniform *piano*.

The identical gesture that opens *The Sanguine Fan* is marked *forte* throughout, but this time the melody is also *forte* and richly scored, with a background glow of trombones, harp, and plucked cellos. Having thus compelled attention, Elgar risks an exquisite harmonic change, *pianissimo*, as early as the eighth bar. For except for the echo of Panpipes, this is not 'diegetic' but 'expressive' music, and the similarities of the opening serve to underline the different contexts. The *Brummel* Minuet evokes an old-fashioned Regency dance; *The Sanguine Fan* – a wartime work no less escapist than *The Starlight Express* – conjures Arcady. This score is a most welcome addition to the Complete Edition, and can be used with profit while listening to the editor's excellent recording.³

I hope I may be forgiven a few comments on the inclusion of sketches. Sketch study, a substantial chunk of the musicological literature, normally takes the form of connecting finished work to notations in a composer's notebooks, scraps of paper, or, with Elgar, handsomely bound tomes (organized by Jaeger and with many pages agonizingly and for ever blank). Elgar scribbled musical ideas as they came to him, and what now appear as sketches for finished works often had no predetermined destination. Later he might decide where they should go, and write 'Brummel', or 'Callicles', or 'BJ' (for *The Spanish Lady*); and he moved them from one project to another. When we read sketches of a complete work, they make some kind of

2 Kay adds this slur to the theatre version, but not the concert version.

3 Naxos, 8.553879, with Lloyd-Jones's acclaimed performance of *Falstaff* and *Elegy*.

sense; but when the work remains fragmentary, like *Callicles*, or is lost, like *Brummel*, it isn't easy – quite often it's downright impossible – to see how they might cohere.

A number of *Brummel* sketches may have been considered by Elgar for *The Spanish Lady*, so Percy M. Young included transcriptions for the introduction to Act IV in ECE Vol. 41. This permits another interesting comparison, as ECE Vol. 21 contains transcriptions of the same sketches. Young (I infer) tries to make them less incoherent by bringing them near to a state in which (once orchestrated) they could be performed. The new edition offers a kind of printed facsimile, complete with Elgar's crossings out, blank staves, and occasional interjections: of these a favourite is 'good'. In other sketches I have seen 'jolly good', 'rather cheap', 'Gounod', 'Mendelssohn', and 'Tristan! 1st chord only'.⁴ Such things brighten one's studies, without making the actual musical and often verbal notations any more coherent unless the musical material is developed elsewhere. If one were to 'realise' the introduction to *Brummel* Act IV, Young's suggestions would need to be compared with the originals to check his accuracy. I can see the point of telling us which parts of a sketch have been crossed out; I can't, however, understand the purpose of printing a sketch entirely crossed out by Elgar with printed lines representing his crossings out, or his massive marking of K for 'Koppid', without, inevitably, possessing their character. Wouldn't it be enough to say 'this sketch (or bars X to Y) was (were) crossed out'?

With *The Sanguine Fan*, we are not given sketches, as the work was finished, but cuts. The music is rich in invention, beautifully scored, and intended to correspond closely to the scenario provided by Mrs Christopher Lowther. Exigencies of staging (with actors and dancers) required some passages to be removed. They are reproduced in the Appendix; we are unlikely ever to hear them but we can mentally slot them into place. The largest cut was more of the type of energetic material that remains between figs. 46 and 49. For the second performance, Elgar added a charming shepherds' dance (from fig. 60, roughly two thirds of the way through) which is in position in the score and, as the editor remarks, makes a welcome change from so much triple metre.

Why shepherds come in at this point is less clear; and this brings me to the scenario. Regrettably the score contains few pointers to where we are in the story, but it isn't too difficult to work out which music represents the pipes of Pan; him falling asleep; Echo's flute, played off stage; her dance; quarrels, and acts of violence. But what actually happens? The Foreword (p. vii) prints the 'Argument' made available as 'a programme slip' (fourteen lines, but not a sonnet). The edition proper (pp. 2–3) prints a much longer 'synopsis as originally supplied to Elgar', replete with details (fruit, a dropped fan, a snuff-box) for which a musical analogue would be hard to find. The Naxos

4 I can't say why Elgar mentions *Tristan* this once (British Library Additional Manuscript 63154, folio 7 verso), as this chord (a half-diminished 7th) is ubiquitous in his music; in this instance, too, there is no sign of Wagner's unusual enharmonic notation.

recording contains a different concise synopsis. The problem is that they don't agree with each other. In all of them Pan falls in love with Echo, a human couple quarrels, and Echo flirts with the young man. In Lowther's 'Argument', jealous Pan has Echo killed by the shepherds; but her mocking voice will always follow him. The humans are simply forgotten. According to the CD insert, Pan threatens the young man; he takes refuge at the statue of Eros, which strikes him dead with a thunderbolt (it would take too long to explain why). In the long version, the flash of light from Eros causes no harm. Pan threatens violence and the girl 'with a cry flings herself between Pan and the young man', for she loves him after all. *She* has saved him; they embrace. Pan turns angrily on Echo but is again captivated by her and they go off together.

Moore reproduces comments from an eye-witness: 'Du Maurier (Pan) looked superb, utterly sardonic and unyielding as he half carried Echo off [...] looking back on the dead young man and desolate girl.'⁵ Were it not for these memories, recorded by Moore in 1974, one might assume that a work intended to take people's minds off the war could hardly end with a barely civilized creature (as 'the Hun' was perceived) mocking a dead youth. The end has always puzzled me because the music contains no hint of tragedy. There is a final call of the panpipe (clarinet) and Echo (flute), a fragment of her dance, a reminiscence of sleep music, and a reprise of the Minuet. That music fits the long scenario from which, it seems, Elgar was working; all is well; nobody dies.

Julian Rushton

5 Jerrold Northrop Moore, *Edward Elgar. A Creative Life* (Oxford, 1984), 703. Other biographers follow Moore in killing the poor chap.



CD REVIEWS

Elgar: Cello Concerto, Introduction and Allegro for Strings, Elegy, Pomp and Circumstance Marches 1-5

Paul Watkins ('cello), BBC Philharmonic, conducted by Andrew Davis

Chandos
CHAN10709

Here we have a glorious collection of Elgar's orchestral music and music for strings covering the most significant years of his output. As if that were not enough, the artists include the distinguished 'cellist Paul Watkins appearing with the superb BBC Philharmonic conducted here by Sir Andrew Davis – much admired for his years with the BBC Symphony. Paul Watkins at the age of 42 has performed with enough celebrated orchestras and conductors world wide to fill a very large CV. His fine qualities as a 'cellist are well known. He also has a busy career as a conductor and brings that experience to bear on his approach to this great concerto, as he explains in the CD notes. There are a few good precedents for cellist/conductors I seem to remember! So we have an all English team to tackle this great English music. What a treat!

The disc opens with the Cello Concerto. An impressive and serious dark-toned opening from the soloist sets the mood for the performance. The first movement unfolds convincingly and demonstrates peerless control of the solo part, though Watkins does not always choose to follow the printed dynamics. This may be an effect of the recording but there is a sense that the dynamic range could be wider. The *molto sostenuto* *ff* entry after fig. 16 is taken *pp* after the *ff* tutti chord but it is well heard and effective. The recitative opening of the second movement, sometimes a weak moment, is played here with great poise and takes the listener on a pleasing logical path to the allegro molto. Here the soloist flies along with great delicacy. It is certainly *leggierissimo* as indicated in the part but I like to hear a little more 'air' between the notes. There is a dot over every semi-quaver and here there is a feeling of being just a little 'on the string'. This movement is however extremely well executed, showing off Paul Watkins' faultlessly agile playing, ably and deftly supported by Davis and the orchestra. The third movement, *adagio*, is beautifully controlled by the soloist with a range of tone colours well matched to the sombre mood. There are a number of places where the movement holds back which is as it should be but I felt it could have moved on just a bit more too in places. The opening orchestral tutti of the fourth movement is dramatic, rhythmically precise and impressive. There are a number of such dramatic moments in this complicated movement; however I did begin to feel that the mood was softening a little when the soloist came in. While it is clearly difficult to match such powerful orchestral outbursts, I did sometimes wish for a more raw and passionate style of playing. I did however like the whispered reference to the slow movement a few bars before the piece returns full circle to the beginning of the first movement and an exciting finish. This is a fine, satisfying and

enjoyable addition to the many recorded versions of the concerto.

The *Introduction and Allegro* starts boldly, with full bodied well balanced string sound from which the solo quartet emerges in a pleasing near focus; lovely warm playing from the quartet. Later the beautiful *p dolce* viola solo ‘Welsh hymn tune’ sounds further away as it wafts in very gently over still, barely audible hushed strings; a moment of magic. The piece moves on well at fig.10 where the repeated quaver figure is particularly well presented – precise and nicely pointed. Later the famous ‘devil of a fugue’ takes off at a moderate pace enabling us to enjoy the superb detailed playing of the BBC Philharmonic. However, towards the end of the *Allegro* this tempo starts to sound a little slow. Overall, though, a fine and enjoyable performance.

The *Elegy* is warmly and movingly played with a most beautiful string sound. It has moments of extraordinary calm where Sir Andrew shows his legendary control. The piece is a miniature delight.

The *Pomp and Circumstance* marches are all dedicated to musician friends of Elgar including three Cathedral Organists. Were they a particularly militaristic bunch? If you were preparing for battle, would you start by ringing up all the Cathedral Organists you knew? Rhythmically tight in the outer march sections, the playing is bold and full of energy, driven hard by Sir Andrew; no hanging about here. The full on sound is sometimes brash to my ears but always exciting. I was less enthused by the treatment of the mellow ‘trio’ sections. There are some gorgeous melodies – particularly in No.5, my personal favourite – but these did not quite come alive in my view. I would turn back to a recording by the LSO from 1959, conducted by Sir Arthur Bliss. Here the glorious tunes are relished and shaped more, the interest in the inner parts brought out more. The lazy triplets in the tune (No.5) fill their bars to perfection without holding up the flow and the interesting rhythmic oddities are subtly brought to our attention. Bliss’s performances of these ‘trios’ stay with you but perhaps the marches are less grand than Sir Andrew achieves here.

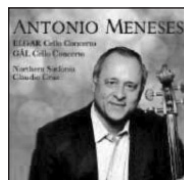
Chris Huggett

Elgar: Cello Concerto

Gál: Cello Concerto

Antonio Meneses (‘cello), Northern Sinfonia, conducted by Claudio Cruz

Yet another recording of Elgar’s Cello Concerto arrives, testament, surely, to the enduring appeal of Elgar’s autumnal masterpiece. I imagine anyone reading this will possess at least one recording of it, but what makes this one particularly welcome is the coupling, the Cello Concerto by Hans Gál. Gál (1890-1987) was a Viennese composer who fled the Nazis and settled in Edinburgh, where he taught at the University. His music has started to emerge, at least on CD, after years of neglect. I have always enjoyed what little Gál I have heard – his music is tonal, and in the central European style of Mahler or Franz Schmidt, but with a quirky charm and personality very much



Avie
AV2237

its own. He suffered, as did Elgar, Rachmaninoff and Strauss, for writing richly Romantic music out of its time, but then the passing of time has made that an irrelevance. Good music is good music, whenever it was written.

The Cello Concerto shares the E minor tonality of Elgar's work, and in the gentle melancholy of the first movement certainly brings the earlier work to mind. There are some lovely textures, and exquisite writing for solo oboe in chamber music-like scoring which rises to a lyrical rapture at times. The solo oboe leads the way in the slow movement. Again there is some lovely woodwind writing, and the quiet but ardent lyricism is quite lovely. The Finale begins with a kind of demented goblin's dance, but leads to a serious cadenza, which brings reminiscences of the first movement – surely some Elgarian influence here – before the vigorous finish.

The Elgar Concerto did not spring any particular insights or surprises, probably an impossible task now, but it is a finely conceived performance. I'm particularly intrigued by foreign interpretations of Elgar, born outside of the British tradition. They can often offer splendid rewards, as, for instance the recent Cello Concerto from an Argentinian cellist (Sol Gabetta) with a Danish orchestra and Swiss conductor (RCA 88697 63081). This time it is two Brazilians in charge, albeit with an English orchestra. They capture the world-weary atmosphere of the first movement wonderfully well, all the transitions between sections are natural and effortless, and the final despair of the work's epilogue is deeply felt and moving. Meneses gives a sane, perhaps understated, reading of the work, but I much prefer it to the overheated accounts one often hears. The Northern Sinfonia may lack the sheer heft of some orchestras, but Cruz sees to it that Elgar's marvellous scoring is always in the sound picture, and it is all faithfully captured in Avie's excellent recording.

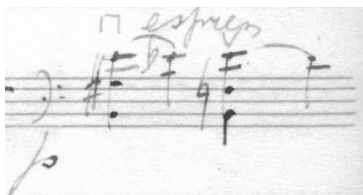
Recommended then, not least for Gál's lovely concerto.

Barry Collett

Two Bs or not two Bs - a note from the editor

Chris Huggett, the reviewer of the Watkins/Davis recording of the Cello Concerto, has drawn my attention to the fact that one of the chords Watkins plays in the cadenza at the start of the second movement, 4 bars after 19, is not the one to be found in the Novello edition of the score. The chord in question is the third triple-stopped chord before the start of the *allegro molto*. The Novello score has a Bb for the bottom note, which is what is normally to be heard and what, for example, Antonio Meneses plays in the recording reviewed above. Watkins plays a B natural, which is actually what's in the autograph manuscript. A can opener having thus been provided, we proceeded to look for some worms, aided and abetted by Chris Bennett.

Musically either chord is plausible, so we turned to Elgar's recordings with Beatrice Harrison for aural enlightenment. Luckily Chris Huggett, as



well as being a first-rate 'cellist, is also a recording engineer in his spare time, and he was able to isolate and 'loop' the chord in question. In the 1919 acoustic recording, Chris hears a B natural as per the autograph (though I must say I'm not so sure). In the later electrical recording the passage is rather skated over, so that the evidence is much less clear.

Volume 32 of the Complete Edition, published in 1988, has the comment: 'Vcl. lowest note B natural, as in first printing of full score; later printings of piano score and full score have B flat, as has Lionel Tertis's arrangement of the cello part for viola, approved by Elgar and published in 1929.'

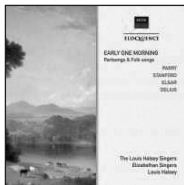
The Birthplace has Elgar's copies of the 'cello and piano score and the viola and piano score (EB1425). He has not made any amendment to the B natural in the former score, or to the B flat in the latter.

The Bärenreiter edition of the piano score, edited by Jonathan Del Mar and published in 2005, has a B natural, albeit with the natural sign in editorial parenthesis.

The new Novello edition of the piano score, edited by John Pickard and Robert Anderson and published in 2004, has a B flat. In their preface, the editors say: 'The only major matter still difficult to resolve concerns the lowest bass clef notes at the end of bar 12 in the second movement. In Elgar's MSS and the early printed editions the second B is specifically marked natural, not flat. When or if Elgar authorised the change to B flat cannot now be established.' In fact it's not 'specifically' marked either natural or flat – one (naturally) assumes B natural from the key signature.

If I may be permitted to add my two-penn'orth, the one bar semiquaver phase (to use Alice's words: 'Diddle diddle diddle') occurs five times in the cadenza passage. Four of those times it starts on a B natural, but only once has Elgar thought it necessary to put in the natural sign, and that is the occurrence after the chord in question. Now, normally you would only mark a natural to cancel out an earlier Bb: but there isn't one, unless Elgar meant the bottom note of that chord to be Bb ...

I suspect there can be no definitive answer: to adapt a famous Vaughan Williams remark, with a natural 'it looks right but sounds wrong'. Maybe this is another subject for the Letters section of a future edition of the Journal.



Decca Eloquence
480 2077 (2CD)

Elgar: *Scenes from the Saga of King Olaf – As Torrents in Summer; My Love dwelt in a Northern Land; Go, Song of Mine; Four part-songs, Op. 53 (There is sweet music, Deep in my soul, O Wild West Wind, Owls); Two Choral Songs, Op. 71 (The Shower, The Fountain); Two Choral Songs, Op. 73 (Love's Tempest)*

Delius: *Midsummer Song; On Craig Dhu; To be sung of a summer night on the water; The splendour falls on castle walls*

Parry: *Songs of Farewell*

Stanford: *Heraclitus; Sweet love for me; My love's an arbutus; Veneta; Chillingham; Shall we go dance*

Traditional: *Folk Song arrangements*

Ian Partridge (tenor), Owen Brannigan (bass), Wilfred Parry (piano)
Louis Halsey Singers, Elizabethan Singers, conducted by Louis Halsey

The 1960s and '70s were a golden age for chamber choirs in London. Alongside the fully professional BBC Singers, newly revitalised under John Poole, were three young conductors and their choirs: John Eliot Gardiner and the Monteverdi Choir; Roger Norrington and the Schütz Choir; and Louis Halsey, firstly with the Elizabethan Singers and then with the Louis Halsey Singers. All three choirs combined first-rate young amateur singers with a liberal sprinkling of professionals at the start of their careers: thus one could turn up to rehearsals and find oneself sitting next to Felicity Palmer, or the complete line-up of King's Singers. The 'elder statesman' of the trio was Louis Halsey, who had been a choral scholar at King's, Cambridge, and was in the 1960s a producer with the BBC World Service. With Gardiner and Norrington you got largely what it said on the tin – Monteverdi and Schütz. Louis's repertoire, by contrast, had a far broader base, ranging from Tallis and Byrd to Joubert and Britten.

I was lucky enough to be a member of the Louis Halsey Singers from 1970 to 1975, and sang many of the pieces on this double CD with them. There is no doubt in my mind that Louis had a special affinity with British music of the early 20th century, and that these performances from three Argo records, shamefully unavailable since the days of LP, have rarely been equalled and never surpassed.

Looking back, it is hard to fathom out just what he did to conjure up such fine results. I don't remember him saying much at rehearsal – he just seemed to let us sing – and for any detailed points he would turn his back on us and play the phrase on the piano ('Louis's doing his piano practice again' would come the whisper). But the results are universally magnificent: not just examples of extremely fine choral singing but performances that have a natural and absolute 'rightness' about them.

The Elgar and Delius LP was recorded in 1968 in Kingsway Hall. It is

a joy to hear performances that bring out the full glory of Elgar's choral writing. His orchestration (there seems no better word) of voices is as skilled and original as his orchestration of instruments, and his technical facility stunning. Sample any of the Op. 53 part-songs, for example, but especially 'O Wild West Wind' or the bi-tonal 'There is sweet music', and you will revel afresh in the glories of this music. Diana McVeagh provided the notes for the original LP, and they are reproduced here. Christopher Robinson's Naxos CD with the Cambridge University Chamber Choir, which has all these part-songs plus the *Bavarian Highlands*, is the only one which to my mind is its equal.

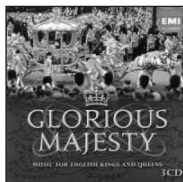
The Parry and Stanford LP dates from 1977. The *Songs of Farewell* have been lucky on disc – a look in my cupboard reveals fine recordings by Christopher Robinson (again!) with the Choir of St. George's Chapel, Windsor, and Richard Marlow with the Choir of Trinity College, Cambridge. Louis Halsey and his Singers provide a stunning performance and if, like Prince Charles, you have not come across this music before, prepare to be moved to tears. The final motet, 'Lord, let me know mine end', with its closing words 'O spare me a little, that I may recover my strength before I go hence and be no more seen' is an overwhelming experience. As Louis says in his perceptive notes: 'The music here seems all the more poignant when we remember that Parry set these heart-rending lines only a few months before his death.' In complete contrast, the six Stanford part-songs from the more than sixty that he wrote are pretty slender stuff, but no less enjoyable for that. I remember one or other of them turning up fairly frequently in Louis's programmes, and with 'Shall we go dance' the Singers won the BBC Choir of the Year competition.

The LP of folk-song arrangements is the earliest of the three, recorded in 1965 with the Elizabethan Singers. The arrangements are by Tippett, Grainger, Vaughan Williams, Holst, Moeran and the like, so its inclusion here is no mere make-weight.

There can be no greater recommendation by a reviewer than to say that, rather than beg a review copy, I bought my own as soon as the release was announced! A slight tinge of regret that the set included the folk-songs rather than Louis's recordings of some of Britten's finest choral pieces evaporated when I saw that Eloquence had announced the release of that as well, on a single CD. There was also his recordings of Schubert part-songs ...

Thank heavens my state pension will have kicked in by the time the credit card bill arrives.

Martin Bird



EMI Classics
3 27285 2 (3CD)

Elgar: *Coronation Ode; Imperial March; Offertory – O hearken thou; Coronation March; Nursery Suite – The Sad Doll; (arr.) National Anthem*

Britten: *Jubilate Deo; Gloriana – Symphonic Suite*

Byrd: *O Lord, make thy servant Elizabeth our Queen*

Handel: *Coronation Anthems (Zadok the Priest, Let thy hand be strengthened, The King shall rejoice, My heart is inditing); Birthday Ode for Queen Anne – Eternal source of light divine; Music for the Royal Fireworks*

Parry: *I was glad*

Purcell: *Birthday Ode for Queen Mary – Come ye sons of Art away; Funeral Music for Queen Mary*

Vaughan Williams: *O taste and see; (arr.) All people that on earth do dwell*

Walton: *Coronation March – Crown Imperial; Coronation March – Orb and Sceptre; Coronation Te Deum*

Dame Felicity Lott (soprano), Alfreda Hodgson (contralto), Richard Morton (tenor), Stephen Roberts (bass), Cambridge University Musical Society Chorus, Choir of King's College Cambridge, Band of the Royal Military School of Music, Kneller Hall, New Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Sir Philip Ledger

Susan Gritton (soprano), Robin Blaze (countertenor), Michael George (bass), Choir of King's College, Cambridge, Academy of Ancient Music, conducted by Stephen Cleobury

Norma Burrowes (soprano), James Bowman, Charles Brett (countertenors), Robert Lloyd (bass), Early Music Consort of London, conducted by David Munrow

London Classical Players, conducted by Sir Roger Norrington

London Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Sir Adrian Boult

London Symphony Chorus, Northern Sinfonia, conducted by Richard Hickox

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Sir Charles Groves

Chichester Cathedral Choir, conducted by John Birch

Choristers of Worcester Cathedral, CBSO Chorus, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Louis Frémaux

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Uri Segal

EMI has assembled these recordings, issued at bargain price under the title of *Glorious Majesty – Music for the English Kings and Queens*, to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. You may, like me, already have at least the Elgar recordings; but if, like me, you find yourself browsing in a record shop, you may well find the set irresistible. I certainly did, and my feelings of nostalgic patriotism were further enhanced by the fact that this

particular record shop was in Guernsey, and I was able to pay with one pound notes.

Back home a week later, I listened to the recordings over a couple of days and was struck by a couple of things: firstly, thankfulness that monarchy had inspired such a wide range of fabulous music (I can't recall a *Birthday Ode* for Oliver Cromwell, offhand, or, for that matter, one for George W. Bush) and, secondly, how well 'our man' holds his own in such illustrious company.

I think it was at the 2007 anniversary celebrations in Worcester (at which the *Coronation Ode* was performed) that I found myself, in conversation with a fellow member, making a case for Purcell being a far greater composer than Elgar. A pretty futile exercise, I know, but I was taken aback by the counter argument: that music using the limited choral and orchestral resources available to Purcell and Handel could not, by definition, be as 'great' as that by a composer with a full modern symphony orchestra at his disposal.

I hope that that member will hear this set! We all know that Handel can make a splendid racket, but I was not prepared for quite how splendid the Coronation Anthems sound here, performed by Stephen Cleobury. Those so-called 'limited resources' make a quite glorious noise, and the closeness of the King's College Chapel recordings of Handel and Purcell compared with that of the *Coronation Ode* means that their impact is even more immediate. And yet the subtlety of the music can be exquisite. Listen to James Bowman and Charles Brett, at the very height of their considerable powers, performing 'Sound the trumpet' from Purcell's *Birthday Ode*, with Christopher Hogwood at the organ and David Munrow supervising proceedings; or to the opening number of Handel's *Birthday Ode*, a quite ravishing duet for countertenor and chromatic trumpet. Returning to 'splendid rackets', we have Norrington's no-holds barred reading of the *Fireworks* music – a match for Elgar's royal marches any day.

It was good, too, to be reminded of Parry's and Walton's ability to spin marvellous tunes of seemingly endless length – the latter's marches worthy successors to Elgar's *Pomp and Circumstance*. The whole is rounded off by Elgar's arrangement of the National Anthem (which he set, cunning man, in Bb major rather than the traditional G – so much easier to sound triumphant and patriotic at that pitch).

Turn up the volume (especially in the *Coronation Ode*), pour yourself a Pimm's, and join in the celebrations.

Martin Bird



Hyperion Helios
CDH55395

Mackenzie: *The Cricket on the Hearth* – overture; *Twelfth Night*; *Benedictus*; *Burns*; Incidental music to *Coriolanus*
BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra conducted by Martyn Brabbins

In his review of Hyperion's recording of Sir Alexander Mackenzie's Violin Concerto and *Pibroch* Suite (CDH55343, *Elgar Society Journal*, Vol. 16, No. 3, November 2009), Martin Bird went into Elgar's friendship with Mackenzie in some detail. Hyperion now put us further in their debt with this reissue of their pioneering 1994 recording of music by the man Elgar called 'the revered head of our art in this country'.

Quite the most popular of his works in Elgar's day was the *Benedictus*, an arrangement of a movement from a set of pieces of violin and piano. Elgar was in the orchestra when it was played at two of William Stockley's concerts in Birmingham in 1889, and again at the Worcester Festival in 1893, and it was on the programme when *Salut d'amour* was first heard at Crystal Palace, and again when Henry Wood gave the London première of the first two *Pomp and Circumstance* Marches. Elgar himself conducted it with the LSO during their Percy Harrison UK tour in 1916. It is an exquisite miniature, and quite worth the modest price of this CD on its own.

The Cricket on the Hearth is a comic opera dating from 1902 based on a Christmas tale by Charles Dickens. The libretto is by Julian Sturgis, who performed a similar task for Sullivan with his adaptation of Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*. It was not performed until 1914, when it was staged by students at the Royal Academy of Music, of which Mackenzie was the Principal. It was revived for the Academy's centenary celebrations in 1922. Happily its delightful overture led a separate life, and received frequent performances, including one at the secular concert at the Gloucester Three Choirs Festival in 1907.

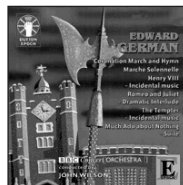
His overture *Twelfth Night*, in length and substance more of a symphonic poem, was given its first performance by Richter at St. James's Hall, Piccadilly, on 4 June 1888, and repeated 'by desire' a week later. It is thought that Elgar was present at one of these concerts. *Burns*, Mackenzie's *Second Scotch Rhapsody*, dates from 1881, and impressed no less a person than Liszt, who once played it in a version for piano duet. As might be expected, it is based on traditional Scottish songs. The incidental music to *Coriolanus* was composed for Henry Irving's production at the Lyceum Theatre in 1901. Three movements are recorded here, including a fine funeral march which was to be played at Irving's own funeral in 1905.

All the music is thoroughly well performed by the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra under Martyn Brabbins, and the recording is to Hyperion's usual excellent standard. If you want to know exactly what it was about Mackenzie's music that commended it so highly to Elgar, then this CD is an excellent place from which to start.

Richard Wiley

**Edward German: Incidental music to *Much Ado about Nothing*;
Incidental music to *The Tempter*; *Marche Solennelle*; Incidental music
to *Henry VIII*; Incidental music to *Romeo and Juliet*; *Coronation March
and Hymn* (1911)**

BBC Concert Orchestra conducted by John Wilson



Dutton Epoch
CDLX 7285

We might have worried years ago that we'd not get to hear much of Edward German's music beyond the usual things – *Merrie England* and the Dances from *English Nell* and *Henry VIII*. So the enterprise of Dutton in bringing us a *third* disc in their German series must be applauded, especially when the forces they've assembled for this recording are patently enjoying what they're playing. German had a most felicitous gift, and his orchestration is always to be admired, so it is not hard to understand why he was turned to by Henry Irving, amongst his contemporaries in the acting and theatre directing worlds, to supply grand and witty accompaniments to plays produced in the 1890s. All the incidental music on this disc comes from that decade when German was a theatre composer of choice, for the Globe and elsewhere.

There are several world première recordings here, viz: three of the movements to *Much Ado about Nothing*, the 'Intermezzo funèbre' from *Henry VIII*, the *Marche Solennelle* craftily reconstructed by David Russell Hulme (who also supplies exemplary liner notes, along with Ray Siese), and the Dramatic Interlude from *Romeo and Juliet*.

The Tempter music for a melodrama by Henry Arthur Jones has a Berceuse and a Bacchanalian Dance – the former a rather exquisite movement, the latter more gutsy but with a plangent middle section where a dialogue between oboe and strings over a harp and timpani accompaniment sticks in the mind long after it has finished.

The *March Solennelle* is a fine lament, while the *Coronation March and Hymn* written for George V's crowning has appropriate gravitas and contemplation. It's a bit of a contrast to what Elgar gave us for the same occasion – he seemed determined to be as louring with the whole thing within the bounds of what the occasion allowed him to give us.

You can see why the Dances from *Henry VIII* have stood the test of time – the Morris Dance is evocative and darkly sly with hints at what morris dancing is really all about; whilst the Shepherd's Dance was a favourite of Elgar's, who wrote to German after a 1916 performance of the music – 'You would have found me alone afterwards smoking a pipe and listening to your 6/8 Henry VIII with all the exquisite pleasure I have always derived from it'. And we have the Overture, too and two fine Preludes, one to depict the despatching of the Duke of Buckingham.

This happy reviewer had the great good fortune to know German's niece, Winifred, towards the end of her life, and she hoped her uncle-by-marriage's music would not be forgotten; she'd have been over the moon at this disc, not to say its two companions. Do take a chance on it if you're dithering; it's appealing stuff.

Dominic Guyver

All the Elgar CDs are available now from the Elgar Birthplace Museum. Remember that buying from the Birthplace is a way of contributing directly towards its finances at this difficult economic time. You may shop online at:

www.elgarfoundation.org/index.php/the-elgar-shop/cds

LETTERS

Approaches to the part of Gerontius

From David Bury

In his review of Mark Tucker's 'Gerontius' the editor, rightly, distinguished between two common approaches to the role. We have all heard 'pious' interpretations and, I trust, disliked them. There is certainly plenty of evidence that Elgar did. It was surely the dramatic intelligence and humanity of Ludwig Wüllner's performance in Düsseldorf in 1901 and 1902, and in London in 1903, which so enthused Elgar (and Jaeger!). I am, thus, surprised to read Wüllner's name listed among the 'pious'.

Wüllner was nearly 45 when he sang in the London premiere on 6 June 1903. Since he seems to have left no recordings of his singing voice, we can none of us be sure what he sounded like nor what we would have made of him. He certainly divided opinion in England in 1903. However there are plenty of clues.

In 1889 Wüllner, until then an academic, began an acting career in Meiningen. He played all the great German classical roles as well as Shakespeare - Hamlet, King Lear, Shylock, Prospero *inter alia*. He did not move to singing until 1896. He may have had vocal limitations, but he is acknowledged to have revolutionised the German *Lied* by his emphasis on text and meaning.

There do exist recordings of Wüllner's voice in speech and declamation. An important example is his vocal contribution to Max von Schilling's orchestral melodrama 'Das Hexenlied'. Although almost 75 at the time of the recording (1933) no listener will be left in doubt as to the energy and intensity that Wüllner imparts.

Then there is the mass of contemporary observations – Elgar himself, Jaeger, the critics. Of course, there will be differences but the overall impression is clear. Elgarians can always look at my little piece about the 1903 Westminster *Gerontius* in *The Best of Me* (Elgar Editions 1999) edited by Geoffrey Hodgkins, or Lewis Foreman's excellent article on 'Early Performances' in the same volume.

Assuredly Wüllner was not one of the namby pamby school of Gerontiuses and we should not allow a legend to develop that he was.

From Walter Hurst

'The incomparable Heddle Nash!' How often is that comment made when a new recording of *The Dream of Gerontius* is made and the tenor found to be wanting! You do not mention him in your criticism of the latest recording, as an operatic exponent. I heard Heddle Nash a number of times in the 1940's in the role in Liverpool with Sargent conducting and Nash singing the part from memory. An unforgettable experience which I renew every time I play the first complete recorded performance.

A response from Martin Bird

I readily confess to having placed Ludwig Wüllner in the wrong category in my review: my memory of him being among those who did not ‘possess the vocal equipment to do full justice to Elgar’s view of the part’ led me to assume, without first checking, that he husbanded such resources as he did possess, and therefore fell into the ‘contemplative’ category. On the available evidence it seems that nothing could have been further from the truth!

Elgar told Ivor Atkins after the Düsseldorf performance that ‘Wüllner was outstanding as Gerontius, and that at that time there was no singer in England to equal him for so completely entering into the part’, and wrote enthusiastically to Novello, saying ‘Dr. Ludwig Wüllner, was splendid – not in voice – but intelligence, genius – he carried everyone away & made Gerontius a real personage – we never had a singer in England with so much brain – even here he is exceptional.’

But, as this implies, there was a serious compromise to be faced: it would seem that Wüllner possessed a pretty unpleasant singing voice and, moreover, one which did not have the range for Gerontius. Elgar had to transpose the whole of the ‘Sanctus fortis’ down for him, thus removing the only top Bb in the work. Now, as every singer knows, some people write more gratefully for the voice than others – five minutes of singing the *Choral Symphony* can leave one shattered, whereas at the end of the Verdi *Requiem* the voice is nicely run in and ready to do it all again! Elgar was one who knew how to treat singers kindly, and the part of Gerontius is very kind to the tenor voice (it’s even kind, behind closed doors, to a high baritone): yet Wüllner obviously struggled with it.

Reports of the German performances led to high expectations of Wüllner in England: this from Margaret Gaskell on the day John Coates’s illness caused the postponement of Richter’s performance of *Gerontius* in Manchester.

Quite in confidence, there has all winter been great dissatisfaction at the engagement of Mr. Coates. So many people entreated to have Dr. Ludwig Wüllner whom Mr. Johnstone had praised so much in his account of the Düsseldorf performance.

Mr. Coates had only once been heard in Manchester at a popular Brand Lane concert this winter, and the musical people who went to hear him – (we didn’t go) – came back very full of how unfit he was to sing such a magnificent and spiritual part as that of Gerontius. Mr. Johnstone told me only a fortnight ago how unpleasant his voice was, etc. However the mot in Manchester today is, that ‘though it’s bad to have Coates as Gerontius, it’s worse not to have him’!¹

It’s interesting to note that Manchester was anticipating a ‘spiritual’ reading from Wüllner rather one from Coates more suited to ‘a popular Brand Lane concert’. But Wüllner *had* been engaged by Frederic Cowen for his performance in Liverpool later that month. The *Liverpool Mercury* noted that ‘Dr. Wüllner ... did not commend himself to the audience by his voice; but there was a general admission of the intellectuality of his treatment of the phrases which occupied his attention.’ The *Liverpool Courier* thought him ‘too vehement in his declamation’, while the *Manchester Guardian* reported that he was ‘much embarrassed by the high notes’. Cowen wrote to Elgar to tell him ‘that we had a really excellent performance last night in Liverpool. The only thing was that Wüllner’s English was rather unsatisfactory ...’, while Adrian Mignot, President of the Liverpool Orchestral Society, wrote to say that ‘Dr. Wüllner certainly felt his part and sang it with great impressiveness

1 Letter from Margaret Gaskell to Alice Elgar, 5 March 1903, Elgar Birthplace Museum letter 3108.

and a touching feeling, though I could have wished him to have a better voice ...’.

David Bury makes the point that Wüllner ‘is acknowledged to have revolutionised the German *Lied* by his emphasis on text and meaning’, and this is borne out by letters to Elgar in the spring of 1903 from Claude Phillips and Lady Mary Lygon.

I went to Wüllner’s Liederabend, and was moved as I have not been by any singing for many years. There was something virtually inspired about it. One forgot the loveless voice. I know it is the fashion among professionals and critics to speak of him as “affected and exaggerated”. Isn’t there always nowadays an unconscious shrinking from genius – a desire to find it a sham when it swarms too high?²

... I proposed to go & listen to Dr. Wüllner yesterday (which I did) and tell you about it. I think his singing is absolutely marvellous, & is quite different, and beyond, anything that I have ever heard. I found Mr. Cary Elwes and his wife there, and we listened entranced, whilst he sang 6 songs of Brahms & 6 by Strauss. I see he is to give 2 more recitals: and I am also [looking] forward with immense interest and pleasure to hearing him sing in Gerontius on June 6th.³

Alice Elgar was an enthusiastic Wüllner supporter, as Jaeger told Dorabella after the Düsseldorf performance.

... directly Wüllner opened his mouth to sing ‘Jesus, Maria, meine Stunde kam’ we said that man has Brains. And by the Olympian Jove he had Brains galore. He made us sit up and realise that Elgar’s intention, & what I had expected when I wrote my much maligned analysis, could be realised by an artist. I never heard such intellectual deeply felt singing. Not that W’s voice is wonderful. No! But his Brains & his heart are; & they are more than mere voice in a work of such greatness as this wonderful Gerontius. We were delighted and moved to tears. As for dear Mrs E, you can imagine her state of seventh-heaven-beatitude, with eyebrow lifting, neck twisting, forget-me-not glances towards the invisible Heavens! Don’t think I am making fun of her! I am not; but you know her signs of deep emotion over the Dr’s music don’t you?⁴

This enthusiasm continued at the London performance, when Alice noted in her diary that ‘Wüllner [was] finer than anyone A. thought’. Wulstan Atkins wrote, however, that ‘Elgar did not like to say much, my father told me, in view of Alice’s enthusiasm, but he was obviously very disappointed that the first London performance had been so unsatisfactory. Some 25 years later in a conversation at Marl Bank he admitted that it had been a mistake to have Wüllner for a performance in English.’ John Fuller-Maitland, in *The Times*, declared that:

Dr. Wüllner’s admirers willingly admit the marked defects of his voice and method; but they maintain that these count for nothing in comparison with the intellectuality of his interpretations and the intense realization which he conveys to his hearers. For the sake of his voice, the long solo in the first part was transposed a note lower – but the merits which were to compensate us for this were hardly perceptible. The whole, from beginning to end, was sung without alteration of tone-quality, nor was anything particularly expressed excepting only the weakness of the dying man. In the fine litany the tenor solo should surely be audible through the chorus, it was not; and there was no suggestion of any contrast

2 Letter from Claude Phillips to Elgar, 28 March 1903, EBM letter 1975.

3 Letter from Lady Mary Lygon, 17 May 1903, EBM letter 1916.

4 Letter from August Jaeger to Dora Penny, 29 December 1901, published in Mrs. Richard Powell, *Memories of a Variation* (Oxford University Press, 1937) 44.

between the man in his bodily agony and the disembodied spirit of its new surroundings.⁵

The critic of the *Daily News* was even more blunt, observing that Wüllner's performance was 'mere ranting ... personally I have some liking for definiteness of pitch'. Gervase and Winefride Elwes were present, and Winefride's remembrance of the performance can leave us in no doubt as to the correctness of David Bury's assertion that Wüllner was 'not one of the namby pamby school of Gerontiuses'.

Gervase longed to sing the part of Gerontius, but as yet, naturally, had hardly won sufficient recognition; and accordingly Wüllner, a celebrated German tenor, was engaged. We went to the concert together and Gervase, for the first time, heard the inspired music. Wüllner was a fine singer, rather of the operatic type, but to our way of thinking was too eager to emphasize the dramatic aspect of the part, even to the point of being theatrical. Moreover, Newman's verse inevitably suffered through being delivered in a strong German accent. The oratorio made an instantaneous and most powerful appeal to Gervase. As we left the Cathedral he told me that he was simply longing to sing in it. 'I know I can do it', he said repeatedly.⁶

All that being said, it is fascinating to me how differently people react to a particular voice. Walter Hurst reminds us of the greatness of Heddle Nash in the role: I remember Boult's choice of Nicolai Gedda for his recording raising more than a few eyebrows at the time. I would love to hear Domingo in the part, or to have heard Wunderlich, and have a mild regret that Gerontius was never likely to be Pavarotti territory.

But at the deliberate risk of provoking more letters on the subject, do we need a third category to go alongside 'contemplative' and 'operatic' – that of 'just hasn't got the vocal wherewithal to be let loose'? All the reviews suggest that Wüllner would be a prime candidate for such a category, whatever his considerable ability to bring the text to life. I would even suggest that Julius Patzak could keep him company – never have I been as disappointed with a performance of the part of Gerontius as with Patzak's on the Elgar Editions CDs: it is hard to imagine a more laboured, out of tune rendering from a professional singer.

I can see pens being put to paper around the world ...

5 John Fuller-Maitland, *The Times*, 8 June 1903.

6 Winefride and Richard Elwes, *Gervase Elwes* (London: Grayson and Grayson 1935).

100 YEARS AGO ...

Elgar gradually emerged from his period of 'cold storage' and on 21 April Alice 'Persuaded E. to have a car - & had lovely drive thro' [Hampstead] Garden Suburb'. Next day his Doctor, Sir Maurice Abbot Anderson 'came & was pleased with E.' Now he quickly perked up and by the end of the month was telling Frances Colvin: 'I took a walk again this p.m. & saw a flock of sheep - bless them - talking a language I have known since I was two years old'. On 1 May he 'Got out sketches &c -': work on *The Music Makers* had recommenced.

Social life was beginning to stir again, too, and on 10 May Alice held a 'Tea party, our first at Severn House'. Among the guests were Muriel Foster and her husband, Frank Schuster, Windflower, and Sidney Colvin. The following day 'A. & C. to Debenham's to final trying of Court dresses - Then to Lady Mildred's who gave most kind rehearsal of curtseys &c -': Alice and Carice were to be presented at Court on the 14th.

On 17 May Leopold Stokowski and his wife were among the guests for tea. Next day the Elgars went to stay at Court Farm in Broadway with the de Navarros. Back in London a week later Elgar was 'not very happy over his work - not "lit up" yet': nevertheless he told Henry Clayton on the 23rd he was 'hoping to send some M.S. to you soon.' The next day he conducted the *Enigma Variations* with an orchestra of over 500 at the 'Titanic Band' Memorial Concert at the Albert Hall.

At the end of the month work started on the bookshelves for the library, and Elgar reported to Troyte, who had offered to come and supervise construction, that 'all goes well so far: three pirates came & have made a damned row for two bouts of 12 hours each - one sportsman with a pickaxe has done much deadly execution & looks like the Maid of Saragossa at her worst ... during the trouble I have shifted my Muse into my dressing room where I can only hear a dull thud occasionally'.

Work continued throughout June on both *The Music Makers* ('E. vesy happy over his music') and the shelves ('Excitements with workmen driving nail thro' water pipe in Library'). The latter were finished on 25 June, and the former on 18 July. Meanwhile on 16 July Elgar's setting of Psalm 48, 'Great is the Lord', received its first performance at the service in Westminster Abbey to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the founding of the Royal Society. After a few days of feeling 'porsley' he turned his attention to the orchestration of three songs, *The River*, *The Torch* and *The Wind at Dawn*, which were to be performed at Hereford in September.

August was devoted largely to the orchestration of *The Music Makers*, which was completed on the 20th while they were staying with Winifred Murray, an old friend of Alice's, at her house in Petersfield. They had gone there while central heating was being installed at Severn House, which was 'becoming full of holes for hot water pipes &c'.

Back home Elgar sank into one of his 'end of composition' depressions, telling Windflower 'everything is sad, & dull, & unhappy & miserable'. He went to Harrogate on the 27th to conduct, through 'corn floating about, square miles of it - washed into mud like a farmyard' by incessant heavy rain, and from there went to Hereford for a rehearsal of *Gerontius*. By the 31st it was not only the weather that was 'Bright & sunny - finer promise', for Elgar was 'busy painting parts of house - Out to buy brushes &c'.

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