



Yorkshire & North East Branch Newsletter No 21 - January 2022

Edited by Paul Kampen -

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Branch Chairman's message

It was so good to be back at The Bar Convent for our first 'real' meeting since lockdown. And we were not disappointed: Andrew Padmore's presentation on 'Conducting Elgar', with particular reference to *The Music Makers* (25 September), was both well prepared and illuminating. Our next talks, by John Norris (23 October) on 'English Treasures in the British Library', and Tom Kelly, on 'Beyond and Within Elgar's "Enigma" Variations' (4 December) further delighted and reminded us that there is no satisfactory substitute for real meetings and good fellowship with like-minded enthusiasts. Attendances have been a little lower than in pre-lockdown days, but at least viable. As confidence builds in the measures we are taking to protect participants at meetings, I hope numbers will continue to grow. This is important for the branch, and indeed the Society. I urge everyone to attend as regularly as possible and to spread the word and thereby ensure our future as a branch.

David Young

Elgar and Doncaster

Sir Edward's Yorkshire connections have often been written up or spoken about. But Elgar and Doncaster? Surely not! But he did visit once, with the London Symphony Orchestra, on Thursday 28 October 1909, for one of Doncaster Corn Exchange's 1909-1910 Subscription Concerts.

Elgar conducted his year-old First Symphony, one of nearly a hundred performances it received in its first year countrywide, also three of the *Sea Pictures* ('Sea Slumber Song', 'Where Corals Lie' and 'The Swimmer') sung by the eminent contralto, Phyllis Lett, and two more recent compositions from his pen: movements from The Second *Wand of Youth* Suite ('Little Bells', 'The Tame Bear', 'Wild Bears') and, a rousing end to the concert (which also included shorter items by Weber, Tchaikovsky and Handel), the Fourth *Pomp and Circumstance* March.

The local press described Elgar's conducting technique as 'nervous and forceful, almost jerky, but entirely free from fuss or violence'. Clearly the concert was a landmark in Doncaster's musical history.

In 1974 the present writer organised an Elgar Festival in Doncaster: a talk by Percy Young on Elgar the European, three concerts, an organ recital in the Parish Church (now Minster), a violin/piano recital and a varied programme by local performers of solo songs, choral items from mixed and male voice choirs and music for string orchestra. The Festival featured premières of completions of the Piano Trio movement and a *Polonaise in F* for violin and piano.

The writer has also compiled an on-going list of Elgar performances in Doncaster and district from circa 1900 – hundreds of performances, but not yet including *In the South*, The Second Symphony, *Falstaff* or *The Kingdom* but, surprisingly, five of *King Olaf*.

Philip L Scowcroft, Committee Member

Our Meetings for 2022

All meetings are held on Saturdays at The Bar Convent, York, and commence at 2 pm.

We are hoping that 'live' meetings will continue for 2022. However, with the current uncertainty regarding Omicron, please check our webpage at:
<https://elgarsociety.org/branches/yorkshire-north-east/>

We request that face coverings are used at meetings.

22 January (Commencing with the AGM)

HOWARD GREGG on *Elgar's Part Songs*.

Elgar's part songs are highly regarded and reflect another aspect of his great musical gifts yet they are rarely heard. The talk will look at their place in Elgar's creative life and the context for which they were written. With musical examples.

Howard Gregg is a committee member of the branch and long-standing member of the Society.

26 March

STUART FREED on *Elgar and the Critical Ear* – with particular reference to the *Introduction and Allegro for Strings*.

In a light-hearted programme, Stuart guides us through 18 different recordings with the aim of choosing just one.

Stuart Freed is Chairman of the Elgar Society.

30 April

WENDY HILL on *Elgar's Early Years*.

This exploration of Elgar's musical beginnings and rise to international prominence will include numerous musical examples.

Wendy Hill is a member of the West Midlands branch, and was for ten years Secretary of The Elgar Society.

21 May

SARAH LISTER on *Elgar and Settle*.

An examination of Elgar's acquaintance with and love of the Yorkshire Dales through his friendship with Charles William Buck, the GP and amateur cellist.

Sarah Lister is a local historian and leader of the Settle Graveyard Project.

25 June

JULIAN RUSHTON on *Elgar's Symphonic Study Falstaff*.

Falstaff is Elgar's most openly programmatic music. Not wishing to be misunderstood, he published a note to make clear that this is the Falstaff of the Henry IV—V plays, not the *Merry Wives*, and to associate his abundance of themes with characters and episodes.

Julian Rushton is Emeritus Professor of Music at the University of Leeds and a committee member of the branch.

24 September

DANIEL GRIMLEY on *A Tale of Two Concertos: Elgar, Delius and Beatrice Harrison*.

An examination of the genesis of the concertos by Elgar and Delius, both of which were performed by Beatrice Harrison.

Daniel Grinley is a Professor of Music at the University of Oxford and Fellow of Merton College.

15 October

JACQUELINE EDWARDS presents a live, lecture/recital on **Dame Clara Butt**.

As mezzo soprano and pianist Jacqueline discusses and illustrates the life and career of the celebrated Edwardian contralto Dame Clara Butt, for whom Elgar composed *Sea Pictures*.

A descendant of Dame Clara Butt Jacqueline Edwards is a concert and opera singer and also performs in a series of one-woman cabarets.

26 November

PAUL KAMPEN on **Barbirolli in Yorkshire**.

An examination of how Sir John Barbirolli revived musical life in Leeds, a decade before he did the same for Manchester, though his conductorship of the Northern Philharmonic Orchestra.

Paul Kampen is a horn player and committee member.

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The Northern Philharmonic Orchestra.	
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First Violins—	Piccolo—
Mr. Edward Maude (Prin.)	Mr. S. Middleton
„ R. Stead	Oboes—
„ N. E. Rouse	Mr. A. S. Livesley
„ W. F. Wilson	„ L. A. Nichols
„ D. Hall	Cor Anglais—
„ A. Boothroyd	Mr. A. Sunderland
„ D. Perkins	Clarinets—
„ G. Casey	Mr. H. Watson
„ E. Eaden	„ N. S. McDonald
„ A. R. Percival	Bass Clarinet—
„ J. Atkinson	Mr. W. W. Lupton
„ D. Adaminsky	Bassoons—
„ B. Horsfall	Mr. S. White
„ C. Taylor	„ A. J. Dove
Second Violins—	Horns—
Mr. E. Drake (Prin.)	Mr. F. W. Beckwith
„ P. Kitson	„ T. B. Murray
„ A. Kilner	„ W. Smith
„ W. Wilson, Junr.	„ T. Tasker
„ P. Bedford	Trumpets—
„ C. Mann	Mr. J. Paley
„ L. J. Riley	„ W. W. Wood
„ G. W. Reed	„ W. Sizer
„ S. Burkinshaw	Trombones—
Miss O. Bell	Mr. H. Smith
Violas—	„ H. Luty
Mr. E. Moxon (Prin.)	„ S. Grant
Miss L. Simms	Tuba—
Mr. S. Errington	Mr. J. A. Wood
„ H. R. Holmes	Harp—
„ B. Boothroyd	Miss H. Atkinson
„ A. Smith	Tympani—
Violoncellos—	Mr. I. Lee
Mr. A. Haynes (Prin.)	Percussion—
„ A. Hemingway	Mr. G. W. Dearlove
„ G. R. Broadbent	„ C. Scott
„ D. Bentley	„ J. A. Lancaster
„ G. S. Drake	
„ A. Morton	
Double Bases—	
Mr. T. H. Shepherd (Prin.)	
„ W. H. Ghent	
„ A. Shaw	
„ H. Lockwood	
„ J. Fawcett	
„ W. Fawcett	
Flutes—	
Mr. J. Lupton Whitlock	
„ S. Middleton	
„ N. Seville	

The Northern Philharmonic Orchestra comprised members of the various theatre and cafe orchestras who were working in Leeds and the surrounding area in the 20s and 30s.

Many of them later became prominent members of the Hallé, BBC Northern and other orchestras and were working up to the 1980s.

One, Reginald Stead, who was for many years Leader of the BBC Northern Orchestra, became a founder member of Opera North in 1978 and worked with the company for about six months.

How many familiar names can you spot?

Image c/o Leeds Local History Library

My Three 'Elgar Moments'

by Trevor Black

In the 1950s I was a chorister at Derby Cathedral and was taught music by the late Dr George Handel Heath Gracie who was Organist and Master of the Choristers from 1933 to 1958. The family then moved to Malvern Wells into the grounds of St Wulstan's TB Hospital, where my father was the Engineer. The morning after we moved and anxious to explore my new surroundings, I ran out of the house and stopped at the sight of the Malvern Hills which dominated the immediate surroundings. That was the 'wow' factor and the very moment I fell in love with the countryside in what was to be my playground. I then became a chorister at Malvern Priory and often ran home along the Malverns, after practice on a Saturday morning. Quite a feat for an eight-year old!

Elgar is buried at St Wulstan's Church which is a short distance from where I went to school and I wasn't aware of how his music would affect me or how I would in future cross paths with his past.

I often would go with my father to Powick Hospital where he had friends and engineering colleagues and I remember the hospital organ where Elgar used to play and practice and where I believe they kept sheets of his music which I believe are now held at the Elgar Museum.

A major 'wow' moment was watching the twenty-year-old Jacqueline du Pré play the Cello Concerto on TV. In my view it was one of the most defining and memorable moments which is still regarded as the pinnacle of interpreting this moving concerto.

In the 1960s the family moved to Worcester and I delivered papers from a newsagents just down from the Cathedral. Again, I wasn't aware that I was delivering papers around the various houses where Elgar had lived. I only discovered this when embarking on one of the Elgar walks that were held during the 150th celebrations in 2007.

I was therefore privileged to attend the special gala anniversary celebration concert at Worcester Cathedral with my wife and cousin. The Cello Concerto played by Julian Lloyd Webber with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra was another 'wow' moment and 'not satisfied' with that we then immediately drove to the Symphony Hall, Birmingham to hear *The Apostles*, performed by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. It was a very memorable day.

A former President of the Malvern Priory Old Choristers Association was Dr F W Wadly who was for 55 years Organist and Master of the Choristers at Carlisle Cathedral but was also Organist at the Priory from 1904 to 1911. He was a friend of Elgar and for a period held Elgar's robes.

Another coincidence was that I was confirmed into the Church of England by Mervyn the Bishop of Worcester. There is a plaque on the wall of Worcester Cathedral in remembrance of him and next to it is a plaque dedicated to Sir Edward.

So whenever I hear Elgar's music it brings back a lot of memories and in particular a passion for the countryside and in particular Worcester and the Malverns. The expression that the music runs through your veins was never more apt.

Trevor Black