The Elgar Society journal

March 2010 Vol. 16, No. 4

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The Elgar Society Journal

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

Front Cover: Elgar with Carice outside Marl Bank, c. 1933. Photograph by kind permission of the Elgar Birthplace Museum.

Notes for Contributors. Please adhere to these as far as possible if you deliver writing (as is much preferred) in Microsoft Word or Rich Text Format. A longer version is available in case you are prepared to do the formatting, but for the present the editor is content to do this.

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Illustrations (pictures, short music examples) are welcome, but *please ensure* they are pertinent, cued into the text, and have captions.

Presentation of written text:

Subheadings: longer articles benefit from judicious use of these.

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

I am pleased to present in this issue a fine mixture of material on Elgar's life and works. The great symphonic and choral masterpieces are enriched by our growing appreciation of the craft, inventiveness, and originality of works that may appear lesser or occasional, such as *The Crown of India*, and the wartime *Starlight Express* and *Fringes of the Fleet*, the latter, like *The Crown of India*, too readily dismissed through its association with music-hall. Occasional music must not be scorned simply for being occasional; we surely do not scorn Handel's *Zadok the Priest*, or his *Water* and *Fireworks* music, whose origins are about as occasional as it is possible to be; the same goes for Mozart's 'Finalmusik' (such as the 'Posthorn' serenade) and, indeed, Elgar's *Coronation Ode*. It is, or will be, the most important outcome of the Elgar Complete Edition that it makes available works such as these, not to mention the songs and shorter instrumental works (many of them available in Clive Brown's edition of music for violin and piano).

Thus it is that we can now read, from John Norris and Jerrold Northrop Moore, a fascinating account of theatrical aspects of the *Starlight Express*, notably its use of melodrama, in anticipation of its imminent publication as part of the Complete Edition. Our CD reviews include an unusually high proportion of what might, until recently, have been considered not merely non-standard Elgar, but – perish the thought – *inferior* Elgar, including *Fringes of the Fleet* and *The Crown of India*. Now at last we can all hear, and study, these works in excellent editions and fine performances.

There remain things to find in the archives; and there remain mysteries.

Warm congratulations are due to John Drysdale on the completion of his second doctorate – in retirement, he followed up his Southampton PhD on the Paris Opéra by an Oxford DPhil on Elgar. An essay intended to form a section of his thesis (so rich was the material on Elgar's income that he had to make cuts) has found its way to the Journal, and I trust we are all glad to learn that Alice's aunt was not the complete dragon she was represented as being (by Elgar). Borrowing from friends, living slightly beyond his income … I suppose Elgar would not object to a comparison with Mozart…

Professor Donald Burrows is one of the world's most distinguished Handel scholars, and he interests himself in other music of that period, for instance editing music by William Croft for the *Musica Britannica* edition. Like Dr Drysdale on Severn House, he has dived into the murky waters of *ownership* – in this case of bundles of music for which Elgar could foresee no use. Among Elgar's many virtues one cannot count being a musicologist (as were Brahms and Webern among other composers).

A propos of Carl Newton's remark (this Journal, November 2009, p. 43) that

'musical history should not be left only to musicologists', I note in case anyone has missed the all-important 'only' that music history should certainly not be left *only* to historians unqualified in matters musical – the same, of course, going for histories of art and literature.

If you have theories about *the* enigma, prepare to shed them now (but of course you won't). I was determined, on taking on the editorship of the Journal, to publish no new 'solutions'. However, the material supplied by Deacon Christine Walters is also biographical, and the element of 'solution' included is, as she points out, not entirely new. One never quite knows, with enigma solvers, whether they are prepared to agree that if their solution is correct, Elgar must have been untruthful; at least this contribution tends to confirm his famous 'Auld lang syne won't do'.

Elgar was also surely not lying when of Variation XIII (***) he said that the material in quotation marks is from Mendelssohn's overture *Meeresstille und glückliche Fahrt* (specifically the prosperous voyage: see bar 185) – although this has been questioned by a number of people. Elgar offered to removed the quotes and change one note in the piano version, the only publication, at that stage (prior to the first orchestral performance), that could have been expected to have much circulation.[1] Elgar wrote in similar terms on 4 July 1899 to Herbert Thompson, recently the annotator of *Caractacus*:

> I intended the quotation to represent the "Glückliche Fahrt" not Holländer (or 3 Blind Mice) – but, as the phrase comes in 50 things it might be worthwhile to mention which I meant.[2]

Fifty is likely to be an underestimate – as it would also be with the pattern of rising thirds that opens the theme itself, and its scalar continuation. The mystery of Elgar apparently inserting the quotation before Lady Mary Lygon went to sea is, of course, another matter, indeed a hornet's nest I shall not disturb here. One certainly hopes she did not experience conditions comparable to those suffered by Wagner's Flying Dutchman.

My thanks to all contributors, to Martin Bird for handling the CDs, to Michael Byde for setting the text, and to Dominic Guyver for suggesting the cover, which relates more to material in the News than the Journal (and why not?).

Julian Rushton

1 Letter to Jaeger, 2 May 1899, in Jerrold Northrop Moore (ed.), *Elgar and his Publishers. Letters of a Creative Life* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 122. This is the letter which informs us: 'The pretty Lady is on the sea & far away'. The piano version was not changed, however.

2 Postcard, University of Leeds Brotherton Library Special Collections MS361.

A Matter of Wills

John Drysdale

This article examines four wills which had a direct bearing on Elgar's financial affairs, and seeks to draw some conclusions from them. It is curious that although these wills are seen to be significant in the Elgar literature, no detailed analysis has ever taken place, nor are received assumptions questioned. This is especially so in relation to the consequences of Elgar's marriage on 8 May 1889.

The will of Alice Elgar's mother, who died on 30 May 1887, reveals a great deal. The probate value of her estate was £7,946 (around £783,000 in 2008 pounds).[1] There were a number of important provisions that affected Alice. First, she was left all her mother's personal and household effects, together with a legacy of £200. Second, her mother left £2,500 in trust, with the income going to Alice. There was, however, a considerable sting in the tail. This trust was to remain in place unless Alice got married, in which case the £2,500 went to her brother, Stanley Napier Roberts, absolutely. The implication of this must surely have been that Alice was expected either not to marry, or to marry a suitable man who could support her financially. As this was not so, she made a considerable financial sacrifice in marrying Elgar. Third, there were important provisions to do with Hazeldine House, in that it would be available for Alice's use after her mother's death; Alice had a Power of Appointment over the property, which was in trust, and any income from the property came to her. This meant that in March 1892 she could sell Hazeldine House and enjoy the income from the proceeds. The income, however, had to be 'independent of any husband'. Fourth, her brother was left £300 absolutely. Fifth, the residue of the estate, after various other small legacies, was to go to Alice absolutely. By 1892, therefore, Alice had lost the interest on £2,500; had received the legacy of £200 and any residue of the estate; and was about to receive the income from the trust set up after Hazeldine House had been sold. The overall result was that there was capital from the trust and other sources which totalled around £5,000. On a 3% yield, the annual income would have been around £150.

The next will of consequence was that of the spinster aunt, Emma Raikes, who died in 1892. She left £6,941 (around £661,000 in 2008 pounds). There remains some confusion over this aunt and what she did or did not do in her will. No-one, as far as I am aware, has analysed the will to see what actually happened. Alice was clearly a favourite niece, and the will of 1879 stipulated that she should inherit

1 Bank of England, The Inflation Calculator. All references to 2008 pounds are derived from this calculator.

all of Emma Raikes' personal effects, plus £2,000 absolutely and any residue of the estate. There were various legacies, including £1,000 to Emma's sister Caroline Dighton and £1,000 to Herbert William Raikes. Emma Raikes, however, so disapproved of Alice's marriage to Elgar that a codicil was signed on 15 May 1889, one week after the marriage. The effects of this have been oversimplified, for instance by Percy M. Young: 'One of the aunts was going to leave Alice a substantial sum, but, on hearing the news, she forthwith cast her out of her will altogether.'[2] A more recent biography puts it this way: 'Elgar was marrying above his station, and Alice's aunt snobbishly disinherited her from marrying "trade."'[3]

In fact, Emma Raikes was not quite so dreadful an aunt. The codicil stipulated that the £2,000 should be put in a trust, with the income going to Alice for her lifetime, again for her separate use. On a 3% yield, the annual total would have been around £60. On the other hand, when Alice died, the £2,000 was to go to Caroline Dighton absolutely. As a result, no child of the Elgars could benefit. The codicil also stipulated that any residue from the estate should also go to Caroline Dighton. This was a blow, as there would have been over £1,000 available after all the legacies had been provided for.

At least, however, the first stipulation in the codicil does explain Elgar's outburst to Frank Schuster after Alice's death, and his harking back to the snobbery he endured in 1889 (although there was only one aunt): '– but I am plunged in the midst of ancient hate and prejudice – poor dear A's settlements of her *awful aunts* who wd. allow nothing to descend to any offspring of *mine* –'.[4]

The third will of consequence was that of Alice herself. When she died on 7 April 1920, she left the comparatively small sum of £2,280 (around £76,000 in 2008 pounds). The will was dated 24 June 1890. In it she appointed two trustees for Hazeldine House, William Alves Raikes and Alfred Henry Arnould. After her death, the life interest was to pass to Elgar. By a codicil dated 13 February 1892 – just one month before the sale of Hazeldine House – she changed this arrangement. The trust mechanism was to be revoked on Alice's death and Elgar was to become absolutely entitled to Hazeldine House or to the proceeds of any sale. All her personal effects and any residue of her estate were also to go to Elgar absolutely.

When Severn House was purchased in 1912, Alice went to the trustees to try and break this trust and release the capital there and then. As the freehold purchase went through it has to be assumed that she was successful, although there were some difficult moments with the trustees.[5] The question then arises over the ownership of Severn House: was it registered in Alice's name, in their joint names, or in Elgar's name? It may well have been that Alice paid for the house but that it was registered in Elgar's name. Although Elgar himself had too

2 Percy M. Young, *Alice Elgar, Enigma of a Victorian Lady* (London, 1978), 95-96.

3 J. P. E. Harper-Scott, *Elgar, an Extraordinary Life* (London, 2007), 22.

4 Elgar Birthplace Museum (EBM), Letter (L) 6986, Elgar to Schuster, 17 April 1920.

5 University of Birmingham Library Services, Special Collections Department, *Diaries of Lady Caroline Alice Elgar 1889-1920*, EE 1/2, 17 November 1911: 'A. to see Mr Arnould – Very upset over house business. He dwelt on so many points– …'.

little money to pay for the house, he could thus have ended up as the owner. This might account for the fact that Alice left only £2,280. Severn House was bought in at auction for £6,500 on 8 November 1921, nineteen months after her death.[6] This was worth around £238,000 in 2008 pounds. There is no knowing how much of a mortgage might have been secured on the property when purchased, but as the cost of living had more than doubled over the period and banks were much more cautious in those days it was unlikely to have been more than £2,000.

Elgar, as it turned out, thus had two strokes of luck. Alice had left her estate to him absolutely, so the question of ownership of the property purchased in 1912 was not, in practice, an issue; and the decision to purchase Severn House had left him with an asset which had increased substantially in value due to inflation. For the first time in his life, Elgar actually had some capital, and this came about through a very surprising aspect of Alice's will. When it was signed in June 1890 Alice was already pregnant with Carice, who was born on 14 August. There was, however, no provision in the will for any children, nor in the 1892 codicil. A further codicil dated 13 May 1905 merely appointed William Alves Raikes and Frank Schuster as joint guardians to Carice after the death of both parents.

As for Elgar himself, after the death of Alice and the sale of Severn House he moved to live in a series of rented properties. He also spent £500 to buy the freehold of 2 Waterworks Road, Worcester, for the use of Charles and Lucy Pipe, his brother-in-law and sister.[7] In 1928, he received a legacy of £7,000 from Frank Schuster. After legacy duty of £700, this resulted in a cheque for £6,300 (around £296,000 in 2008 pounds).[8] In 1929 he paid £2,750 for the purchase of Marl Bank in Worcester.[9]

Given the large capital sums he received in the 1920s, it is surprising that Elgar's estate had a net value for probate of only £9,104 (£488,000 in 2008 pounds). Although the gross value of the estate was £13,934, there must have been bills to pay or borrowings to be repaid of some £4,830. One certain reason for this difference was the loan of £1,000 which Shaw had made to Elgar in the early 1930s. Shaw made a claim on the estate and then transferred the £1,000 to Carice as a birthday present.[10] Quite why Shaw made this loan is unknown but it may have had something to do with the £500 which Henry Embleton of Leeds had lent to Elgar in the early 1920s. After considerable dispute as to whether this had become a gift rather than a loan, Elgar had to repay this sum in March 1930.[11] Another possible reason may have been Elgar's propensity to bet on horses: in May 1933, no fewer than nine bookmakers confirmed their arrangements with him

6 Jerrold Northrop Moore, *Edward Elgar, a Creative Life* (Oxford, 1984), 760.

7 EBM L9561, Elgar to Charles Pipe, 14 September 1922.

8 EBM L6833, Corbould Rigby & Co. to Elgar, 27 June 1928. The letter enclosed a cheque for £6,300.

9 EBM L9125, Gallaher, Russell & Co. to Elgar, 29 October 1929.

10 Michael Holroyd, 'Elgar and Shaw' in *Cockaigne*, edited by Kevin D. Mitchell (Rickmansworth, 2004), 202-204.

11 EBM L3194-3200.

which included, for eight of them, the nom-de-plume used in placing the bets.[12]

In summary, there are four especially interesting points to be made about these four wills. First, Alice knowingly gave up a great deal in marrying Elgar, as she lost the income from the trust of £2,500. Second, it is not true that Emma Raikes cut Alice completely out of her will. Third, Alice Elgar left a very small estate which could have indicated that Severn House was bought in Elgar's name. And fourth, Elgar left a net estate (after deducting substantial debts) which was not as large as we might have expected, given the capital sums which he had inherited in the 1920s.

John Drysdale followed the career of Merchant Banker, retiring in 1996. He is a director, Robert Fleming Holdings and Chairman, Transparency International (UK), from 2008. He was Chairman of the Open University Foundation, 2003-2007. His Southampton PhD on the Paris Opéra in the 1820s and 1830s was published as Louis Véron and the Finances of the Académie Royale de Musique (Perspektiven Der Opernforschung, *vol. 9). In 2009 he completed a second doctorate (DPhil.) at Oxford University, his thesis being entitled 'Elgar's Earnings in Context'.*

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Letter and Date	Bookmaker	Nom-de-Plume
EBM 9064, 1 May 1933	David Cope	Marlborough;
EBM 9133, Ibid.	Daniel M. Grant	Elbow;
EBM 9161, Ibid.	A. Heathorn, Ltd.	Elshie;
EBM 9163, 11 May	Hendley & Co.	Siromoris;
EBM 9198, 1 May	J. John	Elhamboy;
EBM 9215, Ibid.	Joe Lee, Ltd.	Elmusic;
EBM 9367, 2 May	Scotland and Co.	N/A;
EBM 9396, 3 May	James Sutters	Elphin;
EBM 9401, 1 May	Joe Thompson	Ellasar.

'I feel that what I saw is really worthless': Elgar and the Chapel Royal part-books

Donald Burrows

Following the death of Walter Parratt, Elgar was appointed Master of the King's Music. The process began with a letter on 28 April 1924, though in the mind of the public he had already been established in the role through his direction of the music at the opening ceremony for the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley five days previously. Most of the functions of the Mastership were ceremonial and concerned practical music-making, but the general brief included some responsibility for the King's Music Library, which George V had deposited on loan at the British Museum in 1911.[1] Another musically significant court appointment followed later in 1924, when William Barclay Squire became 'Honorary Curator of the King's Music Library in the British Museum'. Squire, as the staff member in charge of printed music, had been responsible for the transference of the library and its establishment in the specially-furnished room in the new wing of the museum. He had formally retired from the museum's service in 1920, but continued thereafter to take an interest in the King's Music Library: by 1924 it was recognised that his accumulated knowledge and experience would be essential to the substantial task of sorting, arranging, and cataloguing the collection.

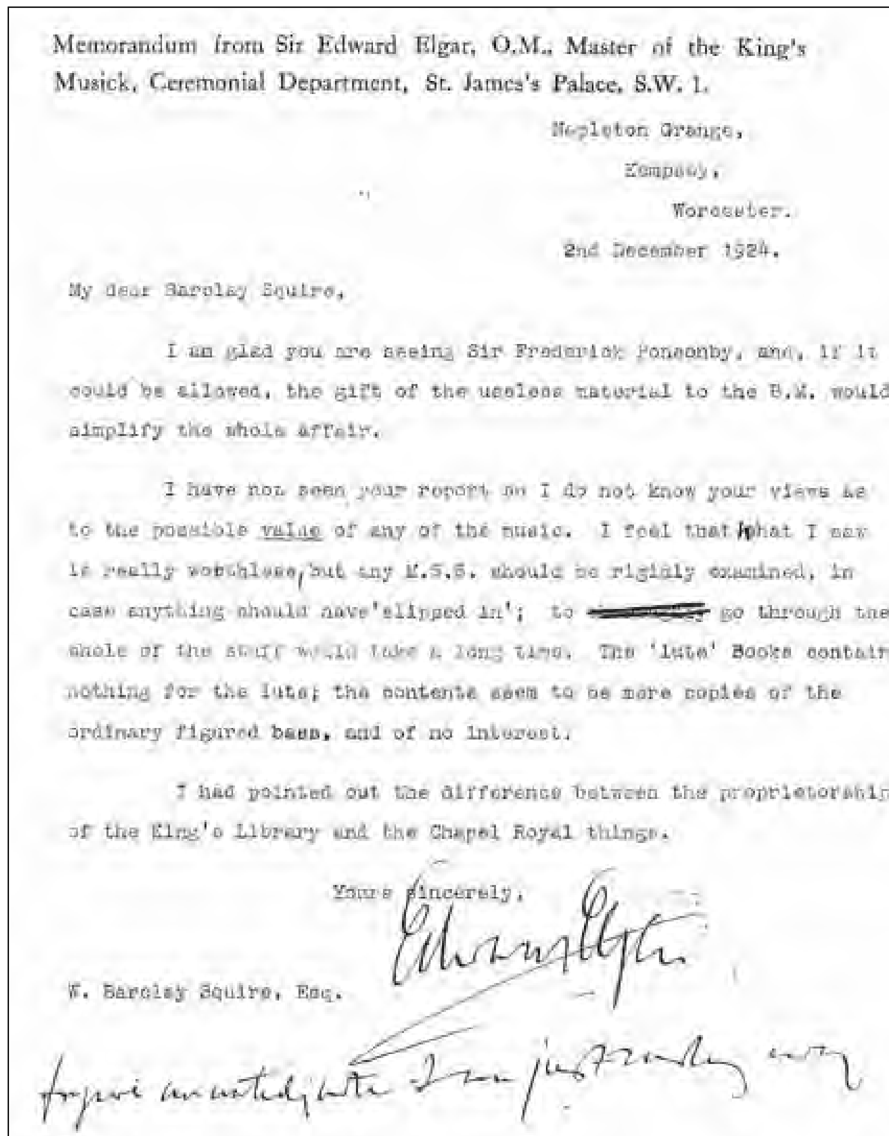
On 18 November 1924 Elgar wrote to Squire expressing pleasure in his appointment and confirming their relative roles, as follows:

> The connection of the Master of the Musick with this library remains as it was in Sir Walter Parratt's time. Questions regarding 'reproductions' are to be referred to me in the way that has become customary; beyond this I have no authority. I take it that you are to continue the general care which you have exercised in the past, in arrangement of the books etc; – matters of repair, binding and the like; this appears to be the interpretation of Sir Frederick Ponsonby's letter to me of October 16th, 1924.

The letter from which this extract is quoted is found in a file of 'Correspondence relating to Royal Music Library 1911–1947', now in the corporate archives of

1 For the history of the King's Music Library, see Donald Burrows, 'The Royal Music Library and its Handel collection', *The Electronic British Library Journal*, Article 2 2009 (http://www.bl.uk/eblj/2009articles/article2.html) PDF format 2.94MB. I am preparing a further article about the history of the Library during the 'deposit' period for publication in 2011.

Elgar's letter of 2 December 1924 to William Barclay Squire. (Reproduced with the permission of the British Library Board.)



Memorandum from Sir Edward Elgar, O.M., Master of the King's Musick, Ceremonial Department, St. James's Palace, S.W. 1.

Napleton Grange,
Kempsey,
Worcester.
2nd December 1924.

My dear Barclay Squire,

I am glad you are seeing Sir Frederick Ponsonby, and, if it could be allowed, the gift of the useless material to the B.M. would simplify the whole affair.

I have not seen your report so I do not know your views as to the possible value of any of the music. I feel that what I saw is really worthless, but any M.S.S. should be rigidly examined, in case anything should have 'slipped in'; to go through the whole of the stuff would take a long time. The 'lute' Books contain nothing for the lute; the contents seem to be mere copies of the ordinary figured bass, and of no interest.

I had pointed out the difference between the proprietorship of the King's Library and the Chapel Royal things.

Yours sincerely,

W. Barclay Squire, Esq.

the British Library. The collection includes 27 letters from Elgar, as listed in the Appendix to this article.[2] Several refer to Ponsonby, and include copies of letters written by him from the Privy Purse Office at Buckingham Palace. All but three of Elgar's own letters are written on the official notepaper for the Master of the Music, though even some of these may be regarded as personal correspondence, or were accompanied by other personal letters.[3] His initial correspondence with Squire, for example, comprised the 'official' letter from which quotation has just been made, but also another letter of the same date in which Elgar explained, rather apologetically, the processes which had delayed the approval and notification of Squire's appointment.

Most of the letters are concerned with responses to requests for the copying, photography or publication of music from the King's Music Library. However, Elgar's more personal letter to Squire on 18 November 1924 concluded with a reference to a more complex and unusual subject:

> As to the music in the Chapels Royal; I am going to look at it in company with the Precentor. Here again I have been asked by two departments to go into the matter, so I had better do so, but I shall of course be guided by your report.

The 'matter' concerned a large collection of manuscript part-books formerly used by the Chapel Royal in their daily services, but which had probably been abandoned for some years. The material comprised mainly choir-books for individual voices, but also part-books for instrumentalists who were appointed to the Chapel – Organists, Lutenists and Violists. The books had probably been kept at or near the Chapel Royal in St James's Palace. It is unclear whether they were 'discovered' in 1924, but it seems more likely that the issue that concerned Elgar was simply one of suitable disposal: the part-books were no longer in current use, and their occupation of space at the Palace was unwelcome. There was initially the question of whether the books should be preserved at all; and if they were judged worth preserving, where should they go?

Since the Chapel Royal was part of the British court establishment, it might have seemed logical for the part-books to be added to the King's Music Library. But there was a problem. The Library was the property of the monarch, a personal music collection initiated by George III; the creation of the part-books, on the other hand, had been financed from within the public court establishment.[4] The part-books were therefore 'Crown property', for which a legitimate claim for deposit could have been made by the Public Record Office, cutting across the logical possibility of concentrating 'royal music' in one specialist collection. Squire had examined the music and presented a report on the part-books to the court. Elgar,

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2 I thank Nicolas Bell (British Library) for making the correspondence file available, and for his comments on a draft of this article.

3 On the two letters from 1932 Elgar crossed through the printed heading, as if to indicate that this was personal correspondence, though the contents were obviously routine matters relating to his official role.

4 Payments for music copying were made from the Lord Chamberlain's department.

as the officer with principal responsibility for musical matters, was then asked to give his opinion.

Elgar's letter to Squire probably arrived in London on the following day, 19 November, and on the same day Lancelot Percival, the Precentor and Sub-Dean of the Chapel Royal, also wrote to Squire, as follows:

> With regard to the Books of Music at the Chapel Royal, I had hoped that the whole matter would have been brought to a head and finished long before this. The delay has been caused because the Lord Chamberlain thought that Sir Edward Elgar, the newly appointed Master of The King's Musick, should be informed and consulted before the final decision is taken. Lord Cromer [the Lord Chamberlain] therefore wrote to Sir Edward Elgar and asked him to get in touch with me. After a short space of time I heard from Sir Edward asking for information with regard to the disposal of what he called obsolete music in the Chapel Royal. I then wrote telling him the whole history of the matter, and suggested that he should come and see what we possessed, and that he should also look at the correspondence which is in the Lord Chamberlain's Office and includes your Report. I also asked him to meet me at the Chapel Royal on any date that he liked to name, but though I wrote that letter on November 3rd, I have had no answer, so that is how the matter stands at present. I wondered whether Sir Edward Elgar, on the receipt of my letter, had handed over the whole matter to you, but you do not say so in your letter.
>
> You will I am sure appreciate my difficulty in answering your last letter and the suggestions contained therein. I am bound to hold things up until I hear from Sir Edward Elgar. Perhaps it would help you if I enclose a copy of my letter to the Master of the King's Musick.

The enclosure, dated 3 November 1924, read as follows:

> Dear Sir Edward Elgar,
>
> Many thanks for your letter of October 30th. I was expecting to hear from you, as I had an interview not very long ago with the Lord Chamberlain.
>
> As you say, I think the whole matter is very simple, but we are all very anxious that you should know exactly what Music we have and what we propose to get rid of, all this of course with the recommendation of Mr Squire who had been appointed by the Authorities to give a Report.
>
> What I suggest is that at some convenient time to yourself, you should meet Mr Roper and myself at the Chapel Royal, when you will have everything ready for your inspection. I presume that you have to come to London pretty frequently. A date that suits Mr Roper and myself very well is Wednesday, November 12th. If this really suits you, any hour up till 5 o'clock will be convenient to us, but we are anxious to hit off a day when you will be in London. If November 12th, therefore, is not convenient to you, would you let us have some days and times when you would be free and in London.
>
> I am not sure whether you have seen all the correspondence which the Lord Chamberlain has in his office. In that correspondence is of course the report made by Mr Barclay Squire, the confirmation by the Lord Chamberlain's Department of Mr Squire's recommendations with regard to the books in question, and now a further recommendation by myself that Westminster Abbey should be allowed to have anything that they want before any of the books are destroyed.

The relevant section of Squire's report, dated 19 March 1924 (and thus before Elgar's appointment), was as follows:

> There are about 60 volumes of Old MS part-books of Anthems and Services. These are of small value but should be preserved as they may contain readings copied from earlier versions. Among them are a few lute books, which seem from a cursory examination to be only duplicate Basso continuo parts.
>
> I would suggest that these … should be given to the British Museum. My idea formerly was that they should be added to the Royal Musical Library which is in [*sic*] permanent loan from the King at the Museum. But if this were done the books would have to pass through the keeping of the Master of the Musick, and moreover the Royal Music Room at the Museum has very little spare space, so it would be much better if the volumes were given to the Museum.[5]

It is not clear exactly when Elgar went to see the part-books at the Chapel Royal: it must have been before 2 December, and probably before 27 November, when he wrote to Squire from Napleton Grange:

> I fear the old choir-books from the Chapel Royal are very poor things and hardly worth house-room, but I suppose they must go to you. Can they be clearly denoted as Crown property?

With this letter Elgar enclosed a copy of one that he had received from Ponsonby, dated 24 November, which outlined the situation in these terms:

> With regard to the ancient music that has been found at St. James's Palace, I am clearly of opinion that anything of value should be sent to the King's Musical Library at the British Museum. It must, however, be remembered that the King's Musical Library is His Majesty's personal property and therefore it would be unwise to add property which belongs to the Crown. Will you consult Mr Barclay Squire and see whether it would not be possible to keep any music which emanates from the Crown in a separate category from the remainder of the music. It is not a matter of great importance, but to guard against the accusation that we are disposing of Crown property, it might be well for the Honorary Curator of the King's Musical Library to make a note that this old music belongs to the Crown.

In addition to the question of the future of the Chapel Royal part-books, the correspondence is concerned with the fate of various music that had been presented to the King, but was not included with the Music Library deposit. It is probable, however, that Elgar's letter of 2 December 1924, written from Kempsey, refers exclusively to the Chapel Royal part-books:[6]

5 A copy of Squire's report survives in the Royal Archives, Windsor Castle, RA LC/LCO/BP/1661: it is quoted here with the permission of Her Majesty The Queen. I thank Pamela Clark, Registrar of the Archives, for tracing this document.

6 At the bottom of the letter Elgar in MS: 'forgive the untidy note I am just rushing away'. The typed letter contains various (though not numerous) corrections, and the annotation

I am glad you are seeing Sir Frederick Ponsonby, and, if it could be allowed, the gift of the useless material to the B.M. would simplify the whole affair.

I have not seen your report so I do not know your views about the possible *value* of any of the music. I feel that what I saw is really worthless, but any M.S.S. should be rigidly examined, in case anything should have 'slipped in'; to [thoroughly *deleted*] go through the whole of the stuff would take a long time. The 'lute' Books contain nothing for the lute; the contents seem to be mere copies of the ordinary figured bass, and of no interest.

I had pointed out the difference between the proprietorship of the King's Library and the Chapel Royal things.

Squire seems to have ensured that the 'worthless' part-books found a safe home at the British Museum, though the first definite reference to this comes in a letter of 3 September 1926, nearly two years later, from Ponsonby to Squire:

As you have found room for the music from the Chapel Royal, I see no possible objection to this music being added to the Royal Collection. I have therefore written to the Lord Chamberlain and asked him to give directions to Mr Percival to have the music sent to you at the British Museum.

Perhaps you might make a note of the fact that it is Crown property as opposed to the King's personal property, but as none of it is to be sold, this point is really quite unimportant.

The last mention of Elgar's involvement occurs in a memorandum four days later, from the Lord Chamberlain to Ponsonby, which deals with other Chapel Royal material that remained after the part-books had been transferred:

Your memorandum of the 3rd September 1926.

I think that the question of the old music in the Chapel Royal has now been disposed of satisfactorily.

The whole matter has been gone into carefully by Mr Percical [*sic*] and Sir Edward Elgar in June 1925 and settled on the following lines :-

The Cheque Books were re-bound and subsequently placed in the Chapel Royal safe.

Old books not required at the British Museum (The King's Music Library) and which were considered by Sir Edward Elgar to be of no value were destroyed.

Other volumes (duplicates) that were not required either by the Chapel Royal or the British Museum were accepted with thanks by Westminster Abbey, the authorities of which asked to have them.

I understood that Sir Edward Elgar was in consultation with Mr Barclay Squire throughout these proceedings, so that he ought to know how matters stand. If you like to send me his last letter, I will deal with the question, but I feel it is really settled and all that Mr Barclay Squire wants to know is that he has room in the Royal Collection

suggests that Elgar may have typed at least some of his own correspondence himself. See illustration.

of Music loaned to the British Museum, if we feel disposed to make use of it.

That should have been the end of the story for the part-books, but about a month later Squire received a memorandum from Frederick Kenyon, the Director of the British Museum, as follows:[7]

On my return from my holiday, I have found your letter about the Chapel Royal music. I don't think that it should be assumed that the Trustees would wish to accept this on loan, without fuller information as to its value. They have not too much space available, and will not want to be regarded as a dumping-ground for collections which it is desired to clear out of the Palace.

There is a further point for consideration; if the collection is of MS. music, its proper place (if accepted) would be in the Department of MSS., rather than occupying space in the Printed Book Dept.

If the Lord Chamberlain decides to offer the collection on loan to the Trustees, you had better let me have a report which I can submit to them.

Fortunately Squire was able to persuade Kenyon that the part-books should be accepted as a complement to the King's Music Library, though that also meant securing the promise from the Lord Chamberlain, as recorded in a letter from Lord Cromer to Squire on 18 October:

I was very glad to have an opportunity of talking to you last week, and I now have to thank you for your letter of the 15th inst. together with extracts from Sir Frederick Ponsonby's Memoranda of 1924-25 & 26, which clearly establish the fact that the Music in the Chapel Royal cannot be considered as The King's private property and must be held to be Crown Property.

As soon as I receive from you or Mr Percival a detailed list of the Music MSS. which it is proposed to offer to the British Museum I will forward this to Sir Frederick Kenyon for consideration by the Trustees of the offer made by His Majesty The King.

The Minutes of the Standing Committee of the British Museum on 1 November 1926 provide the conclusion:

<u>Loan of music by H.M. the King</u>. – On a letter from the Lord Chamberlain, 25th October, submitted by the Director, the Trustees ordered their dutiful thanks to be returned to H. M. the King for the permanent loan of about 95 volumes of manuscript music, principally 18th century, formerly used by the choir of the Chapel Royal. They directed the loan to be housed with, but (being Crown property) distinct from, the King's Music Library.

The distinction of ownership may explain why there was no reference to the part-books in the catalogue of the miscellaneous manuscripts in the King's Music Library published in 1929.[8] Even though the status of the part-books was apparently

7 The memorandum is undated, but a subsequent one from Kenyon to Squire, dated 5 October, must have followed soon after Squire's response.

8 *Catalogue of the King's Music Library: Part II. The Miscellaneous Manuscripts* (London,

secure, the Museum's first published reference to them did not occur until Pamela J. Willetts's *Handlist of Music Manuscripts acquired 1908-67* (1970), and the first specialist exposition of their musical content was in an article by H. Watkins Shaw in 1959.[9] The formal situation had been resolved in 1958, when the part-books were added to the Royal Music Library by the Queen's command. At some stage a card catalogue of the musical items in the part-books was prepared, but this was located in the Music Room and was only available to readers who asked for it – that is, those who knew it was there.[10] My recollection of my first encounter with the part-books in the 1970s is that the Museum staff still had some sensitivity about the status of the collection, which was kept in a kind of corridor-cupboard between the stacks.[11] (There was not enough space for storage with the main Royal Music Library room.) There is still no published catalogue of the contents of the part-books.

Today, when musicians are keenly aware of the value of original performing materials, Elgar's apparent dismissal of the part-books seems rather shocking. It may partly have been that he was overwhelmed by the size and condition of the collection. Without knowledge of the textual history of particular pieces, it is difficult to assess the value of music in such bulk, and in single parts. The volumes would have been dusty from neglect and probably also from the deposit of smoke from coal fires at St James's Palace; readers in the 1970s still found manuscripts with dirty boards, wrapped in brown paper, and arranged their working timetables with regular visits to the wash-room.[12]

More likely, though, the key to Elgar's attitude lies in Lancelot Percival's report that he referred to the music as 'obsolete', for the repertory of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was then at its most unfashionable. It is difficult to know whether Elgar realised that the earliest layers of the part-books date from Purcell's time, and whether this knowledge would have made any difference. In the 1920s few musicians had an interest in 'authentic' performance, either as a general topic or as applied to the repertory that was to be found in the part-books. Elgar's comment that 'the "lute" Books contain nothing for the lute', but were 'mere copies of the ordinary figured bass' seems to miss the point: for us, the value of original performing parts is that they tell us what the performers actually did.[13] Other part-books provide evidence about how music was distributed between singers, how the organ was used to accompany services and anthems, and about the length of time that the 'Violist' survived as an accompanist, though latterly playing the cello rather than the gamba. But for Elgar in the 1920s this was old-fashioned stuff, irrelevant to his contemporary world of music-making. It is fortunate for us that Squire, although equally a man of his time, was more cautious, and that Elgar accepted his judgment.

Donald Burrows is Professor of Music at the Open University. He is one of our foremost authorities on the life and music of Handel, and has published Handel *in the Master Musicians series, a Cambridge Music Handbook on Messiah, Handel and the English Chapel Royal, and editions of music. He has a long-standing interest in Elgar. With Edition Peters, he has published three of Elgar's works for violin and piano; he has also conducted performances of Symphonies No. 1 and No. 2, and* The Dream of Gerontius.

1929). Squire completed only Part I of the catalogue (*The Handel Manuscripts*) before his death in January 1927, and Hilda Andrews was responsible for Part II. Part III, covering printed music and musical literature, was begun by Squire, completed by William C. Smith, and published in 1929.

9 H. Watkins Shaw, 'A contemporary source of English music for the Purcellian period', *Acta Musicologica*, 1959 fasc. 1, pp. 38-44.

10 There is still no published catalogue of the part-books as a collection, but the pre-1800 items are included in the Repertoire internationale de sources musicales (RISM), A/II, and records for complete sets of part-books where some originated before 1800 will shortly be added to RISM.

11 The 95 volumes deposited on loan in 1926 were later supplemented by other deposits (1968 and 1972) of a further nine MS and 24 printed volumes from the Chapel Royal, and another MS from a private owner in 1973. See Margaret Laurie, 'The Chapel Royal Part-books' in Oliver Neighbour (ed.), *Music and Bibliography: Essays in Honour of Alec Hyatt King* (New York and London, 1980), 28-50. I thank Oliver Neighbour for additional information on the modern history of the part-books: he describes their former location in the Museum as 'a cubby-hole off the staircase between two of the Supplementary Rooms'.

12 The Museum probably did not accept responsibility for the maintenance and conservation of these volumes: Kenyon's memorandum to Squire of 5 October 1926 stated that 'As the collection is Crown property, it is primarily the duty of the Crown to take care of it'.

13 In fact, the lute books contain at least one obbligato movement for the instrument, from an anthem by Bernard Gates, written in the composer's autograph. It is possible that the volume concerned (now R.M. 27.a.14) was not among those initially seen by Squire and Elgar.

ELGAR LETTERS IN 'CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO THE ROYAL MUSIC LIBRARY 1911-1947' (British Library)

Date	Paper	+Address	MS/typed	Addressee	Subject and comments
8/11/1924	MM1	NG(MS)	typed	W. Barclay Squire	Pleasure in Squire's appointment as Hon. Curator, and confirming their relative roles over the King's Music Library
8/11/1924	NG	NG(typed)	typed	W. Barclay Squire	Explaining delay in Squire's appointment. Planning to inspect the Chapel Royal music.
24/11/1924	Br	MS		W. Barclay Squire	Had seen Sir Frederick Ponsonby: things of a private nature in the King's Music Library may be placed on reserve; EE to see them and authorise these to be sent to Buckingham Palace.
27/11/1924	MM1	NG(typed)	typed	W. Barclay Squire	Enclosing 2 letters from Ponsonby. EE to see the 'private things' in the King's Music Library. Chapel Royal music.
2/12/1924	MM1	NG(typed)	typed	W. Barclay Squire	Value and ownership of Chapel Royal music.
30/1/1925	MM1	NG(typed)	typed	W. Barclay Squire	Had sent telegram this morning. [Also copy of telegram, Kempsey 9.39 a.m.] No objection to reproduction of two pages of Semele [Handel autograph] by Bernhard [Boris] Ord [for Cambridge concert].
19/3/1925	MM1	NG(typed)	typed	W. Barclay Squire	Permission for Squire to reproduce music examples in his article about MS of Colonna opera in the Royal Library
23/6/1925	MM1	NG(typed)	typed	W. Barclay Squire	Thanks for note about Carnegie Trust, and approval for addition of copy of Tallis's 40-part song to Library
10/7/1925	MM1	NG(typed)	typed	W. Barclay Squire	To be in town shortly; must see (one of) the authorities about several things; the question about music [presented to the King] 'shall be gone into'. 'I am all right again'.
2/12/1925	MM1	NG(typed)	typed	W. Barclay Squire	Had heard from Lord Chamberlain about presented music; WBS's letter enclosed, with copy of reply from Lord Cromer; WBS to communicate with the Private Secretary's Department.
8/12/1925	MM1	NG(typed)	typed	W. Barclay Squire	Asking Squire to communicate with Private Secretary's Department at Buckingham Palace and to examine presented music; if there is anything of outstanding value, EE would examine it if requested.
4/3/1927	NG		typed	Frederic Kenyon	Enclosing letter from Prof. Bantock, Birmingham [recommending Hilda Andrews to continue catalogue of Library following Squire's death]
10/3/1927	MM2	NG(typed)	typed	Frederic Kenyon	Enclosing letter from Sir Richard Terry [recommending Andrews]
19/9/1927	MM2	NG(typed)	typed	W. A. Marsden	No objection to Prof C. Sanford Terry's proposal [to reproduce music examples for his book on J. C. Bach]
14/3/1928	MM3	BM(stamp)	MS	Farquharson Sharp	Had left Kempsey; had sent telegram to Mr Levien approving reproduction of pages; 'if there is any difficulty as to the care of the score after the concert I have no doubt could be responsible for it in my official capacity and return it to the B. M.'. [This refers to the loan of Handel's autograph score of *Solomon* for display at a Royal Philharmonic Society concert conducted by Beecham, 22 March 1928: see Lbl

					RPS MS 292, f.217. J. J. M. Levien was secretary to the Society.]
21/5/1928	MM3	TH(stamp)	typed	Farquharson Sharp	Had seen Ponsonby: permission [requested from Vienna National Library (Hoboken), to have copies of pages from RM 20.e.7, Handel's *Esther*] will be given when specific requests are made. Thank you for telling me of Solomon's safe return to the Temple'.
30/5/1928	MM3	TH(stamp)	typed	Farquharson Sharp	Enclosing Ponsonby's response about the large quantity of copies requested from Vienna.
27/8/1929	MM3	TH(stamp)	typed	Farquharson Sharp	Sorry Farquharson's time at the B. M. is coming to an end so soon; no difficulty about future guardianship of the King's Library; Miss Andrews has completed the catalogue well.
11/11/1929	MM3	TH(stamp)	typed	Frederic Kenyon	Headed 'The King's Music Library'. Had received letter from Ponsonby: the King approves your suggestion to charge fees for all music published out of the King's Library; 'it seemed to me necessary to be prepared' because of possible publicity arising from publication of the catalogue.
11/11/1929	MM3	TH(stamp)	typed	Farquharson Sharp	Did not see you at the Museum on Friday. Enclosing a page from 'Music & Youth': form of copyright acknowledgment incorrect. 'P.S. In future in certain cases I shall be allowed to suggest the payment of a small sum for musical charities'.
26/6/1930	MM3	MB(stamp)	MS	W. A. Marsden	Date in red stamp-impression; ink annotation 'kindly note the new address'. Enquiry from Rosa Spier, harp teacher at The Hague, for photo of Handel concerto: is publication to be involved?
27/9/1930	MM3	MB(stamp)	MS	W. A. Marsden	Approval for Rev. E. H. Fellowes [to use Cosyn MS as source for Weelkes Short Service], but 'official' permit to be issued by you.
30/9/1930	MM3	Worcester(MS)	MS	W. A. Marsden	Only the alto part is to be transcribed by Fellowes: 'copyright reserved' is unnecessary and might lead to confusion.
16/9/1932	MM4	MB(typed)	typed	H. Thomas	Thanks for letter referring to application from Coopersmith: no objection to photostats, but further permission needed for reproduction and publication
3/12/1932	MM4	Worcester(MS)	typed	W. A. Marsden	[Application from H. L. Mann for photos of pieces in Forster Virginal Book]: permission given for reproduction, but not for publication
20/5/1933	MM4	Worcester(MS)	MS	W. A. Marsden	No objection to Edition Peters having copies [for comparison, not reproduction, in preparation of Handel edition].
9/12/1933	MM5	MB(MS)	typed	H. Thomas	Application from Dr Alfred Einstein [for copy of J. C. Bach Overtures Op. 18 from R.M. 17.b.2]: ask for what purpose copy is to be used. P.S. [MS] 'Thank you I am better but not doing anything yet in the way of work.'

Abbreviations for notepaper and addresses

MM1 Memorandum from Sir Edward Elgar, O.M., Master of the King's / Musick, Ceremonial Department, St. James's Palace, S.W.1.

MM2 Memorandum from Sir Edward Elgar, O.M., Master of the King's / Musick, Lord Chamberlain's Office, St. James's Palace, S.W.1

MM3 From Sir Edward Elgar, O.M., K.C.V.O., Master of the King's / Musick; Lord Chamberlain's Office, St James's Palace, London, S.W.1

MM4 From Sir Edward Elgar, Bt., O.M., K.C.V.O., / Master of the King's Musick; Lord Chamberlain's Office, / St James's Palace, London, S.W.1

MM5 From Sir Edward Elgar, Bart., O.M., G.C.V.O., / Master of the King's Musick; Lord Chamberlain's Office, / St James's Palace, London, S.W.1

NG Napleton Grange, Kempsey, Worcester.

Br Brooks's, St. James's Street, SW1

BM Battenhall Manor, Worcester

TH Tiddington House, Stratford upon Avon

MB Marl Bank, Rainbow Hill, Worcester

'Stamp' = address as red stamp-impression

Some memories of Elgar

Frank Walters[1]

About 1895 Elgar and the Walters family developed a close friendship which was to stretch over the next forty years. By the time I arrived on the scene some twenty years later, the relationship was very close. Elgar had lost his brother Frank a short time previously, and he asked that I be named after him – Francis, called Frank. From a babe in arms, he was a marvellous 'uncle' to me; the fact that he was a famous composer meant nothing.

A few months before I was four, he and Lady Elgar had me at their home in Hampstead. These are my only memories, dim as they are, of Lady Elgar, who died the following year. During the previous year, he had written what was to prove his last major work, the Cello Concerto, and while I was with them at Hampstead it received its first performance. At that early age I had no idea what was going on, but I well remember the following day how I sensed his great disappointment and how upset he was, for it was one of the few days he did not take me for a walk on Hampstead Heath.

This was the only major [orchestral] work not composed within sight of his beloved Malvern Hills. Most of it was written at a secluded cottage not far from here, at Fittleworth in Sussex. During the First World War years he became, we are told, very fatalistic while still possessing a great faith – just a continuation of the enigma of his personality which went right through life with him; this concerto reflects that state of mind in the haunting melancholy of its thought. With the background of the war years in mind, it is almost as if he wrote this work for the deep disillusionment of the returning men.[2]

Aunt Alice – Lady Elgar – died in 1920, and Uncle Ted was completely shattered. It was as if his power house, his driving force, had completely deserted him. He returned to be among his friends at Malvern and Worcester and never composed another major work, and only his friends persuaded him to compose lesser works.

He spent a lot of time taking me for walks and teaching me to fly kites. (Perhaps this did him good?) But at times his quiet humour would prevail. (Story of Carice

1 Typescript notes prepared by the late Frank Walters for a talk given in the 1960s, probably for the Southern Orchestral Concert Society, and offered to the Journal by his daughter Deacon Christine Walters. See the biographical notes below.

2 At this point was played the third movement of the Cello Concerto, with Jacqueline du Pré and the London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Sir John Barbirolli.

and the song.) He still took a keen interest in local music and often took rehearsals of the Malvern Orchestral Society. (Early memories of this.)[3]

Refer to Three Choirs Festival and schooldays in atmosphere of music, with such people as Troyte Griffith, Isabel Fitton, Winifred Norbury, Ivor Atkins, Herbert Brewer, Granville Bantock, W.H. (Billy) Reed, Marie Hall, Ernest Newman, Albert Sammons, Walford Davies, and young Adrian Boult, and a host of other artists.[4]

The first realisation to me of his greatness came in 1924, when I was nine and he proudly put me on his knee and told me a secret – he was to be appointed Master of the King's Musick', and he went on to explain to me the duties of this office.[5]

Memories of walking on the Malvern Hills with Elgar, and he 'trying out' on me – then about eleven – a tune, by humming a whistling it. This became a year or two later No. 2 of the *Nursery Suite*, dedicated to the two princesses Elizabeth and Margaret Rose.[6] (Conversation re cinema organist. Depression came, etc.)

Visit to London with E.E. and my father for recording of Violin Concerto by the young Yehudi Menuhin in 1932.[7] In 1933 I left home, but returned later in the year to see Uncle Ted for the last time. Elgar died in February 1934, aged 77.

Elgar was an upright, kindly, and generous man. In his own circle he was greatly loved. Outside it he often presented an aspect that deceived people as to his real nature – including many who have since written biographies of him. Though he was gratified by his success, he had no taste for the parade that came of it. Since his momentary acquaintances were largely formed during the press of public work and therefore at a time when his nerves were on edge, he was widely reputed among those who knew him but little to be lacking in geniality, even in courtesy. He was ruthlessly intolerant of toadyism, and especially apt to be testy with people who insisted on talking shop. All this awkwardness of manner was a protective armour. Beneath it was a nature ready to glow and expand in its own cherished surroundings and chosen intimacies – as one small boy could well testify.

Elgar never took to city life. He was passionately fond of his Worcestershire, his garden, his Malvern Hills, his dogs, and his library. No single hobby occupied him for life; rather was he a hobbyist, taking up one occupation after another out of sheer curiosity; kite-flying, chemistry, puzzles of all kinds, poker-work, and carpentry. He was a cyclist, fisherman, and country walker. He could talk freely on rural topics and taught me much of country lore. In fact, he was ready to talk freely

3 The brackets mark material which – unfortunately for us – must have been delivered extempore! If any reader can tell us what may be the 'story of Carice and the song', we would be glad to hear it [ed.].

4 Two songs from *Sea Pictures* ('In Haven' and 'Where Corals Lie') were played, with Janet Baker and the LSO, conducted by Barbirolli.

5 Third movement of the Second Symphony. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult.

6 'The Serious Doll' from the *Nursery Suite*. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Laurence Collingwood.

7 Part of the second movement (Andante) from the Violin Concerto, played by Menuhin and the LSO, conducted by the composer.

on any subject whatever, except music.

Whether he was a happy man it is difficult to know. To be the most esteemed musician of his time must have brought some elation to his inner being; and the felicity of his home life must have been reflected in his daily thoughts. Yet he was prey to a perverse and ever-recurring notion that the hand of the world was against him. Was this, I wonder, genuine? Or did his lifelong habit of humorous pretence set up a hardened surface? I very much doubt whether Elgar himself could have given an answer.

Home later in year. (Story of Alfred Cortot.)[8]

Frank Walters (1915–77) was the son of George Walters (1870–1942), a Malvern resident not prominent in biographical studies of Elgar, no doubt because he was not a musician. On first acquaintance with Elgar, he was Market Superintendant in Evesham; then a collector of rates and taxes for the Worcester area. Their common ground was involvement in the Three Choirs Festival. Frank Walters trained for a time at the Birmingham School of Music, and is listed in the International Who's Who in Music *as a pupil of Ivor Atkins. He enlisted in the armed forces but was injured by bombing. He was subsequently employed to organize classes for the Forces in the Portsmouth area. His work was acknowledged in a letter from Sir Henry Wood, concerning the Cosham and Hilsea District Services Club, on 13 June 1944, some two months before the conductor's death. After the war Frank Walters worked in the administration of Birmingham hospitals before moving to Hampshire, where he became involved in music administration, notably of the Petersfield Orchestra and the Southern Orchestral Society, of which he was a Vice-Chairman at the time of his death.*

In 1975 Frank Walters was one of five British Members awarded a Medallion by British Advisory Council of The International Who's Who in Music *for 'Outstanding Services to Music'.*[9] *The citation mentions him 'as a small boy … a source of great joy and companionship to the nation's greatest composer, Sir Edward Elgar'.*

Further to the above, Frank Walters's daughter Deacon Christine Walters writes:

As readers of the Elgar Society Journal well know, much has been written about the 'secret' of the 'Enigma' Variations, and it has always been said that Elgar did not leave the 'answer' of the Enigma with anyone. But nearly 35 years ago, I discovered that this was not so – Elgar had orally left the secret with my grandfather, George Walters, who passed it on to my father, who passed it on to me not long before he died in 1977. I was told it should remain secret; however, I have no heir to pass it on

8 Four of the *Variations on an Original Theme*. LSO, conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent [*italics*: Frank Walters's MS notes]. Theme [*then break off*]; VI Ysobel [*amateur viola player*], VII Troyte [ref. piano attempts]; VIII Winifred Norbury [W.N.] [*trilling oboe notes = W.N.'s laughter*]; IX Nimrod [*A.J. Jaeger*].

9 The panel included among others the conductors Sir Adrian Boult and Sir Charles Groves, the singers Isobel Baillie and Norma Procter, and Yehudi Menuhin.

to. I have spoken about this with a local historian and he firmly believes that from an historical point of view, the secret should not 'die' with me. But I have no written proof. The only provenance I have is my father and grandfather.

The essence of the secret is very typical of Elgar's impish sense of humour, teasing, setting puzzles, keeping people 'hanging by a string' – so that many have worked at complex answers to the puzzle. The answer is in fact much simpler and through the years many have guessed correctly. It may be that to let out the secret now will spoil people's pleasure of pursuing their own theories! On the other hand, many may not believe me. I am sure that Edward Elgar is still 'laughing in heaven' and delighted at the trouble he has caused!

The music Elgar said 'went with' the Enigma theme is *Rule, Britannia*. My father felt particularly that the 'Rule, Britannia' and 'Never, never' rhythms were strong [links to the theme], and he concurred with the Dutch musicologist, Theodore van Houten, who published his 'solution' in 1976.[10]

After a career in Floristry, Christine Walters became a member of the Wesley Deaconess Order of the Methodist Church in 1973. After church appointments in Wrexham, Bolton, and Surbiton, she served as Warden of the newly formed Methodist Diaconal Order (1989–98), and was Vice-President of the Methodist Conference (1994–5). Now retired, Christine lives in Emsworth, Hampshire and is a member of the Southern Branch of the Elgar Society.

The editor adds:

As noted in a recent editorial (this Journal, 16/3, November 2009), Elgar did not himself necessarily 'say' that a tune 'went with' the theme; and his sense of mischief, or simple indifference (particularly as he could not foresee the outcome), may have prevented him publishing anything in his own words beyond what appears in letters to Jaeger and the much later notes to the piano rolls.[11] It is of course possible that Barry in the original programme note and Edwards in his report quoted Elgar exactly. In that case he seems to have contradicted himself, since one refers to a theme going over the whole set, and the other to a tune 'going with' the theme (which could imply a counterpoint or simply a close similarity, as with 'Rule, Britannia' and, indeed, the slow movement of Mozart's 'Prague' Symphony, so long as they are played in the minor: changing from major to minor is a standard process of variations and improvisation).[12]

10 Theodore van Houten, '"You of All People": Elgar's *Enigma*', *The Music Review* 37 (1976), 130–42.

11 On the piano rolls, see Mike Smith, 'Friends Revisited: an edition of Elgar Birthplace EB722', this Journal, 16/2 (July 2008), 5–22. Another alleged 'enigma', the music in quotation marks, was definitely intended as an allusion to Mendelssohn, as Elgar wrote both to Jaeger and to Herbert Thompson in 1899 (see editorial).

12 See Jerrold Northrop Moore, 'The Enigma Solution', *Sunday Telegraph*, 3 November 1991.

Possibly Barry somewhat ornamented Elgar's words according to his own understanding. Edwards's formulation comes nearer to the 'secret' as given to George Walters. The notes and rhythm of part of the refrain of Arne's 'Rule, Britannia' – 'Never, never, never' with its two (actually four) shorts followed by two longs – could have evolved into the opening of Elgar's theme by improvisation (recall that the first of his recorded improvisations sets off from music by Rossini).

If Elgar indeed hit on the theme by improvising, then he may have started from some such familiar material, and the words of Arne's song resonate somewhat with the exuberant finale to the recently premiered *Caractacus*. Nevertheless an improvisation on Mozart's *Prague* symphony, which Elgar had recently heard in Leeds, could have produced the same result.[13]

All this says nothing about dark sayings. But as Theodore van Houten astutely observed, the condition that Dora Penny 'of all people' should have noticed the resemblance is met particularly well by 'Rule, Britannia'; no doubt several members of the Elgar Society are old enough to remember the pre-decimal penny on which Britannia was represented looking out to sea.

13 The 'Prague' Symphony was played on 7 October, and Herbert Thompson in his diary noted the timing: '(12.10.4½ = 26)'. He dined with the Elgars that evening (Diaries of Herbert Thompson, Leeds University Brotherton Library, Special Collections).

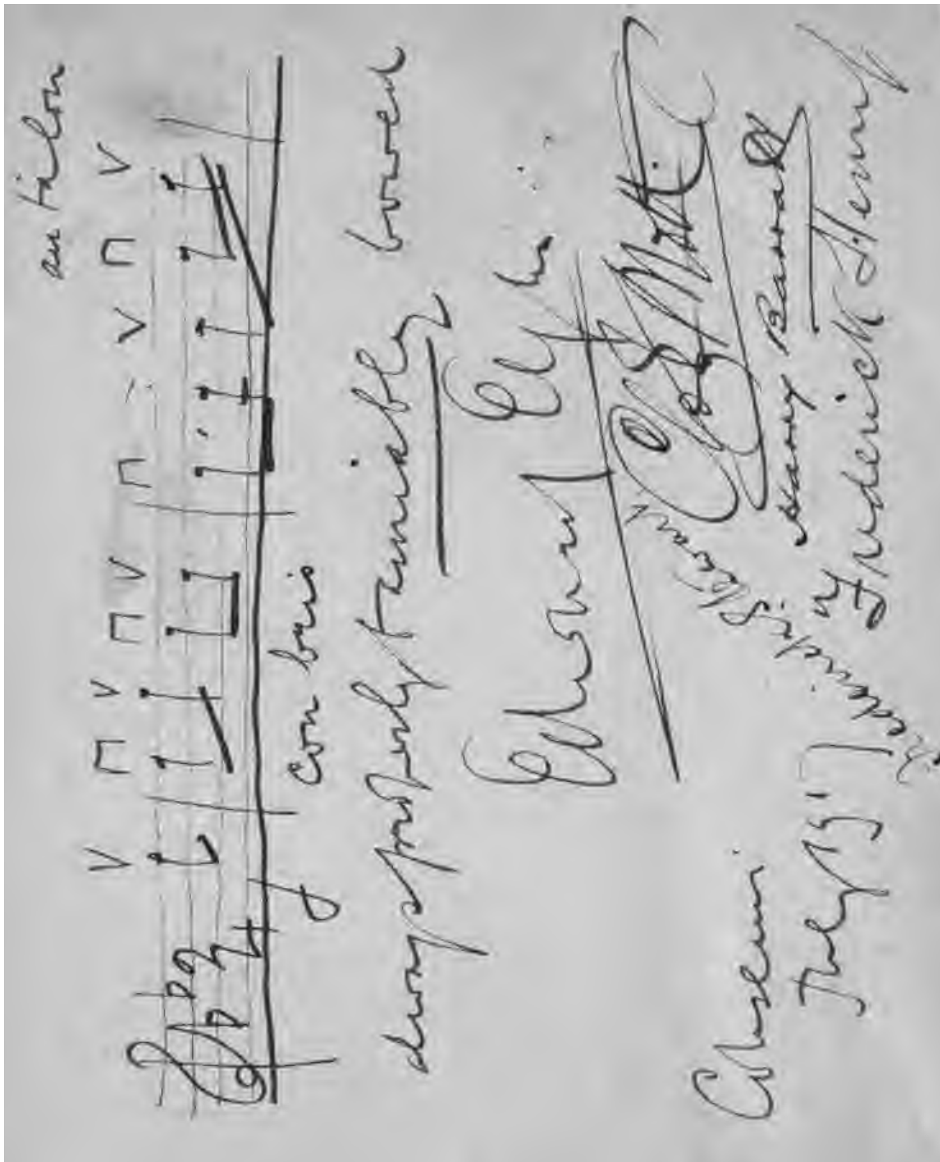

Fig. 1 Album leaf with signatures (see note 7 below). Reproduced by courtesy of Graham Parlett.

All at Sea: Elgar, Kipling and The Fringes of the Fleet[1]

Andrew Neill

Five ships, Unity, Claribel, Assyrian, Stormcock, and Golden Gain: all converted trawlers, and all forgotten except by Elgarians and those who read the lesser-known poems of Rudyard Kipling. These vessels have achieved a modest level of immortality, ensured for future generations by the release of the important new recording by SOMM (reviewed below). It is likely that all five vessels existed although, probably for security reasons, Kipling altered their implied location and made it difficult to identify their origins.[2] The rhythm of those names (in Kipling's words and Elgar's music) stays in the memory and provides a starting-point to look again at their brief moment in the sun.

In late November 1917 the poet withdrew his assent for the continued performance of the songs composed by Elgar in the spring of 1917 to poems Kipling had written two years earlier. There is a general consensus that the death of John Kipling at the Battle of Loos was the prime cause behind Kipling's decision, but although this remains the most likely explanation it is difficult to accept that it tells the whole story. It is a tribute to Kipling's strength of character that not only did he complete the six commissioned articles but also the prefatory poems under the shadow of the news concerning his son. Kipling loved the Navy, and enthusiastically embraced the idea of writing about those 'on the fringes' of the service. Unfortunately his antipathy to Elgar's songs consigned the music (and his poetry) to an obscurity from which this new recording rescues them. We can only resort to speculation about why Kipling withdrew his support; but it is worth examining the background to the composition of the songs, and to try and throw some light on the complex reasons behind Kipling's hostility.

Over the years Kipling's poems from his 1915 publication *The Fringes of the*

1 Some of the following is covered in my 'Elgar's War', in Lewis Foreman (Ed.), *Oh my Horses!* (Rickmansworth: Elgar Editions, 2001, 3–69). I am grateful to the editor of The *Kipling Journal* for allowing me to use excerpts from material I recently contributed. Although readers may learn most of what they need to know about this episode from Jerrold Northrop Moore's *Edward Elgar, a Creative Life* (1984), it is nevertheless interesting to consider what we can establish from subsequent research and more recent biographies of Kipling.

2 Gerald Toghill, *Royal Navy Trawlers – Requisitioned Vessels* (Maritime Books, 2004) identifies Assyrian, Claribelle (sic), and Stormcock.

Fleet (later also published in *Sea Warfare*) and Elgar's music have come to be seen as a significant contribution to the music of the war, particularly as the songs became popular at the time, and the contemporary recording remained in HMV's catalogue for many years after the war ended. Kipling's war began long before 1914 when he warned of Germany's military and imperial ambitions. These, he felt, could be thwarted by a powerful Royal Navy; and he used his considerable abilities as a speaker, writer, and polemicist to warn against complacency. He came to befriend Admiral Lord Charles Beresford, who led an unscrupulous and personal campaign against the reforms of Admiral 'Jackie' Fisher (later Admiral of the Fleet and First Sea Lord). Elgar had also become a friend of Beresford, having accepted his invitation in 1905 to cruise as his guest, when Beresford commanded the Mediterranean fleet.

Immediately war was declared Kipling began to lobby for his son to be accepted as a soldier. John Kipling was small in stature and had the same poor eyesight as his father, which meant he was unsuitable for the Navy; and he was rejected by the military. Eventually Kipling, using every contact he had (including his friendship with Field-Marshall Lord Roberts), secured a commission for John in the recently formed Irish Guards. On 2 September 1915, the *Daily Telegraph* announced that it would publish a series of articles written by Kipling 'dealing with the life of the French line', following Kipling's extensive trip to France. Six articles appeared between 6 and 17 September. The paper also commissioned Kipling to write some pieces on the less glamorous side of the Royal Navy: crews of submarines, and those

Fig. 2 Minesweepers, from a contemporary drawing.

involved in the coastal forces with escort and mine-sweeping duties (see fig. 2). He travelled to Dover on 18 September, returning home the following day before leaving for Harwich (the main East Coast port for submarines); there he stayed between 22 and 25 September, putting to sea on at least one occasion. He obviously enjoyed himself: 'Kipling is bubbling over with enthusiasm for what he has already seen'.[3]

The news that John Kipling was 'missing in action' during the Battle of Loos on 27 September reached the family on 2 October. Kipling's pieces were published between 20 November and 2 December 1915, each coloured by a poem which prefaced the articles under the general heading *The Fringes of the Fleet*. None of the poems, as published in the *Telegraph* or subsequent war-time publications, was titled. Neither the poems nor the articles betray the sense of guilt and bereavement Kipling must have been suffering. Kipling allowed the titles of the songs (as given below) to be included in the edition of his poetry, but it is not clear whether he is following Elgar (who used these titles) or if Elgar was following Kipling. There is, unfortunately, no evidence that Kipling or Elgar communicated over this venture.

Elgar used four poems. The first line of each is listed below with the title Elgar used in brackets. The date of publication in the *Telegraph* is also shown, with Kipling's three categories of sub-heading.

20 November, The Auxiliaries: 'In Lowestoft a boat was laid' ['The Lowestoft Boat (A Chanty)': 1st song][4]

23 November, 'The Auxiliaries: Dawn off the Foreland – the young flood making' ['The Sweepers': 4th Song]

25 November, 'Submarines: Farewell and adieu to you, Greenwich ladies'[5]

27 November, 'Submarines: The Ships destroy us above' ['Submarines': 3rd Song]

30 November, 'Patrols: Be well assured that on our side' ['Fate's Discourtesy'. 2nd Song]

2 December, 'Patrols: Where the East wind is brewed fresh and fresh every morning'

After the first article the paper proudly quoted the *Evening Standard*: 'Thanks to "The Daily Telegraph", the Kipling view of the Brity [sic] Navy is once more available'.

Kipling's material was republished later in December 1915 in the small booklet *The Fringes of the Fleet* at a price of 6d (fig. 3). Early in 1916 Lord Charles Beresford suggested to Elgar in that the poems should be set to music. Jerrold

3 Andrew Lycett, *Rudyard Kipling* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999), 457 (quoting a letter from E Y Daniel an employee of the Committee of Imperial Defence).

4 In the poem Kipling refers to a 'Q.F. Gun at bow and stern' and states that 'her skipper was mate of a bucko ship'. Two Q.F. (quick-firing – delineated by the bass-drum) guns were unusual for vessels of this size. 'Bucko' was a term applied to the mate of sailing ships particularly American vessels on the East to West run around Cape Horn. The members of the crew would be driven hard by a second-in-command not afraid to use violence.

5 For security reasons Greenwich was substituted for Harwich in the first line. The poem vividly describes life aboard a submarine: 'We'll duck and we'll dive like little tin turtles'.

Northrop Moore describes what happened next:

> To set the verses, Edward sketched some hearty tunes for baritone and men's chorus. But then Kipling had objected to his verse being turned into musical entertainment. ... Edward dropped the project—to the intense disappointment of friends who felt that pairing the author of 'Recessional' with the composer of *Land of Hope and Glory* was too good a chance to miss. They set about persuading Kipling to change his mind, and a year later they seemed to be successful.[6]

In 1912 Elgar had composed the music for *The Crown of India*, which formed part of a variety show at the London Coliseum and took its place among a series of light-hearted acts. It is clear that he enjoyed the experience; and it was therefore only a small step for him to approach Oswald Stoll at the Coliseum with the proposal that *The Fringes of the Fleet* could be included in another review, as Alice Elgar's diary entry confirms (9 May 1917):

> E. to Novello – Found his 4 Augt. Spirit of England had stirred the House – It was thought so wonderful. E. to see Mr. Stoll who liked the idea of the Kipling Songs at Coliseum – Then to Enoch to consult them about it.

Elgar, like Kipling, became engaged in war work from the outset; but their paths never seemed to cross. He turned again to *The Fringes* in March 1917, quickly responding to the spirit of Kipling's verses with what he called a 'broad saltwater style', although the introverted, subtle, and understated 'Submarines' is generally considered the best of the songs. Elgar suggests the motion of the vessel by the use of woodwind and two blocks of sandpaper rubbed together. As always his orchestral imagination was acute: he had already portrayed the sound of aircraft in 'To Women' from *The Spirit of England*. The setting of 'Submarines' is ethereal, claustrophobic, and sinister; and it shows how sympathetic Elgar was to the atmosphere Kipling created in two short verses. The music of the other songs is rather more memorable than their present-day obscurity suggests: people in the street whistled the tunes as they passed below the rehearsal rooms, and the main theme of 'Fate's Discourtesy' came to Elgar's mind in November 1929 when he recorded his piano improvisations.

As with most of the music he wrote during the war, Elgar threw himself into the project whole-heartedly (this goes some way to explaining his bitter comments later). On 4 June, a week before the first performance, he travelled to Harwich to borrow seamen's kit for the performances. On the first night (Monday 11 June) the four singers (as 'Charles Mott and Company': see the poster, fig. 4) performed outside a harbour-side pub against a backdrop which is more like Scotland than the East Coast of England where Kipling gathered his material. Perhaps realising that the performance needed lengthening, or the steely confidence of the last song 'The Sweepers' tempering, Elgar added an unaccompanied song, 'Inside the Bar', with words by the imperialist poet and novelist Sir Gilbert Parker, MP. 'Inside the Bar' was first performed on 25 June. Parker's poem contains a mild dose of realism, as sailors are reminded of the temptations facing their loved ones while they are away.

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6 Jerrold Northrop Moore, *Edward Elgar, a Creative Life* (Oxford University Press, 1984), 706.

Fig. 4 Coliseum poster, reproduced by courtesy of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

Fig. 3 The first edition of Kipling's poems. It is intended to place a colour version of this and fig. 4 on the Society's website.

It is perhaps pertinent to ask whether the Parker setting formed another reason for Kipling's hostility, and whether Elgar advised Kipling of his intention to set the Parker song and include it under Kipling's chosen heading *The Fringes of the Fleet*.

The Fringes soon became popular, the Coliseum proclaiming 'The Great ELGAR-KIPLING Success'. On 4 July the cast travelled to HMV's Hayes studios to record the Kipling songs; ten days later the four baritones returned to record the unaccompanied 'Inside the Bar'. The enjoyment of all involved (including an orchestra largely composed of female players) remains infectious even after 90 years.[7] Elgar dedicated *The Fringes* to Lord Charles Beresford, who later assisted in delaying the conscription of the lead baritone, Charles Mott. When his call-up came through at the end of July Mott was replaced by George Parker. Mott eventually joined the Artists Rifles, was mortally wounded in Aveluy Woods in France on 20 May 1918, and died two days later.

Such was their success that Elgar took the songs on tour, to Manchester, Leicester, Chiswick (where he was not well), and Chatham, where the performances were curtailed by air raids. By then, however, the first signs appeared that all was not well for Kipling. On 26 August Elgar wrote: 'It seems atrocious but mean spirited R. Kipling wants to stop "The Fringes" continuing'. A month later he wrote to Lady Alice Stuart of Wortley: 'I fear the Songs are doomed by R.K. he is perfectly stupid in his attitude'. We have no correspondence to explain Kipling's motives, but it seems that Elgar got over his disappointment, setting *Big Steamers* in 1918 ('anything for the cause' he told his wife). Later he was happy to nominate Kipling for membership of the Beefsteak club.

Although the loss of John Kipling remains the most obvious reason for his father's reluctance to support a music hall-setting there may well be other reasons, for example:

1) Kipling did not like Elgar's settings and the stage show of which they were part, even though he loved the music hall. Was Kipling consulted about the Coliseum performances? There is no evidence that Kipling attended any performance.

2) Did Elgar give the songs their titles; in effect naming the poems without permission?

3) Elgar and Kipling had different sympathies. Kipling's virulent anti-German writings and comments were in contrast to Elgar's more 'liberal 'sympathies.

4) Elgar set the Parker song without seeking Kipling's approval. The song was then incorporated in the show under Kipling's general title *The Fringes of the Fleet*.

5) Kipling did not like Elgar's music but would have been happy with another composer, such as Edward German.

It would be interesting to know whether Kipling was sent copies of the recordings when they were released in the autumn of 1917.

Kipling continued to write about naval matters, responding to a request from the Admiralty in April 1916 which 'asked him to return to Harwich to write about submarine warfare in *Tales of the Trade*'.[8] A few months later, after the Battle of Jutland (31 May–1 June 1916), he contributed once more to the *Daily Telegraph* in a further series of articles (also published in *Sea Warfare*), and it is there that the poem *My Boy Jack* first appeared. The death, at Jutland, of Boy-Sailor 1st Class Jack Cornwell, who was awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross, is probably the direct inspiration, but their personal nature is barely concealed, the final verse reaching some sort of apotheosis. The poem was set to music by Kipling's preferred composer, Edward German, the following year. German's music sympathetically under-pinned Kipling's view of his own son: 'Eventually, Rudyard came to hold an image of his son dying with a smile on his face as he fired on a German machine-gun post…'.[9] The image we have of the Kiplings at home had been foreshadowed by Kipling himself who had already reflected on personal resilience without realising how pertinent his words would become: 'To face the naked days in silent fortitude'.[10]

For Elgar the experience of 1917 remained an irritant. Nearly ten years later, on 3 February 1927, the music publishers Enoch & Son wrote to Elgar: 'Please expect the "Fringes" kit. It is on its way to you'. Elgar replied eight days later in a letter of thanks: 'The kit of The Fringes arrived today; many thanks for sending it. I am sorry our venture that promised success shd. have been killed by the miserable conceit of one man!'. The same day (11 February) Elgar wrote to Carice: 'I go to London tomorrow Saty at 9 o.c. Let me know when you will be coming up, etc. I have the 'Kit' of the "Fringes" – there is a light brown Duffle coat with hood – first class & wd. that and a pair of (very) solid leather gigantic seaboots be of any use to Henry? They wd. be admirable to chuck on for dodging about the farm in snow etc.'.[11]

The poet and the composer apparently had much in common, but it was probably only surface deep. Even in their passing differences remained. Kipling, who had accepted the Nobel Prize for literature in 1907, otherwise eschewed all honours, but was given a splendid funeral in Westminster Abbey. Elgar, who craved formal recognition and ended his life a baronet, was buried quietly (almost anonymously) in Little Malvern on 26 February 1934. There was no music and only a handful of mourners.

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7 Winifred Westwood, a violinist in the orchestra of the Coliseum Theatre, collected signatures in an autograph album and took the opportunity of collecting those of Elgar and the four singers. Elgar inserted a musical quotation from *Fate's Discourtesy* below which he added the comment 'always properly & amiably bowed', which is possibly a reference to performers (mostly women) and a possible pun on the word 'bowed'. The music itself is heavily marked with up and down bows (see fig. 1).

8 Lycett, *Rudyard Kipling*, 464.

9 On Kipling's preference for the music of Edward German see my 'Elgar's Creative Challenge 1914–1918', in Foreman (ed.), *Oh My Horses!*, 207–233.

10 From the poem *For all we have and are*, published in 1914.

11 The reference to 'Henry' is probably to Samuel Henry Blake, Carice's husband. Clearly the 'borrowed' clothing was never returned to Harwich.

Tales from the Complete Edition 2 : The Starlight Express

John Norris and Jerrold Northrop Moore

The accompanying issue of the Elgar Society News announces the publication of Vol. 19: *The Starlight Express*, in the Elgar Complete Edition – eight months late, but a far better edition as a result. It is a volume that challenges the basic premise of a Complete Edition, that it should contain only Elgar's thoughts, not the thoughts of others. The challenge arises from the nature of a work that in common parlance would now be described as a 'musical' (or even a 'pantomime', as it was a Christmas production intended for a juvenile audience). Elgar provided an extensive score at very short notice, leaving detailed interaction between the music and the play to be worked out in rehearsal.

Elgar's precise involvement in rehearsals – from which evolved his final thoughts – is largely unrecorded. We know that relations soured during the rehearsal period, leading to Elgar boycotting the first performance (which at one point he was down to conduct). It is clear from correspondence between Elgar and Algernon Blackwood (author of the book on which the play was based, who also became estranged from the production as rehearsals progressed) that the problems arose not from differences over the music, but with a stage design which sought to change a light-hearted piece of post-Edwardian whimsy into something closer to Greek allegory.[1]

Perhaps because of this estrangement, previous commentators have tended to confine their attention either to the history of the play and production or to the music itself, without much concern for the detailed inter-relationship between play and music. The Complete Edition volume could easily have fallen into that trap. As work progressed, however, it became increasingly clear that a full understanding of the music was possible only from a line-by-line co-ordination with the play.

It is this detailed co-ordination of word and music that has taken up much of the additional time needed to get the volume into print. The time has, however, proved to be a voyage of discovery. Although Elgar threw his sizeable score together in a matter of weeks (with many motives taken over from the *Wand of Youth* suites), it has become clear that he was at pains from the outset to ensure that the music closely complemented the stage action in the sections of melodrama. Which of us,

1 Algernon Blackwood (1869-1951) had written the work as a novel, *A Prisoner in Fairyland* (London: Macmillan, 1913). The correspondence between Elgar and Blackwood expressing concerns over the stage set and the direction the play was taking can be found in British Library Add. MS 69834.

for instance, first realised that two slightly dissonant horn chords midway through Act II Scene 1 sound the approaching whistle of the Starlight Express?[2] More will be said of this aspect of preparing the volume towards the end of this article.

The genesis of the play and the history of its production are fully described in the Foreword to the Complete Edition, so only a brief résumé is needed here. Blackwood's novel of 1913, *A Prisoner in Fairyland*, had been adapted for the stage by Violet Pearn, born in Plymouth in 1890 and active as a playwright and author from 1910 until around 1950. The actress Lena Ashwell, lessee of the Kingsway Theatre, agreed to stage Pearn's adaptation under the title *The Starlight Express*. Ashwell was not the first to consider staging the play, nor was Elgar the first composer to be engaged to write music to accompany it. By the time he was approached, it was late: he did not see the typescript until 10 November 1915, only seven weeks before the scheduled premiere.

Violet Pearn's adaptation struggled from the start. Elgar's copy of the typescript (which he used to plan his music) contains many deletions and amendments to the dialogue in other hands: second thoughts which may in some cases have come before Elgar's involvement. Concerns about the play's length and coherence clearly emerged during rehearsals, leading to cuts. Press reviews were generally complimentary about Elgar's music, but the play itself came in for sharp criticism. Further cuts and text revisions followed. Lack of critical success was not the direct cause of the production's close. In common with other Christmas plays then and now, a limited seasonal run was all that was ever envisaged. A wildly enthusiastic audience response might have brought an extension of the initial four-week run beyond the end of January 1916; but the more likely outcome would have been a further run the following Christmas. That was indeed suggested by Lena Ashwell, seemingly without much enthusiasm. But by Christmas 1916, Elgar had recorded much of the music from the play. The war had dragged on for a further year with no end in sight. The vision exemplified by *The Starlight Express* had receded.

* * * * *

The main source for Elgar's music is his 300-page manuscript full score, now fully printed for the first time.[3] At first glance it might be taken for a continuous score; Elgar did not number the individual pieces, nor always clearly indicate breaks between them. A closer examination reveals many separate pieces of great variety. The Organ-grinder's Songs (introducing each act) and other set-pieces are now well known from recordings. But the score also includes many short spans of music to announce the arrival of a character or accompany a bit of stage action; orchestral entr'actes (some from the *Wand of Youth*, others not) to cover scene changes; and melodramas, where music and spoken word make their own ensemble. The last-named have never, after the original production and until now, been clear

2 Elgar's imitation of the engine's whistle was written at much the same time as 'To Women' from *The Spirit of England*. There, on the words 'Those threatening wings that pulse the air', Elgar provides the violas and bassoons with a passage intended to capture the throbbing sound of aircraft engines.

3 British Library Add. MS 52530.

in any reading. In the new Complete Edition volume, all these songs, interludes, melodrama, and fragments have been numbered sequentially by the editors from 1 to 50.

Speed (and occasional haste) is evident everywhere in Elgar's manuscript full score. The words of the songs appear written out in Lady Elgar's hand, or occasionally a copyist's. Special haste is apparent in some cases where Elgar simply indicates that the orchestral accompaniment is to be copied from another verse where it has already been written out in full. One number – the 'Sun Dance' from the first *Wand of Youth* Suite – is completely missing from the *Starlight Express* score. Elgar annotates two successive pages of the full score: 'Sun Dance (Printed copy) follows to End this Scene' (Elgar's page 93 of the Act II manuscript score) and 'Sun Dance printed copies comes in here – leads to Scene 2' (on the following page). The slight semantic differences between these two annotations, plus contradictory references elsewhere, described in more detail below, caused the editorial team some debate. It must also have caused the original production team concern, since the orchestra used in *The Wand of Youth* employs a second oboe and a second bassoon, two additional horns, a third trombone, and a tuba, instruments not otherwise called for in *The Starlight Express*.

Several pieces carry page numbers with alphabetic suffixes (p.104a, etc), yet they show rehearsal-cue numbers in regular sequence.[4] This suggests that Elgar wrote these pieces *after* he had numbered the pages but *before* adding the rehearsal-cues (which he did in blue crayon circled with a red stamp). The notable exception is the song 'Wake Up, You Little Night Winds' (Act II Scene 1). Its twelve pages are numbered entirely separately from 1 to 12, with the first additionally marked 'after p. 81' and the last 'to p. 82'. And Elgar has added the rehearsal cues in a separate alphabetic sequence from A to I. The corresponding typescript pages are also a subsequent addition. It suggests that this may have been the last addition of all, perhaps while the production was in rehearsal or even during the run.

Although Elgar produced a reasonably tidy and legible score in his familiar black ink (now faded to grey-black), the manuscript contains several layers of subsequent annotation: in pencil; in blue, red and brown crayon; and in red and green ink. Elgar was fairly systematic in his choice of writing implement and colour when introducing corrections. He limits his use of red ink to the rewriting of complex bars on another stave, to clarify his wishes for the copyist. The sequence of colours in certain annotations suggests that Elgar used pencil for a first round of corrections and blue crayon for a second round (possibly adding the rehearsal numbers at this stage).

Green ink seems to signify late annotation. Some of these may bear on the separate publication of the three Organ-grinder's Songs (although much of the accompaniment reductions for piano was left to Julius Harrison). Other green-ink additions may have been made to adapt instrumentation for the recordings Elgar conducted in February 1916. Yet green-ink annotations also appear in numbers neither printed separately nor recorded. They include the addition of a *Dal Segno*

4 Those now numbered 2, 3, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 28, 29, 37, and 40 in the Edition; nos. 2–13 are all from Act I, suggesting an initial paucity of musical accompaniment to this Act.

sign in No. 46, which would be unperformable without it: surely no more than the last-minute remedying of an earlier omission. Then again, a few short passages (typically of two or four bars) have been crossed through in green ink, either to accommodate quicker stage action or to help reduce the piece to the requirements of a four-minute gramophone record. Where they make musical sense, such deletions have been restored (with a qualifying footnote) in our edition.

Further passages have been deleted in pencil or blue crayon. The point at which these deletions were made is less clear. In most cases the music makes equal sense with or without the deleted bars. In fact it is not always clear whether Elgar himself made the deletions. Where such ambiguities persist, we can only record them with footnotes.

Not all corrections on the manuscript are in Elgar's hand. Since the score was never engraved, the publisher hired out Elgar's manuscript as the only conducting copy. And thus a variety of hands have added marks – cuts, extra instructions, even *aides-mémoire*. It seems likely that the annotations in red and brown crayon, mainly used to emphasize performance points such as fermatas and repeated sections, may have been added by the conductor, Julius Harrison.

Several problems in the larger sequencing of the musical play remain. In the typescript Elgar noted two different placements for the 'Sun Dance' (now No. 33); as explained later, neither in the end proved realistic. To the score Elgar added lines from the play to indicate where each number was to start and, in some cases, to end – around 100 cues in total; but a few of these cues do not appear in the final play text, and for one number Elgar gives no cues at all in the score. For No. 45, Elgar wrote in and then crossed out quantities of dialogue. And there are the musical passages mentioned above which have been deleted from the score in pencil or blue crayon. To propose plausible solutions for any of these matters needs a closer understanding of the ensemble of play and score than can be gathered from the state of their virtual separation which faced us at the outset. Such an understanding could only be gained by reconstructing the ensembles of spoken words and music which had constituted the extensive element of melodrama. What follows is an account of how we reached that view.

* * * * *

The earlier of the two principal sources is Elgar's copy of the play typescript.[5] As soon as he received it and decided to write the music, he began to mark lines which might be set. As he progressed, he compiled a checklist of such passages.[6] From that checklist he subsequently crossed out entries, presumably as he completed the music for each.

For the historian, one of the most fascinating aspects of Elgar's play typescript is the preliminary tranche of annotations he made to sketch a musical development for the play. At first he envisioned as singers many of the Sprite characters who arrive on the Starlight Express. Then he became aware of financial constraints that

5 British Library Add. MS 69832A–C (A comprising the typescript for Act 1, B for Act 2, and C for Act 3).

6 British Library Add. MS 69832D.

would limit the number of professional singers. From the dialogue Elgar had first planned to set to music, several Sprites had to revert to speaking roles. Out of the residue, two singing characters were carved out. The Organ-grinder started life as a facet of the Tramp character, one of the Sprites. The Organ-grinder's songs, one to precede each act, led Elgar to compose the three most imposing songs in the musical play. The decision was therefore taken to separate the two characters into a singing role for the Organ-grinder and a non-singing role for the Tramp. With the Tramp's role thus lightened, he also received the few lines originally given to another Sprite, the Gipsy, who no longer appears. (Interestingly, and perhaps not entirely for financial reasons, the roles of both the Organ-grinder and the Tramp in the Kingsway Theatre production were taken by the baritone Charles Mott.)

The role of the Laugher had a more complex evolution. Always included among the Sprites, her role was expanded by the addition of songs given in the typescript to other characters singing communally ('Oh Stars shine brightly!'; 'We shall meet the morning spiders') or alone. (At one point, Elgar has written 'sop[rano]' against lines given in the typescript to the Dustman, presumably intending that these lines should also be sung by the Laugher. In the event he left them unset.) Several lines in the penultimate number for one or another of the star-cluster of Pleiades characters were sung by the soprano of the Laugher's role. The first Pleiades' line sounds 'from afar', presumably off-stage, masking any possible recognition of the Laugher. As the Pleiades draw closer, the stage steadily fills with figures, further masking the persona of the Laugher.

The typescript also shows annotations not ultimately (or not fully) reflected in the score. Where typescript and score annotations conflict, the score – coming later in the creative process – takes priority. Yet such conflicts are rare. Most of Elgar's typescript annotations forecast (and occasionally supplement) what appears in the score. As previously mentioned, one melodrama midway through Act I shows no dialogue cues in the score to correlate words with music, but the typescript shows vertical lines added by Elgar to define the accompanied words. Elsewhere, five separate passages of text show his intention that the music for them is to be taken from other places in the score. The most prominent is the Laugher's 'Sunrise Song', which Jane-Anne has already sung at several points before the Laugher arrives.

One particularly complex case is that of the 'Sun Dance' from *The Wand of Youth*. Its music does not appear in the *Starlight Express* score: Elgar merely indicates at the end of Act 2 Scene 1 that it is to be played from *Wand of Youth* orchestral parts. This instruction overtakes two earlier placements in the typescript. His initial inclination was to use it immediately following the arrival of the Starlight Express much earlier in Act 2 Scene 1: there, in the typescript, he has written 'Sundance' and then scribbled it through. A change of mind led him to place the dance at the end of Scene 1, though seemingly before the fall of curtain to end the scene.[7]

7 Did Elgar envisage the whole of the 'Sun Dance' being performed within Scene 1? This interpretation is supported by various typescript annotations: 'Sundance here', 'Sundance music to end', and, against the word 'curtain' at the end of the scene, 'ends ***ff***'. And while the typescript contains his first thoughts, not necessarily surviving into the full score, Elgar also wrote 'curtain' twice in the score of the short number which follows the 'Sun Dance': at bar 10 (where the music suggests a rising curtain), but also at bar 3, where he may have intended the curtain to fall to end Scene 1. A precise interpretation of Elgar's annotations would have led to difficulties in performance, however. His typescript annotations place the start of the 'Sun Dance' before the start of No. 32, the preceding number in the score, in which the 'sound of sweet and wordless singing is heard in the very far distance'. Such sounds would be inaudible over the boisterous 'Sun Dance'. The actors would also find the piece challenging to speak over; unlike most of Elgar's music for the melodramas, the 'Sun Dance' lacks any pauses for the actors to deliver their lines. The rehearsals would surely have shown the shortcomings of such a staging, if indeed it was intended, leading to the more satisfactory arrangement proposed in the edition.

There are, however, practical difficulties with this arrangement, not least that between Scenes 1 and 2 there is a substantial change of scene – from the edge of a pine forest to the interior of a *pension* – for which Elgar otherwise provides no music. The pragmatic solution to all these difficulties (probably reached in rehearsal) is for the 'Sun Dance' to follow the dialogue of Scene 1, becoming an entr'acte while the scenery was being changed behind the curtain.

Another point which led to some detailed debate among the editors concerns the song 'Wake up, you Little Night Winds'. Elgar's copy of the typescript contains the following passage (stage directions in italics; Elgar's annotations bold, in angled brackets):

<1> Wake up, you little Night Winds! Blow your best!
(One WIND flits in)
<2> We want you all –
(Two more WINDS flit in)
– Ha-ha, that's East and West!
<½> Now fetch the South!
(THEY beckon. All come on but one)
<3> The North Wind too. She always blows the strongest.
(Last WIND appears)
<4> You all must draw your deepest breath and longest
With open mouth.

In his full score Elgar has set the lines numbered 1 to 4, but not the half-line 'Now fetch the South!'. Close examination reveals a flaw in the typescript at this point. By the time the South Wind is summoned with the words 'Now fetch the South', three winds are already on stage and the North has yet to come. So South must have been the first wind to appear, as the others – when 'Two more WINDS flit in' – are greeted as East and West. Presumably Elgar ultimately recognised this, and so left the half-line unset.[8]

Equally perplexing are the two pages of typescript which open Act II Scene 2. In Elgar's typescript they are crossed through with a single diagonal line. The

8 In the place in the score where the half-line should appear, the words 'Now fetch' have been written above the vocal stave in much the same way that Elgar added text-cues at the start of many pieces. The word 'Bis' (indicating that the bar is to be repeated) has also been added twice to the bar in large letters. But the handwriting of 'Now fetch' and 'Bis' appears not to be Elgar's, suggesting that a conductor or producer tripped over the same flaw in the typescript, adding 'Bis' to the bar to allow time for the half-line to be delivered.

implication is that these lines were dropped from the play. Yet that idea is countered by Elgar's typescript annotation that music from elsewhere should accompany part of the seemingly deleted text, and by the further addition of the number 83, written in such a way as to suggest it is a rehearsal cue. In the full score, rehearsal cue 83 is quite remote from this position in the typescript. At both points, however, the Organ-grinder is playing off-stage, thus suggesting that the music from cue 83 might be re-used. So, whether or not these two pages of typescript survived into the production run, it seems that Elgar had worked out a musical intention for this passage. Justification enough to include the passage in our volume.

The score also includes an unnumbered page (between pages 48 and 49 of Act I) which bears all the signs of a hurried late addition; it comprises little more than a succession of arpeggios within a complex and barely comprehensible repeat system, no doubt a reflection of the time pressures under which Elgar was working. Fortunately another source provides assistance here.[9] Among a voluminous bundle of Elgar's preliminary sketches in pencil which otherwise add little to the full score, there is a four-page folio in ink headed 'Act I Additions' which contains a fuller, and superior, version of the unnumbered page from the score. Whether Elgar himself had second thoughts or produced the expanded version at the conductor's request is not clear, but Elgar clearly intended this version to supersede the unnumbered page, and it has thus been used for the melodrama which is now No. 13.

While we were eventually to reach an editorial consensus on the positioning of the 'Sun Dance' and the interpretation of the 'Night Winds' song, there were points on which we had to agree to differ. One arose from stage directions 'sings' or 'chants' set against lines ultimately given to actors rather than singers, and for which Elgar therefore provided no music. We agreed that this had arisen from financial constraints on the hiring of singers and the incomplete revision of the typescript to reflect it. But we could not agree on how such passages should be presented in the Complete Edition score. Should fidelity to text prevail over practical performing instructions? Could the actors improvise their singing at these points? Or should they be directed simply to chant the music-less lines, or even speak them? These points of editorial disagreement were ultimately very few. Those that remained could only be flagged up with a footnote summarising our dilemma.

Inevitably the biggest problem facing any editor of *The Starlight Express* lies in the melodrama – those passages, occupying fully one-third of the play's length, in which speech combines with music to greater dramatic effect. Elgar's copy of the play typescript shows various jottings in his hand recording his intention to provide a musical accompaniment, usually single words such as 'music', 'violin', 'begins', or even just 'here'. A few clearer definitions emerge from his full score: for two numbers, he attempted to set out a precise ensemble of words and music through individual notes, chords or pauses; for a further four numbers he provided briefer indications of the dialogue to be delivered at a specific point. But for most numbers, Elgar provided only the line which might cue, open, close or post-script a melodrama. The rest was left to be worked out in rehearsal.

Our first editorial idea was to print only what survived – no more, no less,

9 British Library Add. MS 69833.

exactly as written. But that would leave the melodrama *ensembles* virtually unrepresented. It would demand of any reader an ability to correlate in an instant from two separately printed sources, something we found we could not do in any comprehensive way for ourselves. And the fact remained that Elgar had never envisioned such challenges. His score unquestionably indicates a further stage of working out the detail, containing such instructions as 'repeat if necessary', 'repeat until ready', and at one point 'stop anywhere'. That final working out could only have been done in production rehearsals, which no-one now alive had attended. So we faced a paradox: to present *The Starlight Express* at all adequately in a scholarly performing edition, the melodrama would have to be reconstructed.

Yet the effort of reconstructing the melodramas had barely commenced before we all began to feel the presence of a new and warming light over our shoulders. Our emerging ability to comprehend the melodramas as actual, living ensembles of speech and music began to reveal a work of far greater effectiveness than any of us had anticipated. It was – and is – the first time anyone could have appreciated this since the original production closed in January 1916. All subsequent attempts at revival have been hamstrung by this lacuna running through the work. For melodrama was and remains the central element, connecting the play's ordinary spoken dialogue on the one hand to the music's formal songs and dances on the other. Reconstructing the melodrama ensembles has in fact restored a focus – even a concision – which has been lacking throughout the ninety-four years since the original run closed.

It has proved a challenging task. Where the space between cues (from either typescript or score) is short, realising the ensemble is almost straightforward. The longer the gaps between cues, the bigger the problems to be solved. Worst of all was No. 47 – arguably the work's grandest and most spectacular number, opening the final scene – during which a text filling four typescript pages had to be set to a span of forty-seven bars without any intervening signpost in either source. The work of bringing this ensemble together filled four days.

Another persistent problem arose where typescript annotations indicate excessive text to be delivered against the music provided. In one melodrama (No. 45, which ends Act III Scene 1), it seems that Elgar all but gave up his own attempt to set the lengthy dialogue to music: detailed text, laboriously added bar by bar, is comprehensively crossed out after bar 9. Elgar replaces this simply by 'Lamplighter's business & Exit' above bars 17–19 and the single word 'Wonderful!' spoken by the children's mother in bar 19. Immediately after that a 4-bar repeat has been crossed through: yet it will be apparent to anyone hearing those deleted bars that they lead directly into the entr'acte between the two scenes of Act III.

We had to provide our own solution to this and other places where the dialogue could not reasonably be delivered during the time taken to play the music Elgar provided. Where there is nothing in the score to indicate any reduction in tempo, the likelihood is that the orchestra would simply have repeated a few bars until the stage action and words caught up, an established theatrical practice known as 'vamping'. In our volume we have adopted an equivalent solution by adding an occasional editorial repeat, always clearly noted as such.

We know that a credible – even compelling – performance emerged at the

Kingsway Theatre, for even the most lukewarm reviews praised Elgar's music. This above all else drew us on to try to define, out of the jumble of hints and half-clues, the best fit of music to dialogue in the melodramas. The question we have repeatedly asked ourselves, as timescales lengthened and two projected publication dates went by, was whether our extending efforts were worthwhile. We hope, when at last you hold the new volume in your hands, that you will agree with our unanimous and emphatic affirmative answer to the question raised above. We cannot always claim an exact certainty in the melodrama ensemble realised. Yet we consider that our provision – at long last – of a workable ensemble at every point brings the new edition much closer to what was seen and heard in 1915–16 than that achieved by any revival since then.

John Norris and Jerrold Northrop Moore require no introduction to readers of the Elgar Society Journal. *We shall of course commission a review of the edition of* The Starlight Express *for a future issue.*

Harleyford: precursor of Hoffnung

Martin Bird

The November *Journal* included the programme for the spoof 'Harleyford Musical Festival' concocted by Elgar for the amusement of his house guests at the 1909 Hereford Musical Festival. Those interested in the 'occasional anorakisms of Elgarian minutiae' may well be amused by the story behind the first item on the programme:

> 8.0 Tympanocrashic Detonation of a Brass Bombardon 'an Delian Heckelphone.[1]
> ☛ Beware of Pick-pockets!

Delius was at the Festival to conduct his *Dance Rhapsody* at the secular concert in the Shire Hall on the Wednesday evening. George Sinclair had written to him on 16 August:

> The Bishop of Hereford will write to invite you and Mrs. Delius to stay at the Palace, so there is no occasion for you to engage rooms. Sir Hubert Parry will also be staying at the Palace.[2]

He chose instead to stay at the Queen's Arms in Broad Street, and in those more secular surroundings managed to have his wallet stolen. On 8 September Parry noted in his diary: 'They told me at the Palace that Delius was so excited about the performance of his work that he had to remain in his room all day and live upon gruel'. Delius later wrote to Ernest Newman: 'I had a bad bilious attack & spent most of the time in my bed'.

The orchestra for *Dance Rhapsody* includes a heckelphone, equivalent to a bass oboe. Thomas Beecham had written to Delius about it at the beginning of August:

> I have arranged about the Bass Oboe for Hereford. I find out however that Sinclair has been writing to another man who plays the 'Heckelphone'. I am told that this particular instrument is a filthy affair and will not do – The man who played the Bass Oboe in the 'Mass' has overhauled the instrument and got to the bottom of it. He makes it now sound most beautiful and it is quite in tune. I find that it is built to suit either high pitch or low, this being determined by crooks. These latter we did not have for the 'Mass' – hence the weird noises.

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1 Was this 'Handelian' Heckelphone suggested by the contrabassoon which so impressed audiences in 1784 at the monster Handel festival in Westminster Abbey? [ed.]

2 Citations from Delius's letters are from Lionel Carley, *Delius, A life in letters* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1988).

But now it sounds enchanting, and it is also the only one there is.

> If I were you, I should write to Sinclair and tell him this or else you will be saddled with this other instrument which I am sure you will not like.[3]

Come the performance, though, it was evident to the reviewer from *The Times* that Beecham's advice had not been taken.

> The duet between the English horn and the Heckelphone (a kind of bass oboe) at the beginning was robbed of its misty atmospheric effect by the fact that the player had to struggle with the Heckelphone to produce the notes in any way possible.[4]

In fact, the player was neither Beecham's nor Sinclair's first choice, for there was a last minute substitute.

> Great praise is due to Miss Bull, who undertook at short notice to play the heckelphone, by no means an easy matter, and who played it extremely well. The orchestra keenly responded to the composer's directions, and performed the work with a spirit and energy that fully brought out its distinctive character.[5]

Beecham tells us that Miss Bull was

> a young lady of semi-amateur status who had volunteered at short notice to see what she could do with it. Now the bass oboe, like certain other members of the single- and double-reed families, is to be endured only if manipulated with supreme cunning and control; otherwise its presence in the orchestra is a strain upon the nervous system of conductor and players alike, a danger to the seemly rendering of the piece in hand, and a cause of astonishment and risibility in the audience. A perfect breath control is the essential requisite for keeping it well in order, and this alone can obviate the eruption of sounds that would arouse attention even in a circus. As none of these safety-first precautions had been taken, the public, which had assembled … in anticipation of some pensive and poetical effort from the most discussed musician of the day, was confounded by the frequent audition of noises that resembled nothing so much as the painful endeavour of an anguished mother-duck to effect the speedy evacuation of an abnormally large-sized egg.[6]

Leila Marion Bull (1870-1957) was the daughter of a local doctor, Henry Graves Bull. Her occupation is recorded in the 1901 census as 'Oboist Music': remarkably daring at a time when orchestras were not known for their engagement of women. The Royal Academy of Music's Leila Bull Prize for oboists ensures that she will not be forgotten. The Bulls lived at Harley House, in St John's Street, Hereford, and Leila Bull lived there until her death. Serendipitously, this is the very house that Elgar stayed in for the 1909 Festival.

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3 Letter from Thomas Beecham to Delius, 2 August 1909.

4 *The Times*, 10 September 1909.

5 *Hereford Times*, 11 September 1909.

6 Beecham, *A Mingled Chime*, (London: Hutchinson, 1944).

REVIEW OF MUSIC

Elgar: *Mina* (1934)
Ledbury: Acuta Music, 2009

Mina has a unique claim to attention within Elgar's biography. It was written in 1932 and later orchestrated (the date 1934 on the cover of the edition does not, shall we say, represent the full truth). Just over a week before he died, Elgar was able to comment, by way of a letter from Carice, on the recording session swiftly set up by Fred W. Gaisberg, to whom this delicate miniature is dedicated. He had handed the MS to Gaisberg on his last visit; but as the new edition reminds us, the 'autograph' is not entirely in Elgar's hand. There is autograph material in every bar, but in a few places the texture seems to have been completed by someone else. In itself this isn't particularly unusual; composers have often called in assistants to free themselves from repetitive tasks, and nothing here can compare in scale with the labours of Fenby realising the intentions of the paralysed Delius.

The present edition is based on manuscript material in the British Library; it therefore omits the instruments (trumpets, trombones, and timpani) supplied in the posthumous publication by Keith Prowse.[1] *Mina* offers no scope for such heavyweights and is surely intended for what we have here: single flute, oboe, and bassoon, two clarinets, two muted horns, strings, also muted and surely not meant to be numerous, celesta, and glockenspiel. Where else, if anywhere, did Elgar use a celesta? Curiously, Carice's letter alludes to a harp; perhaps Elgar was simply too ill to supply the right word to his daughter. The part is surely playable on the harp and (dare I say this?) might sound even better that way.

Mina is slight but beautifully crafted, its waltz-like rhythm and opening oscillation between seventh chords a gentle reminder of Elgar's French side. The choice of tempo is a delicate matter. The editors suggest a duration about three minutes. This would require the upper range of the metronome marking printed here (120–138 crotchets per minute), based on 'the tempi adopted in the two original recordings'. The first (conducted by J. Ainslie Murray) was the only one Elgar heard, and he said it was too fast. The editors state that it goes from 138 to 172 c.p.m. (172 presumably in the bars Elgar complained, with musical if not literal justification, were *twice* too fast). Including repeats, the piece lasts 402 crotchets. A speed of c. 120 c.p.m., and a timing of up to three and a half minutes, would seem about right. Neville Marriner's 1970 recording (just over four minutes) is somewhat too languid, even in those bars delightfully marked 'rapido', but the edition did not, perhaps, need thus to acknowledge Murray's tempo, given the composer's objection.[2] This, however, is a tiny blemish on another welcome publication in Acuta Music's Late Elgar Edition; performing materials are available.

Julian Rushton

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1 That the MS is not entirely in Elgar's hand is mentioned by Christopher Kent in *Elgar: a Guide to Research* (New York: Garland, 1993), 361, but Kent lists the Prowse instrumentation rather than the manuscript's, as does Stewart Craggs in *Edward Elgar. A Source Book* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1995), 104.

2 Marriner's recording on *The Lighter Elgar* (EMI Classics) does not use the Prowse additional brass, but there may be other minor alterations in scoring; at least to me the horn line from bar 34 sounds like a cello.

CD REVIEWS

Note from the CD Reviews Editor: the following recordings are available now from the Elgar Birthplace Museum: Davis *Crown of India* etc.; Higgins *Fringes of the Fleet* etc.; Menuhin *In the South* etc.; Complete songs, vol. 2. Buying from the Birthplace is a way of contributing directly towards its finances at this difficult economic time. Their on-line shopping pages can be found at www.elgarmuseum.org/trolleyed.

The Birthplace can also supply the full score of the Anthony Payne orchestration of The Crown of India.

A software bug contrived to remove automatically every reference to Parry from the November 2009 issue (an unlikely alliance of Bill Gates and the ghost of Stanford, perhaps ...). Most were retrieved: but the last sentence of the review of Parry's Choral Works should read 'In choral music Parry at his best stands comparison with anyone, and this is Parry at his best'.

Martin Bird

SOMM CD 243

Elgar: *The Fringes of the Fleet; Inside the Bar* (arr. Higgins); *Big Steamers; Elegy,* Op. 58
Ansell: Overtures *Plymouth Hoe* and *The Windjammer*
German: *Big Steamers* (orch. Higgins)
Ireland: *The Soldier* (orch. Higgins), *Blow Out, You Bugles* (orch. Higgins)
Haydn Wood: *A Manx Overture; The Island of Mountains and Glens*; March: *Elizabeth of England*
Roderick Williams, baritone, Nicolas Lester, baritone, Duncan Rock, baritone, Laurence Meikle, baritone, Guildford Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Tom Higgins

In November 2009 I gave a first response to this important recording which had not been formally released when the Editor called 'time' on submissions. However, he kindly allowed me to write more about the recording for this issue. I have loved these wartime songs by Elgar since first hearing the 1917 recordings over 40 years ago when Jerrold Northrop Moore so courageously ensured they were reproduced on LP. It was only later when we discussed the apparent non-collaboration between Kipling and Elgar that issues raised by Elgar's settings became apparent to me. Those early recordings were lifted directly from the stage, with performers who took liberties with the music and joyfully added some of the comedic effects that they presumably used at the Coliseum. I urge readers who do not know these records

to hear them, for they are a triumphant example of what could be done in those pioneering days of acoustic recording (Dutton CDBP9777).

This SOMM recording cannot and should not attempt to replicate those aspects of performance. Happily Tom Higgins, the conductor, has judiciously worked out what to do and how far to go. For example he includes laughter (bars 3 & 15 of the final refrain) in 'The Lowestoft Boat', but not the barking which the 1917 performers adopted as a forceful reference to 'Her cook was chef from a Lorst Dogs' Home!'

One of this country's premier baritones, Roderick Williams, leads younger singers in this performance with fine musicianship and respect for the words. Williams is ably supported by the other members of his 'crew', all of whom understand the need for humour or emotion where appropriate. It is on Williams's shoulders, however, that the success of the songs rests. The ship's bell, the sandpaper effect, and the generous acoustic, which does not obscure detail, gives the listener the chance to re-appraise the effectiveness of the poems and of Elgar's music, and how right they must have seemed at the time.

'The Lowestoft Boat (A Chanty)'. Kipling's seamen vary in age from 17 to 58 in a crew which, if they did not frighten Kipling, were sure to frighten 'Fritz'. It is the jolliest of the four songs. Elgar's generous last 'The Lord knows where!' (half-spoken, half-sung) leaves us in no doubt as to the commitment and understanding of Roderick Williams to the atmosphere of the song.

'Fate's Discourtesy'. This is the longest and most philosophical of the poems, in which Kipling considers 'England's' responsibilities and enables him to use the unidentified vessel and its crew as a metaphor for England and her people. Here Williams is given the challenge of conveying insecurity combined with confidence as the challenges of war (the sea and weather form another metaphor) are assuredly met: 'Is nothing left to give but time and place to meet the hour...'.

'Submarines'. In 'Farewell and adieu to you, Greenwich ladies' (a light-hearted parody on the sea shanty *Spanish ladies*), Kipling revels in something that must have been new to him, exploring the possibilities the submarine offered. In 'Submarines' the brutal reality of life aboard and the damage done 'when our blow gets home' is spelt out. The recording allows important details to be heard (without over-emphasis) and as we can hear every word, the submarine as a weapon is revealed for perhaps its first outing in song.

'The Sweepers'. This song reflects the sentiments of 'The Lowestoft Boat' as the smallest ships go about their vital work in the Thames estuary. Here the vessels are the heroes (or heroines)

rather than the crew. The unpleasant world of mine-sweeping is revealed by Williams and his fellow singers with crystal clarity as the stoicism of those involved in a vital job is nonchalantly conveyed with Higgins's attention to detail ensuring the safest of passages.

'Inside the Bar'. This is very different: gone is Kipling's humour and his juxtaposition of irony and pathos. Parker's directness comes as something of a cold shower after the energies of the little sweepers. Elgar's salty setting rounded off the performance on stage by moving away from thoughts of war, leaving the sailors to have the last word. This is the first time the four singers perform together throughout a song and very well they do it. There is no room to hide and we feel for them all as they dream of home.

The nautical theme of the disc is developed in the bright attractive works by Haydn Wood and John Ansell. Wood's *A Manx Overture* is a charming tribute to his adopted home. Edward German's version of *Big Steamers* (Kipling's poem from 1911) is also included in an orchestration by Tom Higgins. I have happy memories of singers such as Robert Lloyd performing the song, his big voice contrasting the questioner and the Big Steamers very effectively. Roderick Williams's lighter voice does not have the resonant contrast of Lloyd, but his intelligent interpretation and clarity of diction underpin Kipling's important message most movingly. John Ireland's settings of Rupert Brooke (whose golden promise was buried with him on the island of Skyros in March 1915) have also been orchestrated most effectively by Tom Higgins. They are deeply sensitive songs and the orchestra throws light on words as well known as 'If I should die, think only this of me…'. 'Blow Out, You Bugles' is a subtle Whitmanesque reflection on the ultimate sacrifice, and Higgins's orchestration adds poignancy to an already poignant meditation on youthful death. It is, however, the Kipling/Elgar songs which are at the heart of the disc. Roderick Williams is a worthy successor to Charles Mott and it is difficult to imagine these songs being better performed. SOMM and Tom Higgins have given us something to treasure. In addition to *The Fringes*, Tom Higgins has arranged Elgar's setting of *Big Steamers* for his baritones and, although I prefer the original for solo voice, this works effectively and becomes a perfect companion to Elgar's Parker setting. The Guildford Philharmonic's strings cannot match those of the greatest orchestras but the inclusion of Elgar's *Elegy*, in a fine performance, brings a reflective mood to the disc, effectively balancing the rest; the *Elegy* is a heartfelt miniature requiem and serves here as a quiet reminder of the short life of John Kipling, whose death cast such a substantial shadow over Elgar's ill-fated songs: 'fates' discourtesy' indeed.

Andrew Neill

***The Crown of India*, Op. 66**
Clare Shearer (mezzo-soprano: Agra, Benares, Lotus)
Gerald Finley (baritone: St George)
Joanne Mitchell (speaker: India)
Deborah McAndrew (speaker: Calcutta)
Barbara Marten (speaker: Delhi)[1]
Sheffield Philharmonic Choir, BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Andrew Davis

Chandos
CHAN10570
(2cds)

***The Crown of India*, Op. 66**
Cast as above but without narration (edited by Andrew Davis)
Imperial March, op 32
Coronation March, op 65
Empire March
BBC Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Andrew Davis

Additional orchestration by Anthony Payne.

A piece appearing in the *Daily Telegraph* on 4 September 1915 by leading music critic Robin Legge, entitled 'Music in the Music Halls', began by posing this question: 'Do you remember that at the Coliseum Elgar's Crown Masque of India [sic] was produced with at least as great a show of splendour as any opera you have seen at Covent Garden?' The same can be said for this splendid new Chandos offering, its first recording release under the baton of Sir Andrew Davis.

The 'Imperial Masque' was the brainchild of impresario Oswald Stoll, owner-manager of the Coliseum Theatre in London. Stoll rightly reckoned that the public's enthusiasm for the press reports of the December 1911 Delhi Durbar would provide a popular subject for a *pièce de théâtre*. Stoll approached Elgar for music to complement Henry Hamilton's spoken tribute to the Durbar. Hamilton constructed his couplets around an imagined contest between Delhi and Calcutta, each claiming the right to become the imperial capital – the Crown of India. The Masque was a significant financial success for both Stoll and Elgar. 'God bless the Music Halls!' wrote the composer to his friend Frances Colvin. Elgar conducted twice a day to capacity crowds for the first fortnight of the run. His friend Hugh Blair produced a piano-vocal score for publication. Subsequently Elgar transformed five of the Masque's component movements into the orchestral suite we know from the recordings of Sir Alexander Gibson and others.

Most of the performing material including the full score was wantonly discarded from the archives of the publisher Enoch

1 The sleeve incorrectly lists Barbara Marten as India and Joanne Mitchell as Delhi. The reverse shown above is correct.

and Sons in the early 1970s, when the building housing them was demolished. Then in 2007, as a feature of the Elgar Year celebrations, the Elgar Society commissioned Anthony Payne to restore as far as feasible the lost parts by making use of the Blair piano reduction to integrate a new orchestration of the missing movements with the suite score. Sir Andrew's delight in Payne's achievement is evident in the interviews he has given: 'He's done a terrific job. This is from Elgar's mature period, the time of the Violin Concerto and Sospiri. There's a "March of the Moguls" which is the only march I know in three time and an exquisite interlude with solo violin'. Andrew Neill's comprehensive sleeve notes make clear precisely which music is pure Elgar and which is Elgar-Payne.

It is a happy sign of the times that most of the critics who reviewed the two-disc set (Andrew Clements of the *Guardian* being a sour exception) were prepared to put aside political correctness to acknowledge the grandeur of Elgar's music, though all saw fit to express unhappiness with Hamilton's text – as did Elgar himself, who noted 'There is far too much of this political business'. Devotees able to ignore the words in order to hear the work in its entirety will enjoy disc one. Listeners who find Hamilton's couplets unendurable can ignore disc one and proceed to disc two, where Sir Andrew gives us the music without narration plus the three marches. Since the set is sold at the retail price of a single CD, those who would limit their listening to the wordless version should not feel aggrieved.

Allow me to commend in particular Sir Andrew's account of the *Coronation March*.[2] Davis's direction shows us how in this darkly grand work, Elgar's music addresses two meanings of 'recessional', the formal feature George V's coronation service and the underlying lament for what the composer perceived to be the fearful consequences of Edward VII's passing, consequences expressed by the King's close friend Lord Esher, who wrote that with the death of King Edward, 'all the old buoys which have marked the channel of our lives seem to have been swept away'.

Arthur Reynolds

2 Incidentally another march in three time! [ed.]

Elgar: *Falstaff* Op. 68
Vaughan Williams: Oboe Concerto
Handel, arr. Harty: *Water Music* Suite
Mitch Miller (oboe)
Columbia Broadcasting Symphony, conducted by Bernard Herrmann

Pristine Audio
PASC202

This 'Concert of English Music' played by the Columbia Broadcasting Symphony with Mitchell ('Mitch') Miller, conducted by Bernard Herrmann, came to me in CD form; but all Pristine Audio releases are available through their web site as MP3 and FLAC downloads.[3] The recordings come from the archive of Edward Johnson. They are from a CBS live broadcast from 9 September 1945, and 'had previously been very well dubbed onto high quality ¼" tape from what sound like excellent acetate discs for this era'. The further transfer and re-mastering is by Andrew Rose, founder of Pristine Classical.

In recordings such as these two things feature largely in one's listening: the first is the quality of the recording and the second the nature of the performance. In respect of the first these are excellent transfers. The sound is rich, warm and sonorous, the dynamic range wide, and there is virtually no hiss or extraneous noise. This enables one to concentrate on the performances, but I cannot pass on to these without giving Edward Johnson and, particularly, Andrew Rose high praise for the art which conceals their art; they enable us to concentrate on the music without distraction.

I must confess that I went straight to the third work in the concert, Elgar's 'Symphonic Study', *Falstaff*. It is for me Elgar's greatest orchestral work – as *The Apostles* is his greatest choral work. I had the privilege in 2007 of conducting a performance, but more relevantly had the greater privilege of rehearsing it with my (amateur) players over a period of twelve weeks. It enabled me really to get to know the work, to become acutely familiar with its original and highly fascinating themes, its masterly construction and orchestral writing - or so I thought; for on hearing the work again in this recording new facets were revealed.

The CD starts with a performance of pieces from Hamilton Harty's arrangement of Handel's *Water Music*. Leaving aside exactly how English either of them was (Harty definitely not; Handel only by adoption), this is a performance I could live

3 The web site is worth a visit, not least because the 1945 Sargent recording of *Gerontius* is available at a very reasonable price: www.PristineClassical.com.

without. It sets the scene for the whole CD in that it is well conducted and there is a fine rhythmic bounce to the playing. But it is completely unauthentic, and I think we have moved on from this. To be fair, the playing is neatly articulated and the string section is particularly fine. In the opening Allegro the horns are slightly distant (as if heard over water!) with the odd fluffed note; the drums are also slightly muffled. In the Bourrée the oboe is out of tune. The best item is the *Andante espressivo*, in which the sonorously long melodic phrases on strings are very attractive. There is also some nicely articulated busy string work in the Hornpipe, together with excitingly flaring horns and brilliant trumpets. As an indication of its period it is faintly interesting, but as a performance it is not one I wish to hear again.

Far more interesting is the next work, the Concerto for Oboe and Strings by Ralph Vaughan Williams ('an actual Englishman', as the radio announcer quaintly has it!). Finished in 1944, the work was new at the time of this recording; indeed this performance was only the second in the USA, the first having been given by the same performers the previous June. The work followed closely on Vaughan Williams's Fifth Symphony, whose world it closely inhabits. It is a lovely piece and here receives an eloquent and convincing performance. I particularly like the persuasive account Mitchell Miller gives of the wonderfully melodic Lento near the end of the Finale.

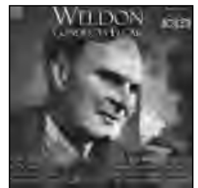
The highlight of the CD for me is the performance of *Falstaff*. I can say without equivocation that this is a performance I will treasure. Leaving aside the nature of Elgar's accompanying 'analysis' written for *The Musical Times* of September 1913, I find that the performance reveals with masterly clarity the musical substance of the work, the nature of the themes, of the structure and of the orchestration. It is always fluid, always moving from somewhere and to somewhere with purpose. Bernard Herrmann always in control of the structure and his players always in control of their instruments. There are so many good things in the performance that it seems invidious to single them out, but I would mention the richly sonorous opening, the speed steadier than many performances I have heard but fittingly, an eloquent exposition of the initial themes. The strings are warm and rich throughout, the numerous soloists in all sections acquitting themselves with great aplomb. The virtuosity of the strings at figs. 41 (and 122) and after – a notoriously difficult passage – is breathtaking, but it is virtuosity in the service of musical expression. At fig. 52 the muted horn sound is wonderful and the bassoon cadenza at fig. 62 wonderfully 'right', and I particularly like the gutsy violin soloist in the 'Dream Interlude'. There are a couple of minor blemishes, as one might expect from a live

recording: bar 645 finds the 'cellos napping a bit and somebody comes in early two bars before fig.146. Slightly less minor is the unfortunate 'double crescendo' of the side drum ten bars from the end. I take this to be an editing slip.

Overall the performance is quite wonderful and does Elgar proud. The virtuosity of his orchestral writing and structural thinking, the ingenious transformations of themes – a new transformation of Falstaff's opening theme which I had not noticed before came to me from this recording – and the fascinatingly angular, chromatic and syncopated nature of the themes themselves meld into a work which is for me quite simply a masterpiece from beginning to end. The recording was made just one week after the surrender ceremony of Japan. A fascinating snippet of the ensuing Columbia news broadcast ends the CD but is tantalisingly faded into silence. I was seven months old at the time …

Paul Adrian Rooke

***In the South*, Op. 50**
***Sea Pictures*, Op. 37**
***Chanson de Matin*, Op. 15 No, 2**
Overture in D minor (Handel, orch. Elgar)
Gladys Ripley (contralto)
London Symphony Orchestra conducted by George Weldon



Pristine Audio
PASC196

Looking through my collection, I see that Weldon's recordings of *In the South*, *Sea Pictures*, and the arrangement of the Handel Overture were among my very first Elgar records, bought with birthday money some 45 years ago. It is good to see the Handel reissued on CD, and it comes across well, with more body to the sound than on the original EP. *Chanson de Matin*, on the other hand, suffers from a degree of break up of the sound, presumably due to the digital re-mastering. The performances are a reminder of just how good an Elgarian George Weldon was. However, *In the South* and *Sea Pictures* were reissued by SOMM in 2008, together with the 'Enigma' Variations, and were reviewed with enthusiasm by Steven Halls in the Journal in July 2008. Their transfer was done from the original EMI tapes, whereas the present transfer is from an LP pressing. By comparison the Pristine sound is rather thin, and there is a slight wobble in pitch at the very end of *Sea Pictures*.

There seems to be very little to choose between the issues in

terms of price, though the Pristine is available via their online site in a variety of digital formats. When faced with a choice between the two, it has to be the SOMM. It is just bad luck on Pristine that two companies came up with much the same very good idea at nearly the same time.

Martin Bird

Alto
ALC 1055

***In the South*, Op. 50**
Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
Yehudi Menuhin

'Enigma' Variations, Op. 36
London Symphony Orchestra
Eduardo Mata

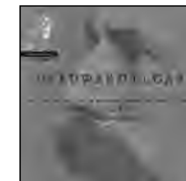
***Introduction and Allegro*, Op. 47**
Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
Barry Wordsworth

Anyone wanting three of Elgar's most popular orchestral works need not hesitate to get this CD, especially at its budget price. The American Alto label has re-mastered these recordings from 1987 (Variations) and 1994 (the other two), and the first thing that strikes one is the brilliance and immediacy of the sound quality. Eduardo Mata was a Mexican composer and conductor who was killed in a plane crash in 1995, and here, working with an orchestra that must know this score backwards, he turns in a warm and affectionate performance. The playing is lovely throughout, and Mata makes sure that much inner detail is brought out, except, strangely, the pianissimo trumpet motifs just before fig 74 in the Finale. 'W.M.B.' and 'Troyte' are suitably bluff and hearty, and there is great tenderness in 'C.A.E.' and 'Ysobel'. The mysterious 'Romanza' is rapt and inward, but 'Nimrod' is a bit too slow for me, as is the lovely cello variation 'B.G.N.' The Finale is also taken at a steady tempo (there is incidentally no organ) and the final pages need more drive, although the playing remains fabulous throughout. Timings are instructive: Mata takes 34.05 minutes, as against Gardiner at 30.34, Rattle at 32.37, Elder at 28.19, and the far-from-speedy Thomson at 31.24. But timings do not tell the whole story. One of my favourite recordings is Skrowaczewski with the Saarbrucken Radio Symphony Orchestra, which clocks in at 35.33. So Mata would not be my first choice, but it is a far from negligible performance.

In the South is a different kettle of fish. The work explodes into exuberant life, and this is as thrilling an opening as any on CD, with the orchestra obviously relishing Elgar's virtuosic writing. The horns are especially magnificent. The brazen Roman section with its grinding discords is finely handled, with heavy brass and bass drum impressive, and the following 'Canto Popolare' is exquisite, with solo viola singing against a beautifully etched backdrop of high divided violins, harp, and a fleck of colour from the glockenspiel. Menuhin keeps the final few pages on a tight leash instead of the usual dash to the finish, but with such glorious playing it seems exactly right.

Again the sound of the RPO strings in the *Introduction and Allegro* is rich and sonorous, and this is an excellent performance, one to have one marvelling yet again at Elgar's extraordinary understanding of string technique. John Eliot Gardiner has the same programme, with the excellent Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, on Deutsche Grammophon, a favourite disc of mine. But this new budget release has immense appeal, and is thoroughly recommended.

Barry Collett



Channel Classic
CCS SA 28610

Complete Songs, Vol. 2
Speak, my Heart!; Is she not passing fair?; A Song of Flight; The Shepherd's Song; The Language of Flowers; After; It isnae me; The Pipes of Pan; Shakespeare's Kingdom; Rondel; The Poet's Life; A War Song; The Torch; The River; Was it some golden Star?; Through the long Days; Arabian Serenade; As I laye a-thynkynge; Roundel; A Child Asleep; The Chariots of the Lord; The King's Way.
Amanda Roocroft (soprano), Konrad Jarnot (baritone), Reinild Mees (piano)

I reviewed Vol. 1 of this complete cycle of Elgar songs from Stichting 20ste-eeuwse Lied (20th-Century Song Foundation) in the Journal in July 2008. I felt then that it was likely to be the definitive version of this repertoire, and Vol. 2 has confirmed that. Elgar's songs are perhaps the least-known area of his output, and in years gone by they have had a bad press. That has changed. There are some gems among this collection, which often throw a different light on the composer of the great symphonic and choral works.

It might seem odd to mention the pianist first in any review of a song CD, but the Dutch pianist Reinild Mees is the guiding spirit behind this enterprise, and her understanding of Elgar's

idiosyncratic piano writing is complete. She knows just when to colour the harmonies, when to blossom into a sonorous climax, and how to support the singers without overwhelming them. Konrad Jarnot is magnificent throughout, and his diction is exemplary; even the range required in *A War Song* gives him no problems. Amanda Roocroft is also a very fine singer, and communicates the sometimes dreadful verse (*The King's Way*, for instance) as though she truly believes in it. Her performance of Elgar's first known work, *The Language of Flowers* (1872), is delightful, and shows what a charming piece this is. Also her depiction of the driving rhythms of *The Pipes of Pan* is impressive. Konrad Jarnot relishes the dramatic passion of Arabian Serenade, and the tempo fluctuations and intricate accompaniment of the little-known *A Song of Flight* are finely managed by him and his pianist.

Complaints are minimal and nit-picking. Perhaps *It isnae me*, Elgar's last song (1931) could have had more heartache than Amanda Roocroft allows here, and I was surprised by *The Shepherd's Song*, which sets off at a cracking pace – it is marked only Allegretto. By contrast, the very deliberate Allegretto of *Was it some golden Star?* is most effective, quite hypnotic at this languorous tempo. The pianist plays a strange chord in the first beat of bar 3 in *A War Song* (at least it's different in my copy), and it leads to a harmonic false-relation on the third beat, surely not intended by Elgar. But this is as nothing compared to the pleasure the CD gave me. Anyone wanting just a selection of Elgar's songs could turn to Teresa Cahill (Pearl SHE 9635) or a trio of singers on SOMM CD 220, but I have no hesitation in saying that these two Channel Classics CDs should be in every Elgarian's collection. We may not hear very often in recital, or indeed want to, *Chariots of the Lord* and *The King's Way*, but they are worth putting up with for the sake of most of the others. For the first time we have his complete songs together, and they shed an important light on this generally neglected repertoire.

Barry Collett

Vaughan Williams: Piano Concerto, Suite from *The Wasps*, *English Folk Song Suite* (orch. Gordon Jacob), *The Running Set*
Ashley Wass (piano)
Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra
James Judd

NAXOS
8.572304

The Piano Concerto is by far the most substantial work on this disc, and I was attracted to it for a variety of reasons. It was composed between 1926 and 1930; at much the same time Elgar was again dabbling with the sketches for a piano concerto. It was written for Harriet Cohen, to whom Elgar gave the short score of his concerto (and for whom, as regular readers may recall, both Elgar and I had a certain penchant!). Ashley Wass is well known for his performances of Elgar (and not just on record), as is the conductor, James Judd.

Whereas the music of the post-war Elgar casts its sad gaze on what might have been and what has been lost, the music of the post-war Vaughan Williams has an extraordinary prescience. This concerto has the mood of the Fourth Symphony: in fact it could well be described as a symphony with piano obbligato. Bartók thought well of it, and no wonder. It is a work of considerable power which explores the full range of tone colours of the piano, and the performers do it full justice.

The rest of this disc comprises mostly familiar music that requires little comment other than to say that it is neatly played and well recorded. I had not heard *The Running Set* before. It was written for the 1934 festival of the English Folk Dance Society, where it was performed by the assembled masses. Toccata-like in form, its relentless pace brings to mind Beecham's comment: 'That'll make the blighters hop'.

Martin Bird

EMI Classics for Pleasure

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Stanford: Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in G, Op. 81, 'For lo, I raise up', Op. 145, *A Song of Peace*, **Op. 113 No. 4, 'Pray that Jerusalem', Three motets, Op. 38, Postlude in D minor, Op. 105 No. 6, Magnificat, Op. 164,** *A Song of Wisdom*, **Op. 113 No. 6, 'O for a closer walk with God', 'The Lord is my shepherd', Op. 115, Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in C, Op. 115**
Choir of King's College, Cambridge
Stephen Cleobury

Here, at bargain price, is a superb collection of church music from that master of the genre, Charles Villiers Stanford. I have sung, conducted – and loved – this music for much of my life, and it is both a joy and a privilege to listen to such a glorious recital as this. Alastair Hussain sings the treble solo in the Magnificat in G with poise and perfection, and if Francis Brett doesn't quite have the breath control to do equal justice to the Nunc Dimittis, at least he avoids the comment made by the conductor the last time I sang it ('… a little less like Val Doonican, please, Martin'). A stray wrong note in this, sung with such total confidence by half the trebles that I wondered if I'd misheard, does nothing to detract from the whole.

The two songs from Op. 113 are sung by the tenor John Mark Ainsley, and benefit immeasurably from being followed, as Stanford intended, by their associated hymns. The complete cycle is available on Chandos, sung by the baritone Stephen Varcoe, but it is only now, listening to the present disc, that they have struck a chord with me. The Op. 38 motets include that minor masterpiece, 'Beati quorum'. Even finer is the sadly neglected double-choir Magnificat, with its hint of Bach's setting, dedicated to the memory of Parry. These and the rest of the music on this wonderfully performed and recorded disc make me even more sure that in Stanford we have one of the most seriously under-rated musicians of the last 150 years. His contribution as composer, performer, and teacher was immense, and we should never forget it.

Martin Bird

LETTERS

From Dr Jerrold Northrop Moore

Martin Bird's letter on the subject of Wulstan Atkins as Elgar's godson interests me. The research provided appears to go some way towards answering a question which has lived at the back of my mind for many years.

My own acquaintance with Wulstan Atkins began in the summer of 1959, when he kindly allowed me to come and see him, on the basis of a recommendation from Elgar's daughter Carice. (It was part of a youthful endeavour to meet as many as possible of Elgar's surviving friends and relations.) In Wulstan's case, it led to a series of visits then and in later summers. After I came to live in London, the visits were back and forth. At no time was the 'godson' idea ever mooted.

Then, after Carice's death in 1970, it was casually mentioned by a friend, as a fact. I remember my surprise at having never heard of it – from Wulstan, from Carice, or from any of the several dozen Elgar friends I knew by then.

The more I thought about it, the more questions arose. At their head came the matter, now raised by Martin Bird, of how a Catholic could undertake (even in absentia) to promise to bring up an Anglican child in the ways of his religion.

I wonder whether other Elgarians who knew the parties concerned can confirm – or not – my recollection that the notion was never put forward during Carice's lifetime.

From Edmund M. Green

In his editorial in the November issue, Julian Rushton mentioned five criteria proposed in his invaluable book on the Variations: 'I rather hoped these criteria would act as a deterrent; instead they have served a number of would-be-solvers to structure their arguments. Perhaps that constitutes a modest benefit'. In my opinion they would be of the greatest possible benefit if only would-be solvers would pay attention to them. Time and again solutions have been proposed that are contradicted by the clues left by the composer. Rushton, in his effort to bring order out of chaos, has itemized these clues in his book. Unfortunately, would-be-solvers often ignore one or more of them.

The criterion most often ignored is that the other theme must be 'larger' than Elgar's theme. For example: if the suggested solution is five notes from a Mozart symphony, the person proposing that solution ought to explain how five notes are 'larger' than Elgar's theme. Similarly, some solutions have been based on a musical theme that is the 'right length' or that 'fits' bars one through six and the first beat of bar seven of the theme. However, if the suggested solution is the same length or 'fits' the original theme, then how is it 'larger'? Larger does not mean the same size. We seldom, if ever, get an explanation of this apparent inconsistency.

The other clue that is often ignored or misunderstood is Elgar's statement to Dora Penny: 'I thought that you, of all people, would guess it'. Most solutions to date have been based on musical themes, and the one person 'of all people' who

would be most likely to guess a musical theme was George Robertson Sinclair [the only musician among 'friends pictured within'], not Miss Penny. It is true that she was a clergyman's daughter, but it is highly improbable that she (of all people) would guess a solution based on classical music in general, and liturgical music in particular. Those who propose a musical solution should take this inconvenient fact into consideration.

From Dr J.H. Roberts

This letter has been prompted by the one from Barry Collett in the Journal for November (p. 67) in which some of the 'extras' players and instruments with which Sir Edward enlarged his standard orchestra are listed. Two works and their percussion, *Falstaff* and the Second Symphony, receive special attention here.

The re-mastering of the Elgar 78s now allow details of the recordings to come to light that were difficult to pin-point formerly, and in the Journal for July 1998, p. 253, a letter concluded (as agreed by other listeners) that the orchestra assembled at the Abbey Road Studios for *Falstaff* recording contained no bass drum even though this work, as with so many others by Elgar has a number of telling entries for the instrument (see for example Journal, July 1996, p.271).

Readers with orchestral experience will know that the composer's requirements are sacrosanct, and bearing in mind the nature of the occasion (with its party of invited dignitaries) it is surprising that greater effort was not made to capture the low frequencies of the drum. Current opionion says that the technology available in 1931 should have made this achievable, but it is known that 78 discs were subjected to 'wear-testing', i.e. many repeated playings, and when a failure occurred it was usually the bass drum that was labelled the culprit.

In J.N. Moore's *Elgar on Record* the number of players engaged for each of the recording sessions is listed and for *Falstaff* we read 'Timpani and two percussion'. This is a man short of the three that Collett mentions, whereas in the fly-leaf of the miniature score for *Falstaff* Elgar specifies four players (even a fifth is needed at one point). Here again Elgar's wishes appear not to have been carried through. Even more surprise follows from a careful listening to the records made by Elgar that pre-date the Abbey Road sessions. The bass drum can be heard, for example, in his performances of the First and Second *Pomp and Circumstance* Marches with the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra.

In the third movement of the Second Symphony there is a passage that has been the subject of much attention in the literature: 'an incessant maddening hammering on the big drum rising at the climax to a hideous din' (Journal, May 1992, p. 15). At this point in a miniature score once owned by Carice she wrote 'terrific' in the margin, when attending one of her father's concerts. This hammering is done by tambourine (the extra player mentioned by Collett), snare drum, and bass drum, with cymbals at the climax. The distinctive sound of the tambourine usually stands out but on the 1927 discs one can only conclude that the instrument was omitted. Again, from *Elgar on Record* only two of the needed four players were engaged and engineer anxiety could account

for no bass drum, but tambourine produces no troublesome low frequencies.

One of the dignitaries invited to attend the opening of the Abbey Road Studios was Paderewski to whom Elgar had dedicated his Symphonic Prelude *Polonia*, and Collett identifies this work as the one with the largest orchestra that Elgar employed. It was given a run-through on the morning of 12 November 1931. Judging from the above we might surmise that the management engaged as many as three of the six percussion players required for *Polonia*; but, in the end, unfortunately, things were taken no further since Paderewski failed to attend due to an attack of cramp.

W.H.. ('Billy') Reed assisted Elgar in work on the Violin Concerto. He was rewarded with the dedicatee of *Sospiri*, a remarkable slow movement which Elgar published for violin and piano and for string orchestra with additional harp and harmonium (Op. 70).

100 YEARS AGO…

Edward and Alice saw in the New Year at a large party at 88 Portland Place London, the home of the eminent solicitor Sir George Lewis. Over the next few days they went to the theatre – *The Importance of Being Earnest* and Maeterlinck's *Blue Bird* – and attended a private view at Burlington House. Edward was looking for a *pied-a-terre* in London to work on the violin concerto he was writing for Kreisler. He was also composing a short work for bassoon and orchestra, and orchestrating the Gilbert Parker songs for the Jaeger Memorial Concert on 24 January. Returning to London by himself on 12 January, he took a flat in Queen Anne's Mansions in Victoria. On the 20th he asked Lady Speyer (the violinist Leonora von Stosch) to try through the concerto's Andante. The Jaeger concert four days later contained two Elgar works: the Variations conducted by Richter – a '*splendid* performance' according to Alice – and the three new songs sung by Muriel Foster, who came out of retirement for the occasion. The Elgars saw Jaeger's widow and children: 'very touching'. Jaeger's fellow variation, Dorabella, was also present: she found it 'rather a trying experience'.

The next week was a mixture of work and social occasions. Alice stayed with Edward until 1 February, during which time they dined with Landon Ronald and his wife. Ronald was keen to conduct Elgar's symphony, having given the Italian premiere three weeks earlier. On 8 February Elgar received a cheque for £208 from Novello for royalties on performances of the symphony (the figure should have been higher, but Novello was having 'a lot of trouble' extracting money from some of the 'foreigners' who were playing it). Elgar returned to Hereford on 9 February, 'much depressed', and having doubts about the concerto. He wrote the song *The River* on 18 and 19 February, and two days later returned to London, initially staying with Schuster but eventually – with Alice's help – finding a flat in New Cavendish Street, just off Portland Place and near the Queen's Hall. He and Alice and Carice moved in at the beginning of March, but life was soon taken up with the social whirl, visiting theatres and exhibitions and calling on or receiving friends. On 11 March he wrote to Schuster's sister: 'I have no news of anything artistic – such things seem to be dropping out of my small weary life'.

The letter to Adela Schuster was in reply to her invitation to Elgar to stay at her house in Torquay. He initially refused, but then Schuster himself offered to take him, and to enlarge the visit to the South-West by a motor tour. They left on 30 March, and after three days at Torquay moved on to the Stuart Wortley home at Tintagel. On 4 April Schuster and Elgar walked with Alice and Clare Stuart Wortley to Boscastle, and in the evening they went down to the castle ruins by the sea. The following day Elgar and Schuster left Tintagel to visit Truro and Land's End, spending the night at Falmouth. The next day, en route to Fowey, they found the house 'Porthgwidden' in the village of Feock, which belonged to Lady Mary Lygon's husband, the Hon. Henry Trefusis. Later that year while staying with Lady Mary and her husband Elgar reminded Schuster of their visit: 'You remember we looked round the corner of the House on to the terrace'.

On 8 April they arrived in Exeter and the following day began their journey home with a 'lovely drive over Dartmoor', and then via Salisbury and Stonehenge to Romsey and Winchester. Elgar wrote to Canon Gorton: 'We had east winds mostly but glorious sun & it seemed difficult to believe we were in England when walking amongst the gorgeous rhododendrons & camellias in full bloom'. They arrived back on 11 April: Alice noted '…so radiant & looking so well'.

Geoffrey Hodgkins

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