



# News

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Centre for the History of Music in Britain, the Empire and the Commonwealth

CHOMBEC is based at the Department of Music, University of Bristol

## The Edgar Hunt Estate Bequest



In January 2008, the University of Bristol came into the possession of a remarkable collection of documents, comprising printed music, concert programmes, photographs, minute books, annotated scores and diverse other materials, which had previously belonged to the recorder player and musicologist Edgar Hunt (1909-2006).

Edgar was the son of Dr Hubert Hunt, organist of Bristol Cathedral from 1901 until his death in 1945 and conductor of the Bristol Madrigal Society from 1915. Hubert Hunt began researching the life and music of the Bristol-born composer, R L Pearsall, which Edgar completed and published in 1977 as *Robert Lucas Pearsall: the 'compleat gentleman' and his music (1795-1856)* (copies of which are available from CHOMBEC for £7-50). Edgar's sister Enid (1911-2003) remained in Bristol all her life and was the backbone of several local musical institutions. For many years she was custodian of the precious archives belonging to the BMS, until it was decided that they should be lodged at Bristol Central Library, where they would be available to researchers. In 2007 that same archive was moved to Bristol University's Special Collections (see Donald Gugan's article, CN4).

The Edgar Hunt Estate Bequest assembles personal collections deriving from all three members of the family. The items that were passed from Hubert to Edgar include a collection of correspondence relating to Pearsall, in particular letters from Pearsall's youngest daughter, Philippa, who spent much of her life documenting and archiving her father's belongings. The letters are an invaluable source of insight into Pearsall's life. Other Pearsall-related material includes photographs and plates used in the Hunt biography, some published editions of works and many autograph manuscripts.

Hubert Hunt's personal notebooks also provide a glimpse into musical life at Bristol Cathedral in the early 20th century. From 1901 to 1919 he minutely recorded the length of lessons at services, the time the psalms took to sing, and the music that was sung. However, the jewel amongst his papers is the collection of Bach preludes and fugues and Mendelssohn sonatas for the organ. In these volumes are registration and performance markings by the legendary Albert Schweitzer, who gave a recital at Bristol Cathedral in 1928.

Enid's contribution to the archive is by far the largest in terms of quantity. Apart from the notebooks and minute books of the musical committees to which she devoted herself, it is mostly attributable to concert and theatre programmes from the early 1900s to the 1960s. It provides a perfect view of concert life in Bristol in the first half of the 20th century, and there are some true gems, including the programme for Rutland Boughton's first festival at Glastonbury in 1914.

The richness and diversity of the archive means that it will be of interest not only to musicologists, but also to others from many different academic disciplines, and the University and CHOMBEC is very grateful, therefore, to Edgar Hunt's daughter, Mrs Rosemary Marciniak, who made the generous gift of her father's collection to us.

James Hobson

## Welcome from the Director

Stephen Banfield

CHOMBEC has been exploring ninth symphonies – Rubbra's and Vaughan Williams's. Both were performed by Bristol University forces during the early part of 2008, and CHOMBEC arranged afternoon workshops to coincide with these events. Andrew Brown reports on the Rubbra workshop and concert below. The Vaughan Williams afternoon on 9 February consisted of four talks on *Vaughan Williams, Hardy and the Ninth Symphony* preceding the 50th anniversary performance given by the University Symphony Orchestra under John Pickard in an evening concert that also included the Mass in G Minor sung by the University Singers under Glyn Jenkins. They ranged across harmonic meanings (David Manning on 'Vaughan Williams's Spiritual Quest'), literary soundscapes (Mark Asquith on 'Hardy's Aeolian Music'), programmatic elements in the music (John Pickard on 'Interpreting the Ninth') and the British musical climate in which Vaughan Williams produced this powerful work (Diana McVeagh on 'The Ninth, Before and After'). Attendees concentrated hard and helped draw these threads together in purposeful discussion.

We are delighted to announce a new Honorary Associate, Professor Philip Payton, who introduces himself below. Philip, a Bristol University graduate, is the leading historian of Cornwall, directs the Institute of Cornish Studies, and neatly links up our Centre's regional and international research briefs in his publications, chief among them *Cornwall: a history* (1996) and *The Cornish Overseas* (1999), both now widely sold in second paperback editions and containing plenty of direct or indirect reference to music. He is also editor of the yearbook *Cornish Studies*, where again music features not infrequently.

We welcome several other new names. Ann Morgan-Davies is now CHOMBEC administrator. All enquiries about events, Friends subscriptions and mailings should in the first instance be addressed to her at the Department of Music, University of Bristol, Victoria Rooms, Queens Rd, Bristol BS8 1SA, tel 0117 954 5028, email ann.morgan-

davies@bristol.ac.uk. Developmental work, networking, cataloguing, digitisation and publicity will henceforward be in the hands of our capable postgraduates Alisabeth (Libby) Concord, Nick Nourse, James Hobson and David Bednall, though we shall miss Giles Cooke's contributions as Visiting Fellow 2007-8.

New columnists, in addition to our much appreciated regular ones, include Karl Kroeger, corresponding member for the USA, a leading expert on American psalmody and an old friend and colleague from your editor's early career days at Keele University. David R M Irving introduces himself and his work below, but I should add that we are indebted to him for having taught at Bristol this spring on the AHRC-funded Colonialism workshop for PhD students in a variety of disciplines from all over the country. Michael Wright, a leading Jew's harper (see [www.jewsharper.info](http://www.jewsharper.info)), has teamed up with Angela Impey, an ethnomusicologist in South Africa who also plays the umakhweyana, for their research on the colonial ramifications of the Jew's harp. Richard Barnard, whose talk on *Otto* was one of the highlights of the 2007-8 Music Research Seminar series, is corresponding member for Bath. Celia Durk, who runs an arts centre in Cheltenham, is currently on the British Music MA programme.

As from 2008, all University of Bristol postgraduates studying for the MA in British Music or researching within the Centre's fields of activity automatically become Friends of CHOMBEC for the duration of their period of registration. We are delighted to welcome them, not least because several, and some of their undergraduate colleagues, have been doing rather well with nominations and prizes recently. *Musica Britannica* administers the annual Louise Dyer awards for research students of British music, and this year James Hobson, well known to CN readers for his work on Pearsall and music in Bristol, and Fabian Huss, who joined us last autumn from Ireland for a PhD on Frank Bridge's chamber music, have each been awarded £400, James for a visit to the Pearsall

manuscripts at the monastery of Einsiedeln in Switzerland, Fabian for trips to primary sources and for the purchase of PhD theses (of which there are a growing number on Bridge). We offer them our hearty congratulations, as indeed we do a number of the undergraduates who took part in the Charles Wesley concert in December (see illustration on page 3 of CN4), namely Emily Vine, Matt Stevens, Ben Edmonds and Benedict Todd. Emily was invited to sing in the extremely competitive Anthony Lewis Award at the Royal Academy of Music in April, again

administered by *Musica Britannica* and with Stephen Varcoe heading the panel of judges. Matt, Ben and Benedict have all been nominated as candidates for end-of-year university prizes because of the excellence of their work.

The Bristol Madrigal Society archive handlists are now on the CHOMBEC website (see under Resources & Links), and similar documents for the Edgar Hunt and Tippett collections will follow shortly.

## CHOMBEC News and Events

### Rubbra Revived: *Sinfonia sacra* and Beyond The Rubbra Workshop and Concert

Andrew Brown

*Why seek ye the living among the dead?*

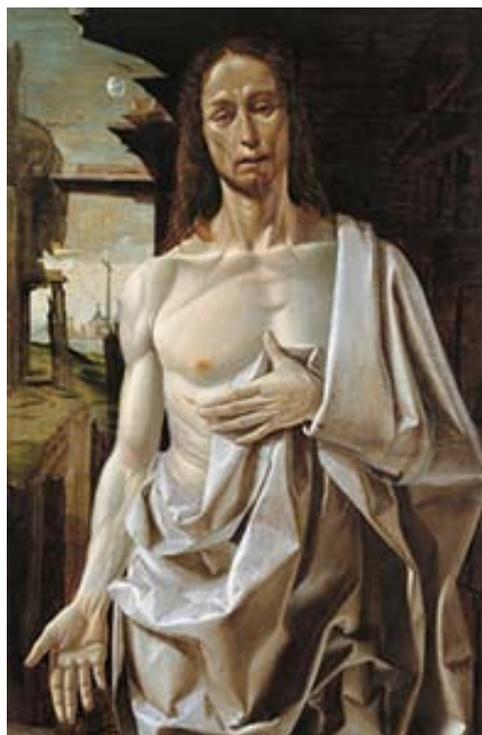
On 15 March, the University of Bristol Choral Society and Symphony Orchestra under John Pickard gave a performance of the *Sinfonia sacra* at the Victoria Rooms. Beforehand, CHOMBEC held a workshop to prepare for this rare event. At the summit of Rubbra's achievement, the symphony (his ninth) has been neglected since its première in 1973. A choral setting subtitled *The Resurrection*, its texts are mostly from the Gospels and Acts with punctuating Latin hymns – a modern sequel to Bach's Passions.

Edmund Rubbra (1901-86) was born into an artisan family of musical chapel-goers. From composition lessons with Cyril Scott, he proceeded, on scholarships, to Holst at Reading University and the RCM. Known initially as a pianist and critic, he produced his first symphony in 1937; ten more were to follow. Alongside choral music, this cycle characterised his maturity. Pre- and postwar works were acclaimed but by the 60s the critical consensus was less sympathetic.

At CHOMBEC's seminar, the artist Benedict Rubbra and musicologist and librarian Adrian Yardley spoke of their sometimes distant father, prompted by Stephen Banfield's questions. His friendship with Finzi, wide interests, private humour and social unease were mentioned. Although a convert to Roman Catholicism, marital arrangements were unconventional; his French second wife, a violinist, did not, it seems, provide domestic stability. His formal faith became a necessary anchor.

Leo Black, a pupil of Rubbra at Oxford, gave an overview of the symphonies entitled 'The Fall and Rise of Edmund Rubbra'. Using recordings, he traced a 'developmental arc' from the frenetic First to the enigma of no 11, referring to the importance of counterpoint and (sometimes) 'dominant intervals' in Rubbra's symphonic method, also to the vicissitudes of critical reception. A somewhat

Sibelian manner in the early symphonies developed into a searching late style; the *Sinfonia sacra* took over a decade to achieve its final form.



*Bramantino: Cristo resucitado. Reproduced by permission of the Fundación Colección Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid*

Katrina Buzzard, PhD student at the University of Newcastle, examined 'Intertextuality and Form' in the *Sinfonia sacra*. Its genre – originally conceived as an oratorio and not accepted as a symphony proper by some critics – was compared with other hybrids, including *A Child of Our Time* (Rubbra's quotation of Lutheran chorales akin to Tippett's spirituals). The *Sinfonia's* cohesion stemmed from the seminal opening: an ambiguous A minor chord containing the notes E, A, and the

ominous F–B, used tellingly throughout the work (resolving to A major only at the final cadence).

The evening performance was remarkable. A pivotal contralto soloist having withdrawn, Pamela Rudge had only hours to learn her difficult part, yet as the Narrator she gave a reading of great conviction. Niall Hoskins' 'last words' of Jesus and the brief duet with Emily Vine's Mary Magdalene were also memorable. John Pickard revealed the vision in this transcendent masterpiece, his amateur choir and orchestra scaling the heights asked of them.

A renaissance painting, *The Risen Christ* by Bramantino, encountered by Rubbra in 1961, proved inspirational (an intense personal agony depicted in the striking image strangely reminiscent of his own *Tenebrae* nocturns). Dramatising a trial of faith against the darkness and pain of the sepulchre, the extraordinary *Sinfonia sacra*'s learned dialectic of ancient and modern has gathered many strands of a passionate life to triumphant summation – a more than personal statement of lasting values for an uncertain age.

## A Tippett Archive

Giles Cooke

CHOMBEC has recently received an archive of items relating to the music of Sir Michael Tippett (1905–98), very kindly donated by Andrew Duckworth of Corsham. It includes performance announcements and concert programmes with informative notes by Tippett authorities. There are articles from music journals about individual works, and interviews with Tippett in the press, often from the time surrounding a first performance. Works mentioned in the collection range in scale from the piano sonatas and the chamber and orchestral music to the monumental operas. Chronologically the articles range from the early pieces for voice and piano to the late orchestral *Rose Lake*. His time at Corsham is represented by items of local interest and a pencil portrait of 1964 by his boyfriend Karl Hawker.

The archive can provide a wide-ranging introduction for students just getting to know Tippett, or a useful tool for persons exploring particular facets of the composer and his times. Anyone tracing the reception history of Tippett's music in his own lifetime, for instance, would find here an accurate reflection, from early reviews stating that Tippett was 'not yet as well known as he should be' (Colin Mason, *The Listener*, 11 Sept 1947) to the retrospective tributes of the 1980s and 90s, when Tippett had become a grandee of 20th-century music.

The collection, though not large, is informative from either a local viewpoint (a transcript of Tippett's talk at the Arnolfini, Bristol, including a question-and-answer session), national (a large helping of opera publications, programmes, and commentary), or international (news from Chicago at the première of Symphony no 4). As a

trove of information which was being compiled even while Tippett was producing new work, it is a small but valuable window into our understanding of Tippett in his time.

*Like the Edgar Hunt Estate Bequest, the Tippett Archive will be housed in the University of Bristol Special Collections in the Arts and Social Sciences Library and will be available to bona fide researchers. Contacts: Michael Richardson or Hannah Lowery.*

## Musica Britannica Call for Proposals

*Musica Britannica*: a national collection of music is actively encouraging proposals for scholarly editions of British musical repertoire. Above all, it seeks editors of the highest calibre offering proposals in the 19th and 20th centuries. Reviewed later in this issue, *MBLXXXV (Eighteenth-Century Psalmody)* has broken new ground in presenting a vernacular repertoire, and certainly much exciting work could follow on this principle. Might we eventually hope for a West End musical comedy; an anthology of brass or military band music, or of minstrel and music-hall songs; songs from the pleasure gardens; a silent or sound film score; a theatrical pasticcio or burlesque? Yet much high art music might also be considered. In recent committee meetings, various suggestions have been made, involving Lutyens, Coleridge-Taylor, Stanford, Smyth, Maconchy, Bax, Charles Wood, Walmisley, Macfarren, Shakespeare overtures, Bishop theatre music, 19th-century madrigals, and much else besides. All might prove productive, yet editors are needed to make the proposal and then perform the expert labour of love, often over many years and always without commensurate reward. Although *Musica Britannica*'s productivity is as great now as it has ever been, if not greater, only two or three volumes appear each year and the lead time is considerable. Do not consider making a proposal unless you would be happy to devote a decade or so to seeing it into print!

We know that some of our readers have, or are in the process of acquiring, the skills to become professional scholarly editors. If you are one of these, please do consider helping to broaden the scope and continue the high standards of stewardship that *Musica Britannica* has attained over nearly 60 years by putting forward a proposal. If you are interested, contact me or John Irving in the first instance, for John has edited a volume and I am a member of the editorial committee, so we both can give you some idea of what it would entail. Do bear in mind, though, that *Musica Britannica*'s format makes the presentation of substantial scores for full orchestra problematic.

Stephen Banfield

## From Our Honorary Associates: 4

Philip Payton

I felt greatly honoured when I was approached recently and asked whether I would consider becoming CHOMBEC's fourth Honorary Associate. Of course, I was more than delighted and readily agreed. But I was also rather humbled, perhaps even a little embarrassed. For, while not exactly being tone deaf, and certainly able (on a good day) to distinguish between Mozart and Beethoven, I had never considered myself a person of great musical insight or ability. True, as a teenager I was an enthusiastic if less-than-gifted member of a Boy Scout marching band. Yet even here the attraction was not so much the fight to produce a few contorted, off-key notes from my battered bugle but rather the smart white gloves, lanyard and khaki Baden-Powell broad-brimmed hat that had a certain postcolonial allure. Maybe, on reflection, this was an early indication of the key to my connection with the world of music: not as composer, performer or sophisticated *aficionado* but as someone who relished the historical and cultural contexts in which music existed. As our discordant toots and bangs rudely disturbed the neighbourhood, so I was transported by these strains of Empire to Ladysmith, Durban and the Relief of Mafeking.

In fact, the imperial dimension occasioned my first academic contact with music. As a postgraduate student at the University of Adelaide in the mid-1970s, I was busily researching the Cornish in South Australia, tracing the emigration of Cornish families in the 19th century and illuminating their experiences in this new land, especially in the colony's copper-mining districts. Here the transplantation and eventual metamorphosis of Cornish cultural and social patterns proved a particular fascination, from the establishment of the several Methodist denominations that the Cornish had known at home to the trade union movement that owed its cohesion to a sense of Cornish ethnic solidarity. Intriguingly, a major part of this activity was musical – from the many brass and silver bands that were seemingly in perpetual demand to lead Methodist tea-treat anniversaries, trade union demonstrations and other public parades, to the chapel choirs and Christmas carol parties that gave a strong religious dimension to musical performance. Later, there were male voice choirs, just as there were in Cornwall itself, and local musicians of rare talent emerged to compose 'Cornish carols' that were unmistakably in the Cornish tradition. In the University Library I stumbled across a tatty volume, its pages yellowing with the passage of time: *The Christmas Welcome: a choice collection of Cornish carols*, published at Moonta, South Australia, in 1893. Not many years later, back in the UK, I produced a new edition, with introduction, re-titled for the occasion *Cornish Carols from Australia* (Redruth, 1984).

Fast forward a decade or so, and I was Director of the Institute of Cornish Studies, part of the

University of Exeter but based in Cornwall. As I slowly built my small team of like-minded colleagues and students, what I had somehow known all along became ever more apparent: that music was an integral and ever-present aspect of Cornwall's distinctive cultural identity. This was part of a rich regional mosaic within Britain itself but it was also, as my Australian adventures had shown me, a vital element of a kaleidoscopic transnational experience where the Cornish had done their bit alongside many others in moulding the popular music of the Empire and Commonwealth.

So perhaps it's not so odd that I should be that fourth Honorary Associate. Certainly, at the Institute of Cornish Studies we have a small core of postgraduate students devoted to the study of Cornish music in its many guises – Frances Bennett, Merv Davey, Susan Skinner, Mike O'Connor – and our Assistant Director, Dr Garry Tregidga, is himself an accomplished musician. We look forward to supporting CHOMBEC's exciting agenda and contributing as fully as we can to the expanding body of knowledge on the music of Britain, the Empire and the Commonwealth.

## Research in Progress

## 1. Michael Wright and Angela Impey

## The Birmingham–KwaZulu Natal Connection

The Jew's harp is one of those common items we tend to ignore when exploring the history of trade between the UK and South Africa, or indeed anywhere. The idea that something that was, and still is, seen as somewhat insignificant both as an object and a musical instrument can tell us anything of importance might seem somewhat far-fetched. There is, however, research emerging of a considerable export market of Jew's harps made in an area centred around Dudley, Rowley Regis and Birmingham from 1800 to the 1970s, and growing evidence of their adapted use by women in the KwaZulu Natal Province of South Africa.

For most of the 19th century and well in to the 20th the West Midlands was the centre of a huge manufacturing industry, most of which was for the export trade. In 1935 the US department of commerce indicated a concern that Troman's, one of the leading makers throughout the period and despite

making 100,000 instruments a week, were struggling to keep up with demand.<sup>1</sup>



Harpers in the field

The use of Jew's harps as trade goods has a long history going back at least to the 16th century when Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, noted that when negotiating with locals in the New World, 'yet if they would bring him hatchets, knives, and Jew's harps, he bid then assure me, he had a Mine of gold, and could refine it, & would trade with me.' These particular instruments would have been imported from the continent, but with the coming of the industrial revolution, a number of families saw an opportunity to exploit the new processes to make Jew's harps in considerable quantities. Two of the most significant makers were the Barnsley and Troman families, and we know that the Barnsleys began the mass production of Jew's harps specifically for the export market. The *Dudley Official Guide* of 1968 explains:

For many years the Barnsley family had been farmers in the Netherton area, renting their farm from the Earls of Dudley, but they soon realised that local coal and iron ore could be transformed into items then in great demand for trading with the natives in the newly discovered parts of the world.<sup>2</sup>

The family has a story that says that the founder, John Barnsley, carried the instruments to Birmingham every Saturday for sale to a distributor, who shipped them to Bristol for export to the 'natives': 'These [Jew's harps] were made for sale by the gross to traders from Bristol who came to the White Horse Inn, Paradise Street, Birmingham, to make their purchases from the founder of the firm, John Barnsley.'<sup>3</sup> Specific evidence, however, both as to the transport to Bristol and the export to South Africa has proved elusive.

Jew's harps were likely to have been made available in South Africa by way of a number of sources. Weekly advertisements published in the *Zululand Times* from 1907 reveal that commercial music stores such as Jackson Bros, Durban, traded 'musical instruments of every description'. While Jew's harps may not have been singled out, the Jackson Bros advertisement provides evidence of a vigorous

trade of musical instruments from England, Europe and America to South Africa at that time.

They were sold at 'concession stores' that were located on the gold mines in Johannesburg and run by Jewish immigrants from Lithuania. These were general dealerships-cum-eating houses customarily located near mine compounds.<sup>4</sup> The concession stores played an important role in introducing western instruments to rural Africans (these included also guitars, violins, concertinas, accordions and mouth organs), and it was through the networks of migrant workers that many new musical practices were disseminated throughout the region. It is probable that the Jew's harp was readily adopted by Nguni people as there already existed a repertoire of mouth bows in their traditional musical cultures. In Angela's research, both umqangala and isizenze mouth bows are unambiguously associated with pre-marital women. These bows were used to compose love songs or songs that commented on the behaviour of friends, boy-friends and family. The Jew's harp fulfilled a similar purpose.

This is a totally new area of research and we are extremely confident we can shed light on an area of the world and a musical instrument that has been rather neglected.



## 2. David R M Irving

### Musical colonialism in the far east

I suppose that growing up in Australia and studying music at university there made me think deeply and critically about the worldwide diffusion of European music. The mechanisms of trade, empire, and settlement have had an irrevocable impact on global musical practices since the turn of the 16th century. Populations have migrated, cultures have collided, and musical practices have evolved. Thinking about

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.birmingham.gov.uk:81/Media/> (accessed 1 July 2008)

<sup>2</sup> *Dudley Official Guide*, 1970 (from a clippings file)

<sup>3</sup> *Birmingham Evening Mail*, 1970 (from a clippings file)

<sup>4</sup> See *From a Land Far Off: a selection of South African Yiddish stories* ed Joseph Sherman (Cape Town, 1987), and Joseph Sherman, 'Serving the natives: whiteness as a price of hospitality in South African Yiddish literature', *Journal of Southern African Studies* xxvi/3 (2000), 505-22.

these phenomena and their related issues made me pursue an area of research that would link the emergence of early modern global networks with the evolution of musical practices around the world.

I undertook my doctoral studies in historical musicology at Clare College, Cambridge, where I wrote my dissertation under the supervision of Tess Knighton on music in the Philippine Islands during the first 250 years of Spanish rule (1565-1815). Examining the exchanges of commodities and musical practices that formed a significant part of the processes of Spanish colonisation and Roman Catholic evangelisation in the Philippines, I sought to consider how music acted as a mediator in cultural transformation and in the development of hybrid musical styles. I also attempted to reconstruct an idea of indigenous musical practices that had been forgotten or suppressed during the Spanish colonial period, by taking a fresh approach to colonial historiography and reading texts from an indigenous perspective.

The British Empire comes into this particular narrative only briefly, insofar as the British occupation of Manila (1762-64, during the Seven Years War) is concerned. One of the possible cultural ramifications of this episode was the introduction of English musical repertoire to the Philippines. In the aftermath of the occupation, travel writers regularly noted the performance of contredanses, and even the instrumental music of Handel, in Manila and parts of the Philippine Archipelago that were remote from the capital, suggesting that the popularity of this music was quite pervasive.

Since October 2007, I have been a Junior Research Fellow at Christ's College, Cambridge. I am currently writing a book, based on my dissertation, which is forthcoming from Oxford University Press as part of the new series *Currents in Latin American and Iberian Music* (an estimated publication date is 2010). At the Faculty of Music, Cambridge, I teach a third-year undergraduate specialist paper on the Jesuits and music, 1540-1773, and supervise undergraduate dissertations on a variety of topics beyond the scope of the traditional European canon. I have recently been appointed Reviews Editor of the journal *Eighteenth-Century Music*, a role I shall take on in 2009.

My next project is a comparative study of major early modern empires (not just European) and connections between them in order to construct a historical perspective on the worldwide exchanges of musical ideas, commodities, and practices. This is a wide-ranging and ambitious endeavour that will take me through an enormous variety of disciplines, diverse performance practices, and archival depositories around the world. Stay tuned!

### 3. Philip Lancaster

'A gathering place of beauty'  
Recent developments in the  
research into the life and work of Ivor  
Gurney

There comes a point in the reception of an artist which seems to affirm and consolidate their reputation. Such is the case with the Gloucester composer-poet Ivor Gurney. Since his death in December 1937 his reputation has steadily grown, championed by figures such as Gerald and Joy Finzi, Michael Hurd, and latterly by the Ivor Gurney Society, founded by Anthony Boden in 1995. Last year the first dedicated Ivor Gurney conference was held in Cambridge; in June an all-Gurney CD was recorded by Susan Bickley and Iain Burnside for the popular Naxos label; and in November the first of what promises to be a few books on Gurney will be published: a dual biography of Gurney and his close friend Marion Scott, written by Pamela Blevins.

In January, I began a major project to reorganise and catalogue the Gurney archive in Gloucester, whilst also trying to draw on other local archives in search of materials that may not yet be known. This has led to some interesting discoveries, including a new photograph of Gurney at the King's School, in a picture of the school football team; and within the archive itself, one of Gurney's pen nibs – the tool of his trade – has come to light, secreted within the spine of a notebook used by Gurney towards the end of 1918. This cataloguing work is being supported by Great Western Research, Gloucestershire County Council and Exeter University, and is associated with the recently founded Centre for South West Writing in Exeter. The Centre's director, Prof Tim Kendall, and I are co-editing a three-volume edition of Gurney's complete poetical works for Oxford University Press's prestigious Oxford English Texts series, affirming Gurney's place as an important poet. This will include some 400 unpublished poems, an example of which is published for the first time in this edition of *CHOMBEC News*: a poem composed in June 1925 in which he recalls what is probably the 1905 Worcester Three Choirs Festival, at which Elgar – Gurney's hero – was present to hear performances of *The Dream of Gerontius* and *The Apostles* (this latter including a setting of the Beatitudes in the scene 'By the wayside').

Work on Gurney's music also continues, bringing the first of Gurney's choral works to publication and performance, and also, later this year, the publication of the first orchestral work. I am also working with the BBC, putting together a Composer of the Week programme on Gurney for 2009. He may never be a household name, but Gurney's reputation as both composer and poet is in the ascendancy.

## Two Poems

*We are privileged to be able to print here two hitherto unpublished poems referring to Elgar, and grateful to Alan Riach and the Trustees of the Ivor Gurney Estate for permission to do so. Alan Riach is Professor of Scottish Literature at the University of Glasgow and an expert on the music of Scottish composers including Hamish MacCunn and Francis George Scott (see his authoritative sleeve note for the recent BBC CD of Scott's music). 'On the Malvern Hills' will appear later this year in a book of his poems. Please turn back to p.7 for Philip Lancaster's introduction to the Gurney poem.*

### ON THE MALVERN HILLS

And the sky's breath lifted both of them,  
the blue, the red, two men in harness, strapped and  
corded to their pelmets as the air curved them out,  
shields in the azure, quilted with this  
substantial occupation: the rising thermal currents  
making movement of them, human points  
and mechanisms, the sounds as unheard  
as the streams appeared invisible, in air.

Like reeds, lifted by the wind, over salt hay  
by the river's side, loosened and taken,  
spiralled by the rising breath and turned  
in lengthening loops and figures, arabesques,  
the strain borne even by  
the hands upon the cords, the pressures bringing down  
or over, out, away to one side or high above  
the steeply sloping hillsides, the curving downs below.

On the ridge of the Malvern Hills, David runs ahead,  
his seven years of appetite lead quickly to the hill beyond.  
Our walking's easy, the pace in the heat of the summery day  
unhurried. We crest the second summit, see David now  
a tiny figure standing on the third, shoulders and arms turned back  
to us  
and then – the paragliders cresting the horizon, sweeping up above  
him,  
sliding down the currents of the col, close to his small shape.

He's looking up at them as they glide by. His breath's intake  
I can feel from here. It's like the child whose arms upstretch  
to the full moon in the ancient sky, so full of natural want, for  
the unattainable.

– *Windflower*, Elgar called her.

Ah, those rosebud lips.  
And things all 'wild & headstrong' –  
'dreaming of a greatness...by the sedge reeds by the riverside...'  
Looking back at the hill-fort of Caractacus, his little army always  
facing impossible odds, but standing even now  
unchanged on this 'illimitable plain'...  
For all the empires of the world have risen to be washed away,  
in light-like movement, solid,  
weighty in the drift of its proximity  
and David's risen gaze –  
the unreachable things can be seen  
and heard as they move in the air.

Alan Riach

### TO THE CITY WORCESTER

Little I remember about Her that I care for,  
Being too great a lover of my own City, and  
Longing for Westgate Street, and the coloured great  
Choir.  
The Cotswolds I knew and the book shops and streets I  
knew.  
But there in the Festival time, a kind lady of years  
Housed me, and fed me as she thought boys should be  
fed.  
I sang 'Gerontius' and saw brown Severn strand;  
Bought 'Sapphic Ode' of Brahms, and knew Elgar was  
born,  
To whose thought Norway and Rome were brought,  
And the Christian worship meditated un-exalted.  
I hero worshipper, full of 'Gerontius' and the  
'Beatitudes'  
Saw himself stand with serious slender attitudes  
To be as rapt in what he had done as anyone  
Of all the attentive Chorus, or all-skilled Band.  
To see a live Hero not four yards ahead . . .

But still the chief thought of that City is yet the  
decorated  
Infinite lines of ornament that so irritated  
My Gloucester-clean mind for fine plain[n]ess.  
And the damned Cathedral organ that always broke  
Down when least looked for, and not in any joke.  
And the overeating the queen kind hostess did force  
On me, all ignorant of stresses or strains or the  
comfort of space.

I B Gurney



*Ivor Gurney in the football team of the King's School, Gloucester, 1905-6 (front row, second from right)*

## Music and Locality: 4

## Leicester's Lady Organists, 1770-1800

Karl Kroeger

Except on the stage, women professional musicians were a rarity in England during the 18th and early 19th centuries. Women singers graced British boards during this period, but female musicians seldom found their way into other public music-making venues. In most parish churches throughout the kingdom, organists were men, some of whom gained eminence as composers as well as performers. Thus it is noteworthy that no fewer than three women occupied prominent organist's positions at two of Leicester's most important churches during the latter half of the 18th century.<sup>1</sup> It becomes even more interesting when it turns out that one of them bested a male applicant for one of those positions.

In 1765, William Boulton, long-time organist of St Martin's church,<sup>2</sup> died after a long illness. The vacancy was advertised in the local newspaper on 6 July 1765,<sup>3</sup> but no public announcement was made of an appointment. In November 1765, Anthony Greatorex, from North Wingfield, Derbyshire, introduced himself as organist at St Martin's and advertised for harpsichord students.<sup>4</sup> At least two of his children came with him to Leicester: Thomas, who became organist at Westminster Abbey in the early 19th century, and Martha, who would succeed him at St Martin's. In the early 1770s, Anthony Greatorex moved to Burton upon Trent, Staffordshire, where he occupied the organist's seat at the parish church for over 40 years.<sup>5</sup>

Martha Greatorex was born in North Wingfield in about 1759. A musical prodigy, she was chosen organist of St Martin's in 1772 at the age of thirteen.<sup>6</sup> From then until the end of the century she took an active part in Leicester's musical life, giving at least 27 concerts between 1768 and 1799. Most of these concerts were for her own benefit, where she organised the performances, paid the musicians, and kept the profits. Concerts in Leicester were structured in two 'Acts', in each of which four or five pieces were played. Each act usually opened and closed with

orchestral works – overtures and symphonies – between which solo concertos and vocal and instrumental chamber music were performed. Miss Greatorex usually performed a keyboard work, a concerto or a 'lesson' (i.e. a sonata), in each act. In Act I of her concert on 6 August 1773 she played a harpsichord concerto by Bach (probably Johann Christian) and in Act II a harpsichord lesson by Pugnani.<sup>7</sup>

Martha Greatorex also taught her instruments, offering instruction on both harpsichord and guitar as early as 1768.<sup>8</sup> Her terms for teaching were half a guinea on entrance, one guinea per quarter for the keyboard, and fifteen shillings per quarter for guitar, for three lessons per week. Apparently she was very successful, for in 1800 she could retire from her organist's post at St Martin's with sufficient funds to purchase a small estate in Burton upon Trent, where her father lived.<sup>9</sup> By the 1820s, she had also tried her hand at composition, publishing two works: 'Cease your funning, the favorite air' arranged with variations for the pianoforte (London: printed for the authoress, ca1820), and 'Pray Goody, a popular air from the celebrated burletta of Midas' arranged with variations for the pianoforte (London: Welsh & Hawes, ca1826). She died in Burton in 1834.

In 1774 St Margaret's church in Leicester installed a new organ, and on 31 May subscribers to the organ fund were asked to meet to elect an organist.<sup>10</sup> No information has been found about who had applied, but the subscribers chose Ann Valentine for the position. Ann Valentine was descended from a long line of local musicians that dates to the close of the 17th century. Her father, John, a violinist, was well known throughout the region as a composer, performer, and teacher.<sup>11</sup> Ann was born in Leicester in 1762 and by 1777 was performing harpsichord concertos and sonatas on concerts organised by her father and her uncle, Henry Valentine, an oboist who also ran Leicester's most important music shop.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Female organists served a few London churches during the 18th century – see Donovan Dawe, *Organists of the City of London, 1666-1850* (privately published, 1983), 3-5. There were also several women organists at parish churches in Liverpool during this time. I am grateful to Sally Drage for bringing these women to my attention.

<sup>2</sup> St Martin's became Leicester Cathedral in 1927.

<sup>3</sup> *Leicester and Nottingham Journal* (hereafter cited as *Journal*).

<sup>4</sup> *Journal*, 30 Nov 1765.

<sup>5</sup> Memorial plaque in St Modwin's parish church, Burton upon Trent.

<sup>6</sup> *ODNB*, s.v. Greatorex, Thomas. For her services as organist, Martha Greatorex was paid an annual salary of £15 3s (Thomas North ed, *The Accounts of the Churchwardens of S. Martin's Leicester, 1489-1844* [Leicester, 1884], entry for April 1779).

<sup>7</sup> *Journal*, 31 July 1773.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 6 Aug 1768. This is a joint advertisement with Anthony Greatorex, which particularly notes that Miss Greatorex also teaches the guitar.

<sup>9</sup> *ODNB*, s.v. Greatorex, Thomas.

<sup>10</sup> *Journal*, 21 May 1774. From notices in the *Journal* in 1772 and 1773 advertising for subscriptions to the organ fund, it appears that St Margaret's may not have had an organ prior to this.

<sup>11</sup> For more about the Valentine family, in particular John Valentine, see Karl Kroeger, 'John Valentine: eighteenth-century music master in the English midlands,' *Notes* xlii (1988), 444-55; see also Martin Medforth, 'The Valentines of Leicester: a reappraisal of an 18th-century musical family,' *Musical Times* cxxii (1981), 812-18.

<sup>12</sup> Ann Valentine is listed for the first time as a performer on the occasion of her father's concert in Rugby on 26 August

Ann and her family had been members of St Margaret's church for many years. She was christened there, and the organ fund's subscribers certainly knew well the family's high musical reputation. Thus her election may have been more a formality than a competition. In the mid 19th century a plaque was mounted in St Margaret's honouring Ann Valentine's years of service, stating that 'she was organist at St Margaret's Church for upwards of half a century.'

Ann Valentine was also a talented composer. In 1790 she published *Ten Sonatas for the pianoforte or harpsichord, with accompaniment for the violin or German flute*, op 1. She performed one of these sonatas at her concert in Leicester on 16 May 1786, along with a harpsichord concerto by Schobert.<sup>13</sup> In the early 19th century, she published several shorter piano pieces. She died in Leicester on 12 October 1845.

As noted above, Martha Greatorex left the organist's position at St Martin's in 1800. A meeting of the congregation was called for 25 February 1800 to select a new organist. Two applicants sought the position: Frederick Hill, organist of the parish church in Loughborough, and Sarah Valentine, the younger sister of Ann. A week before the meeting to elect the organist, Hill published an obsequious letter in the *Journal*, touting his qualifications and soliciting the 'kindness of those gentlemen who shall honour him with their support.'<sup>14</sup> At the election a week later, Sarah Valentine was chosen by an overwhelming margin – some 150 to 1. The *Journal* on 28 February editorialised that a decision 'so honourable is the best encomium on the musical talents and respectability of the party appointed.'<sup>15</sup>

Sarah Valentine was born in Leicester on 23 June 1771, the youngest of the four surviving children of John and Tabitha Valentine. We know little about her, but one can assume that her father saw that she had a solid musical education. She does not appear in any of the concerts announced in the *Journal* through 1800, nor has any evidence been found that she advertised for students.<sup>16</sup> Sarah Valentine died in Leicester on 19 December 1843.

What did Leicester's organists play during Sunday services? This is not recorded anywhere. Presumably they accompanied anthems sung by the choir and the congregational singing of hymns. They may also have improvised organ music as needed. They were all capable musicians who provided valued services to Leicester and its musical community. The fact that they were women did not seem to matter to the people in the pews or to those who attended their concerts.

1777 (*Journal*, 24 Aug 1777). She appeared regularly on Leicester concerts thereafter, presenting two concerts for her own benefit in 1785 and 1786.

<sup>13</sup> *Journal*, 13 May 1786.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 21 February 1800.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 28 February 1800.

<sup>16</sup> The *Journal* was surveyed only from 1759 through 1800. She may have performed and taught in the early 19th century.

## From Our Corresponding Members

### 1. *Otto*

Bristol-based composer Richard Barnard explores a personal connection with music at the Bath Pump Room.

In 2006 I was commissioned, with writer Peter Spafford, to create *Otto*, a 35-minute piece for narrator, piano trio and tape, based on the life of my great-grandfather Otto Heinrich and his many years as a member of the orchestra at the Bath Pump Room. Its first performance marked 300 years of live music at the Pump Room. It will be performed in Bath again on 5, 12 and 19 August 2008 as part of a national tour, alongside a trio programme reflecting the musical tastes of the English Edwardian spa.



*Otto Heinrich*

Otto Heinrich was born in Kemberg in 1859 into a family of musicians. He worked as a violinist in circus bands and orchestras in Holland, Bohemia and New York, coming to England in late 1880s and joining the Bath Pump Room Orchestra in 1888. One of his sons remembers:

He played mainly in the Bath Pump Room Orchestra until August 4th 1914 – but also at Balls in the Assembly Rooms and elsewhere in numerous private mansions and country homes, some quite far afield. Also at Public Schools for special occasions . . . and augmented many an amateur orchestra . . . When father 'had an engagement' we always awaited his return with expectations because he so often brought home a parcel of cakes, pastries and sweetmeats from these country homes.

Adaptability and resourcefulness characterised his career and life. As well as teaching violin extensively throughout his life both privately and at colleges and schools, he also became a talented violin maker and repairer using a workshop in the attic of his home in Twerton, Bath.

By 1914 Otto was well established in England with his English wife and ten children, but he was still technically an alien as a German citizen and did not become a naturalised British citizen until the 1920s. There are family anecdotes of Otto narrowly avoiding internment at the start of the war with interventions and character references from members of the orchestra.

As Peter and I researched and explored these issues during the creation of our piece, we became increasingly interested in the nature of memory and how we relate to our collective and familial past through retelling, reminiscing and reinventing. Part of the process was getting to know Otto through his letters, articles and family memories but also enjoying the imagined stories and our own guesswork. I wanted my music also to explore this process of imperfect remembering. To that end, I used long-forgotten music by the virtuosic pianist and conductor of the orchestra at that time, Frank Tapp (*b*1883 Bath, *d*1953 London), to inspire pastiches of the music Otto played and as material to fragment and absorb into my own style.

Whilst maintaining a narrative thread, *Otto* creates a tapestry of different sections moving between poetry and drama, past and present, imperfectly piecing together a life dedicated to music.

## 2. Tudorism

Sue Cole

In their controversial book *The English Musical Renaissance 1860–1940: construction and deconstruction*, Robert Stradling and Meirion Hughes describe Tudor music and folk music as the ‘twin pillars’ of the English Musical Renaissance. But exactly what image was conjured up in the early 20th century by the term ‘Tudor music’? What music by Tallis, for example, would Vaughan Williams’s audiences have known in 1910 when he wrote his Tallis *Fantasia*? And what would that music have meant to them?

Over the next four years I shall be exploring these and other questions in a postdoctoral fellowship, funded by the Australian Research Council, examining the early 20th-century revival of early English sacred music which culminated in the Carnegie Trust’s monumental Tudor Church Music series.

This project has grown directly out of my doctoral work on the 19th-century reception of Thomas Tallis (recently published by Boydell & Brewer). While conducting this research, I was struck by the importance of Roman Catholic musicians (and especially converts) in the dramatic reassessment of Tallis’s music that took place in the late 19th century. Richard Runciman Terry is relatively well known, but he was far from the only Catholic musician working in

this area: W S Rockstro, who had gone over to Rome in 1876, W H Grattan Flood and H B Collins were also prominent.

Furthermore, these musicians advocated the revival of the Latin music of Tallis and his contemporaries not simply as great music, but as great Catholic music. Terry concluded his 1901 tract *Our Church Music* with the claim that the revival of early English polyphony was a duty that Catholic musicians owed to the ‘memory of our Catholic forefathers’ as a link with ‘that glorious past when this England of ours was undivided in her loyalty to the See of Peter, and our land was justly called the island of saints.’ For musicians such as Terry the rediscovery of this music entailed a reconfiguration of the history of English Church Music, in which the Reformation marked the end, rather than the beginning, of the Golden Age.

H C Colles, in a report to the TCM trustees, argued that the publication of a corpus of Tudor Church Music would not merely be of academic interest, but would ‘enable the people of Great Britain to enjoy a national heritage’. And it is perhaps no coincidence that work began on this publication at the height of the First World War. The national heritage that was being promoted was, however, particularly in the early years before Terry’s departure, a decidedly Catholic one, a fact that did not pass unremarked.

In this project, by tracing the reception of individual composers and indeed individual works in the fifty years from 1880 to the 1920s, I shall explore the many competing agendas that drove the rediscovery of music that had been neglected since the Reformation and its gradual acceptance as, to quote Terry, a ‘priceless national monument . . . without parallel in the history of any other nation.’

*Turn to p.16 for details of Sue Cole’s forthcoming Music Research Seminar and of the Tudorism symposium at which she will be speaking, both in December 2008.*

## Research Students: 5

Austin Phillips

James Hobson

An illustration of how 21st-century technology has revolutionised the business of research is borne out in a small project that I began nearly three years ago. While investigating Robert Lucas Pearsall’s connection with the Bristol Madrigal Society, I came across another Bristol musician of the 1830s. Austin Phillips was a founding member of the BMS – in fact, he had hosted the preliminary meeting at his own home in January 1837. The BMS archives show that he was elected vice-president of the society, and that he sang tenor. His involvement with the BMS dwindled within the society’s first year, and by January 1838 he was no longer attending any meetings and he had resigned his vice-presidency. Other information about him was scarce: he appears in the treasurer’s accounts at Bristol Cathedral as a chorister in the 1810s, and

received a lump sum in April 1838 for his services as a lay clerk. Finally, and most intriguingly, I found him listed in Bristol Central Library's copy of the 1836 edition of *Mathews' Directory* for Bristol, where he is named 'Professor of music and singing – organist of St Michael's – Baldwin St', but an unknown hand has scrawled 'dismissed' in ink alongside the printed entry.

Sadly, the time required to rifle through the newspapers brought my detective work to a halt. However, in October last year the British Library's *19th Century Newspapers* online project was launched, making ten of thousands of pages of British newspapers not only readable, but also searchable by individual word and phrase, thanks to the magic of OCR (Optical Character Recognition). With it, and the other worldwide searchable databases at my fingertips, I was able to fill in the gaps in a matter of hours, where previously days would have been needed to find what I was looking for.

Phillips was born into a musical family in Bristol around 1805. He joined the choir of Bristol Cathedral in 1813 and remained a chorister until 1818. In the mid- to late 1820s he was appointed assistant organist at Wells Cathedral, returning to Bristol to teach in 1830. A notice in the *Bristol Mercury* of January 1830 welcomes Phillips back to Bristol from Wells, wishing him 'the success his well-known talents merit'.

He appears in successive editions of *Mathews' Directory* from 1831 to 1837, always listed as a 'professor of singing and piano', but also as organist at a variety of Bristol churches, the last being St Michael's. He is regularly cited in advertisements for concerts in Bristol, often at the Assembly Rooms in Clifton, where he takes part as an accompanist to singers, chiefly to his sister, Josephine (who is usually billed as Mrs Hardwick) and with Phillips, himself, singing from time to time.

A handful of his songs were published in London during the 1830s, most of them styled ballads and with titles such as 'Beautiful dreams'; 'I think of thee'; 'Merrily o'er the waves I go', etc.

At an undisclosed time, he became a lay clerk at Bristol Cathedral (several fires and the Bristol Blitz destroyed a lot of the cathedral archives), and in January 1837 he was engaged to sing in the vocal sextet, conducted by Edward Taylor, used to illustrate the musical examples chosen by Taylor for his lectures on *English Vocal Harmony*, and which were delivered at the Bristol Institution on Park St between 5 and 17 January. It was on 14 January 1837 that Phillips

entertained Taylor and the pioneers of the BMS at his home.

Financial disaster struck him in late 1837, and he appears amongst the bankrupts at the Bristol Assizes for October. The nature of the dissolution is not clear, but it must have marked the end of his career in the church as the stigma attached to bankruptcy in the 19th century was great. It can only be assumed that the immediate reaction was dismissal from St Michael's and that he found himself eschewed socially. Two months later the papers reported him as having cleared his debt in the Court of Chancery at Bristol.

In April 1838 Phillips collected all of the money owed to him by Bristol Cathedral, there are no further accounts of him participating in any musical events in the city, and to all intents and purposes he disappeared.

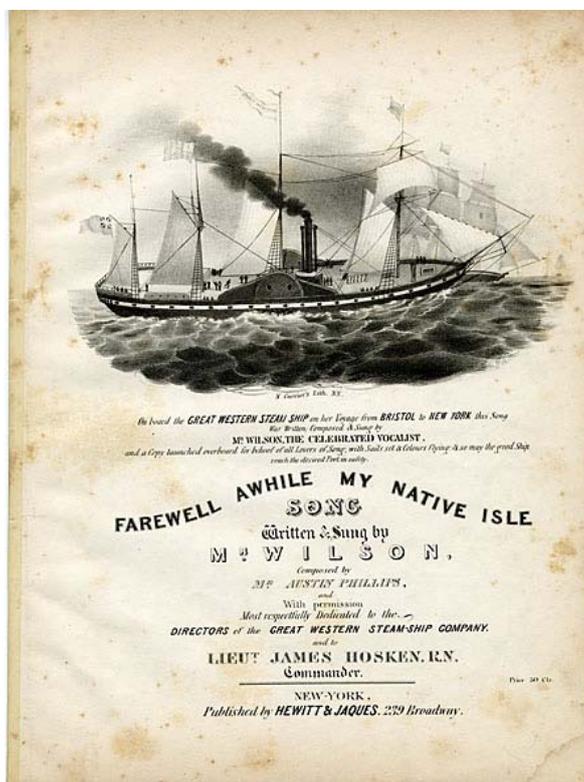
However, a chance discovery in the online library records of the Lester S Levy Collection of Sheet Music at the Sheridan Libraries of Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland, pulled up a copy of a song, 'Farewell awhile, my native isle', which is subtitled:

On board the Great Western Steam Ship on her Voyage from Bristol to New York this Song Was Written . . . by Mr Wilson and a Copy launched overboard for behoof of all Lovers of Song, with Sails set & Colours flying, & so may the good Ship reach the desired Port in safety . . . Composed by Mr Austin Phillips. [New York: Hewitt & Jaques, 239 Broadway.]

Sure enough, the passenger list for the SS Great Western of 24 September 1838 shows 'John Wilson, actor' as passenger no 39. However, there is no Austin Phillips listed among the other passengers. He either travelled to New York on that ship under an assumed name, or he went on a previous sailing, though to date no record of his

immigration into the United States in his name has been found.

If Bristol were the limit to his professional horizon – and a place where his misdemeanors, however slight, had brought social ostracising – then the opportunity of a new life in the New World must have been irresistible. I cannot help but speculate whether Phillips was inspired to leave Bristol because of the almost simultaneous departure of Edward Hodges (1796-1867) to Toronto. Hodges had been organist of St James's and St Nicholas's in Bristol for a number of years, and Phillips must surely have known him; he might even have been his pupil. Shortly after his move to Canada, Hodges was appointed director of music at Trinity Church in New York in 1839. It seems



almost inconceivable that these two men did not keep crossing each other's path, at the very least!

New York in the late 1830s was ripening territory for musicians and composers, and as a writer of ballads and parlour songs, Phillips enjoyed some success. At first he published some of the songs in New York that had previously appeared in London: the earliest of them appeared in 1839, published by Davis and Horn, and throughout the 1840s he continued writing and publishing songs for the American market. He also continued working as an accompanist, and amongst other references in other journals, his name appears in the New Orleans newspaper, the *Picayune*, in 1847, where he is mentioned as playing the piano for a song recital.

A fuller picture of his activities in the United States waits to be revealed, but at least we know how and when he met his death. The *Brooklyn Eagle* of 10 April 10 1851 printed this tiny snippet:

**DEATH OF MR. AUSTIN PHILLIPS.**—We regret to learn that the celebrated vocalist and composer, Austin Phillips, fell dead in the street, about 11 o'clock, on Tuesday night, at the corner of Spring and Wooster streets. At inquest was held on the body, and a verdict rendered of "Death by Apoplexy."

Thus ends – for now – a cameo sketch of an otherwise forgotten Bristolian. He represents a very small (and somewhat jagged) piece of the massive and emerging jigsaw of the diaspora of British musicians who were lured by the opportunities that the New World offered, and yet what remains to be known about him is as tantalising as that which is already known.

## Reviews

David Manning, editor  
*Vaughan Williams on Music*  
(Oxford University Press, 2008)

The 50th anniversary of Vaughan Williams's death has already seen the release of two major documentary films, a raft of new recordings, fine representation at the forthcoming Proms and an ambitious London festival, stretching across the year and featuring most of his major works. At the time of writing, the festival has already come to an early climax with the Philharmonia's stupendous semi-staging of *The Pilgrim's Progress* at Sadler's Wells during June.

As well as revealing the range and sheer originality of the music itself, perhaps the greatest thing the anniversary celebrations can achieve is to nail once and for all the old canard that Vaughan Williams was a narrow-minded, parochial type, eternally wallowing in that most unfragrant of rural products, the old-English cowpat. There is now no excuse for failing to grasp that the *Pastoral Symphony* it is not about the rolling Gloucestershire countryside,

but the blood-soaked battlefields of Flanders, which the composer knew so well. It now seems obvious that the lacerating Fourth Symphony draws much of its troubled character from the political and artistic upheavals of 1930s continental Europe. And how can anyone with any sensitivity now encounter the *London Symphony* and not recognise that in exploring the heart of his city, the composer heard the pulse of a much bigger world?

Anyone seeking further evidence of Vaughan Williams's international outlook need look no further than the marvellous new collection of his writings, handsomely published by Oxford University Press and scrupulously edited by former CHOMBEC Development Officer, David Manning.

Vaughan Williams was a prolific writer of words as well as music and the volume's 400-page selection covers over 60 years of articles, broadcast talks and programme notes. In his Introduction, Manning takes care to point out that all this productivity was not just a symptom of workaholicism (though surely it was that too), but that the prose and the music came together in an over-arching vision, based on the idea that the creation, performance and reception of music are not separate from the real world, but an integral part of it. In this regard at least, Vaughan Williams and John Cage would have agreed – though probably not about much else. For Vaughan Williams, art must have roots

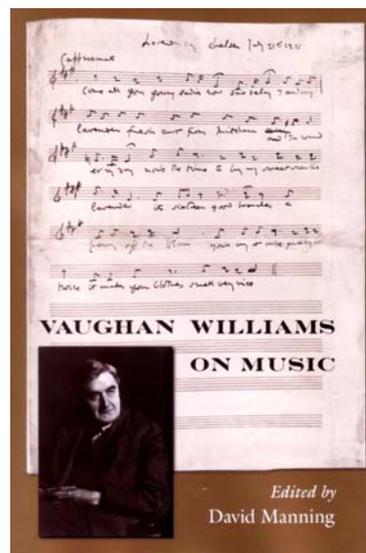
and, while it is to his own native soil that each artist should look, once the roots are discovered, the branches must then stretch outwards to the wider world.

All this is covered in the first and third sections, the biggest portions of the book's six parts, *Musical life and English music* and *Folk Song*. These alone take in a huge range of topics, from musings on 'taste' and (related) the

unmusical antics of vocalists, to the role of the composer in wartime and (poignantly, in the light of its current dumbed-down status) the degeneration, as early as 1957 it seems, of the BBC Third Programme:

Perhaps the BBC governors imagine that the 'people' want 'popular' music, and must be given it. Has it ever occurred to them that they have a moral responsibility to make the best music popular?

No nonsense about cultural relativism here, then, with no inconvenient need to define 'best'. It is surely no coincidence that the Vanity Fair scene of *The Pilgrim's Progress* should include a contemptuous cameo role for Pontius Pilate demanding 'What is truth?'



Here, and often elsewhere, the prose is severe and plain-speaking, rhetorical and schoolmasterly in tone. Vaughan Williams was not a great literary stylist in the way Berlioz was (or even Elgar in his letters to Jaeger). The writing is never less than precise and often illuminated by shafts of wit – the account of a composition lesson with the terrifying Stanford is hilarious (and perhaps a bit more relaxed because it was originally written as a talk). But one is sometimes reminded of the joke allegedly doing the rounds at Westminster around the time that Brown was positioning himself to succeed Blair: ‘the trouble with Gordon is that he’s all substance and no style’.

Part Two offers a collection of writings on *Continental Composers*, ranging from insightful appreciations of, among others, Wagner, Brahms, Verdi and his friend Sibelius, to a two-line obituary ‘tribute’ to Schoenberg that achieves the remarkable conflation of sourness, fairness and resigned self-deprecation into just twenty-six words, all but six of them monosyllables. Part Four, *British Composers*, is especially valuable as many of the subjects were personal acquaintances. Parry, Stanford, Elgar, Finzi and above all his greatest friend, Holst, receive eloquently expressed consideration.

The remaining sections consist of programme notes, either on Vaughan Williams’s own music (often little more than a stark outline of the main themes), or that of other composers. Many are workmanlike, but almost all contain some interesting nuggets of information (a justification of the performance practice of a 1920s *St Matthew Passion*) or an entertaining *bon mot* (a note on Weber’s *Freischütz* overture, making much of the way the music anticipates precise moments in Wagner, only to conclude: ‘Whether this is a subject for rejoicing or regret is a matter of individual taste.’)

In welcoming this anthology, it is worth adding that it is logically structured and immaculately annotated throughout. It would have been nice to have had a brief editorial paragraph for some of the articles, setting them in the context of Vaughan Williams’s own relationship to the subject. But what really matters is that a comprehensive selection of the composer’s writings has been expertly brought together in a single volume. It dismisses the false notion of Vaughan Williams the little-Englander and places him in the broader cultural context his work demands.

JOHN PICKARD

(ISBN 978 0 19518 239 2)

## Study Day Exploring Cornish Music

On 16 February I attended a study day on Cornish Music at Exeter University’s Cornwall Campus, Tremough, Penryn. Hosted by the Institute of Cornish Studies (ICS), based at the campus, the day was ‘aimed at scholars of vernacular, social and folk music, and scholars of social history.’ The campus is set in the grounds of a former convent school and the event was held in the original house, whose dark wood panelling,

huge fireplaces and elegant plaster ceilings lent added interest. Tea, coffee and a sandwich lunch were provided, lunch enlivened with a Cornish dance and costume display by the group ‘Hevva’.

Frances Bennett, a postgraduate student at ICS working in contemporary musicology, opened the proceedings. She drew attention to notices on which questions such as ‘What is Cornish? . . . authentic? . . . vernacular?’ were posed. Delegates were invited to add their comments on sticky notes which were included in the folder of information provided. Frances also spoke about *noze looan* (Cornish for ‘happy night’) music and dance events. Combining ‘elements of traditional music and singing in Cornish with an eclectic cocktail of jazz, funk, reggae etc’, *noze looan* seeks to interest young people in Cornish music and culture.

Mike O’Connor, another ICS postgraduate with an interest in historical musicology, discussed sources available for the study of Cornish music. He provided a useful ‘Time Line of Music in Cornwall 410 AD–1900 AD’ with the sources noted and gave a brief description of the content and significance of each. As a newcomer to this subject I found Mike’s contribution particularly interesting.

A third ICS postgraduate, Merv Davey, who is also a piper, spoke on the use and construction of Cornish bagpipes from the 12th century onwards with apposite illustrations of carvings from ecclesiastic buildings and practical demonstrations on pipes of differing design. Harry Woodhouse then gave an amusing but scholarly account of the activities of church and chapel bands in Cornwall, based on his book *Face the Music*, copies of which were available.

Dr Catherine Lorigan, lecturer in Cornish community studies, cited sources for evidence of instrumental music in Cornwall in the 17th century with examples ranging from instruments played by public waits to those used in the drawing rooms of prosperous families. Gwenaelle Lucas of Brest University followed with a brief talk on sacred vernacular music in Brittany and its use of typical Breton dotted rhythms.

In his session, Deputy Director of ICS Dr Garry Tregidga compared colliery bands of northern Britain with the Cornish brass band tradition. The latter grew up mainly in the industrial areas of tin and clay production and represented (with football) Cornish identity in the early 1900s.

Susan Skinner, an ICS postgraduate, spoke on male voice choirs in the early 20th century, showing evidence for this activity in many Cornish communities. Dr Alan Kent of the Open University drew the day to a close with an account of various representations of Cornish music and instruments in literature.

Several of the speakers performed at the evening ‘troyl’ (ceillidh). The music was well known to participants with many tunes being picked up and played by all comers. I walked the three miles back to my lodgings in Falmouth with the sound of Cornish music in my ears. The day’s programme fulfilled its promise of ‘a stimulating and informative day with lots of music, and new insights into a little-known musical culture.’

The Institute for Cornish Studies requests views on the style and content of future symposia, 'original and radical proposals' being welcomed. For information contact G.H.Tregidga@exeter.ac.uk.

CELIA DURK

Nicholas Temperley and Sally Drage,  
editors  
*Eighteenth-Century Psalmody*  
(*Musica Britannica LXXXV*)  
(Stainer and Bell, 2007)

*Musica Britannica LXXXV* is a departure from the prior 84 volumes of this series. In those volumes we find art music: concert and theatre music, chamber music, cathedral anthems – music composed by professionals for well-trained performers. Here we have psalmody, the people's music, composed by both amateurs and professionals to be sung by the choirs and congregations in parish churches, dissenting chapels and meeting houses. Some of these pieces can still be heard today in church on a Sunday morning; others were little known in their own day and have been revived here for the first time in over two centuries. All are worthy examples from a vital popular musical culture that occasionally approaches the level of art.

Nicholas Temperley, an emeritus professor at the University of Illinois, has studied this music for some four decades, doing perhaps more than any other scholar to establish it as worthy of serious inquiry. Sally Drage, an organist, choir director, and doctoral candidate at the University of Leeds, is presently making a name for herself in the study of psalmody. They have compiled a well-balanced and representative selection from an important and influential repertory that has been overlooked or ignored by most scholars.

The 103 numbered pieces in this volume are divided into three parts: A. Psalm and Hymn Tunes (1-47), B. Anthems and Chants (48-74), and C. Metrical Pieces – perhaps better known as 'set pieces' – (75-103). The music is printed as originally published, mostly for three or four unaccompanied voices in open score. Music in manuscript has been excluded. Antique clefs have been modernised and the interpretation of graces has been supplied in superscript. For the psalm and hymn tunes, including fusing tunes, three to five verses of text usually underlay the voices, with the rest of the words placed at the end of the tune. A few pieces have an accompaniment scored for organ or a small instrumental ensemble. If the music includes a figured bass, this has usually not been realised.

In each section, the pieces are arranged chronologically, beginning with Henry Playford's seminal collection, *The Divine Companion* (London, 1701). The music is English, although a few composers were born abroad. Parish church music from Scotland, Wales, and Ireland has been excluded, except for a few pieces published in English arrangement. The editors have tried to include a wide geographical range. Most important regions of psalmodic activity are

represented, from Yorkshire and Lancashire in the north through the Midlands to Kent and the West Country in the south, with an unexpected emphasis on Dorset. They have also included a wide denominational range: mostly urban and rural Anglican, but also the Methodists, Baptists, Independents, and Unitarians. A denomination not included – the Moravian Church – seems to be a minor oversight. It had a vigorous musical culture in England during the eighteenth century with at least one major composer, Christian LaTrobe.

Most of the composers' names will be unfamiliar to the vast majority of users. Many were rural parish clerks or singing masters with little musical training; others were organists at urban churches in London and elsewhere. Still others were professional musicians and composers, some of whom came to psalmody in an attempt to improve the quality of parish church music. Most composers have only one or two pieces in the collection, but Dorset composers William Knapp, with six works, and Joseph Stephenson, with four, while important psalmodists, seem overemphasised. Some important names are missing – William Tans'ur, John Arnold, Aaron Williams, and Charles Lockhart, to name just a few. While only token representation of any group can be included in a collection of such a broad chronological, geographical, denominational, and stylistic scope, these men were significant enough, it seems to me, to warrant inclusion.

The editors begin the volume with a brief essay introducing the repertory, giving its historical context and an overview of the composers and sources. This is followed by Editorial Notes, where they 'aim to provide documented information that will lead to accurate understanding and appropriate performance of the music, while leaving performers with as many options as the historical evidence allows' (xxx). A concise discussion of performance practice comes next, with a bibliography, acknowledgements, and plates concluding the prefatory material. At the end are 'Notes on the Critical Commentary' followed by a full critical apparatus for each tune, giving source, dating, *Hymn Tune Index* number, context (geographical, denominational, or usage), origin of the text, reading (i.e. differences between the source and the printed music), and performance (notes on how the work was or should be performed). A List of Composers and Adaptors, an Index of First Lines, and an Index of Titles and Tune Names conclude the volume.

The music is printed in a pleasingly spacious layout with adequate margins, bound in sturdy red buckram. The bulky volume itself is probably not suitable for use in performance, but the publisher, Stainer and Bell, offers individual items for sale through its made-to-order service. *Eighteenth-Century Psalmody* should be welcomed by a wide range of users on both sides of the Atlantic, for it contains a treasury of attractive, useful compositions whose sounds are fresh and whose technical demands are modest.

KARL KROEGER

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## Forthcoming Events Relating to Music in Britain, the Empire and the Commonwealth

Events listed in boxes are organised by CHOMBEC and are held in the Victoria Rooms, Bristol. Tuesday seminars begin at 4.30pm. All are welcome to attend.

**21 May-6 November 2008**

Vaughan Williams: The Pioneering Pilgrim. A major retrospective by the Philharmonia Orchestra. Royal Festival Hall, London. Richard Hickox, conductor; Michael Kennedy, artistic advisor. [www.philharmonia.co.uk](http://www.philharmonia.co.uk)

**9 July 2008** English Cathedral Music: the long 19th century to the present. Department of Music, Durham University, Palace Green, Durham, DH1 3RL. [www.dur.ac.uk/john-bede-pauley/cathedralmusic.htm](http://www.dur.ac.uk/john-bede-pauley/cathedralmusic.htm)

**14-16 July 2008** Vauxhall Revisited: pleasure gardens and their publics, 1660-1880. Tate Britain and the Museum of Garden History, London. [www.paul-mellon-centre.ac.uk/eventsf/vauxhall.html](http://www.paul-mellon-centre.ac.uk/eventsf/vauxhall.html)

**15-18 July 2008** RMA Annual Conference 2008, including the theme of William Byrd and his pupils (e.g. Morley, Philips, Tomkins, Bull) and English virginalist music. University of Aberdeen. [www.music.sas.ac.uk](http://www.music.sas.ac.uk)

**23-25 July 2008** WUN International Network in Colonial and Postcolonial Studies: Second University of Sydney Nation-Empire-Globe Postgraduate Intensive. [www.usyd.edu.au/international](http://www.usyd.edu.au/international)

**31 July-3 August 2008** NABMSA [North American British Music Studies Assn]: Third Biennial Conference. York University, Toronto. [www.nabmsa.org/index/html](http://www.nabmsa.org/index/html)

**6-7 September 2008** Concepts of Creativity in 17th-Century England: interdisciplinary symposium. School of Arts, Histories and Cultures, University

of Manchester, UK [www.arts.manchester.ac.uk/subjectareas/music/research/musicalcreativity/conference/](http://www.arts.manchester.ac.uk/subjectareas/music/research/musicalcreativity/conference/)

**6-7 September 2008** Music and the Idea of the North. Leeds Town Hall. LUCEM, with Leeds Metropolitan University, Leeds International Concert Season and Opera North. [www.leeds.ac.uk/music/research/lucem/](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/music/research/lucem/)

**12-15 September 2008** The Georgian Playhouse and its Continental Counterparts 1750-1850. Society for Theatre Research 60th anniversary conference. Theatre Royal, Richmond, Yorks. [www.str.org.uk/](http://www.str.org.uk/) email: [richmond@theatresearch.co.uk](mailto:richmond@theatresearch.co.uk)

**19 September 2008** Cultivating Britons: Culture and Identity in Britain, 1901 to 1936. Oxford Brookes University, in conjunction with Royal Holloway. [ah.brookes.ac.uk/conference/cultivating\\_britons](http://ah.brookes.ac.uk/conference/cultivating_britons)

**7 October 2008** Joanna Bullivant (Worcester College, Oxford): *Modernism, politics and individuality: British music and the Left in the 1930s*

**4 November 2008** Sally Harper (University of Wales, Bangor): *Wales, the true remnant of the ancient Britons? English perceptions of late medieval Welsh musical culture*

**8 November 2008** English Poetry & Song Society concert by Jane Manning OBE, Stephen Roberts and Terence Allbright. Henleaze URC Church, Bristol. email: [menistral@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:menistral@yahoo.co.uk)

**11 November 2008** Wyndham Thomas (University of Bristol): *Tom Moore – making music with the nobility in Wiltshire and beyond (c. 1820-1850)*

**14 November 2008, 1.15-2.00 pm** Music from Georgian Bristol. Stephen Banfield and University of Bristol students. Wesley New Room, Broadmead, Bristol. Free.

**2 December 2008** Sue Cole (University of Melbourne): *Traditions and revivals: continuity and change in the late 19th-century reception of the English virginalists*

**4-7 December 2008** 31st National Conference of the Musicological Society of Australia. University of Melbourne. [www.msa.org.au](http://www.msa.org.au)

**5-7 December 2008** Tudorism: Historical Imagination and the Appropriation of the Sixteenth Century. Colston Research Society Symposium, University of Bristol. [www.bristol.ac.uk/cms/go/colston-symposium-dec08](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/cms/go/colston-symposium-dec08)

### LOOKING AHEAD

**14-15 March 2009** Joseph Haydn. British Library, in association with the Haydn Society of Great Britain. email: [richard.chesser@bl.uk](mailto:richard.chesser@bl.uk)

**27-29 March 2009** Purcell, Handel, Haydn, and Mendelssohn: anniversary reflections. Royal Musical Association conference, New College Oxford. [www.rma.ac.uk/conferences/](http://www.rma.ac.uk/conferences/)

**2-5 July 2009** Sixth Biennial International Conference on Music Since 1900. Keele University. email: [n.w.reyland@keele.ac.uk](mailto:n.w.reyland@keele.ac.uk)

**2-5 July 2009** The Phenomenon of Singing International Symposium VII. St John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. email: [arose@mun.ca](mailto:arose@mun.ca)

**8-9 September 2009** Worship, Liturgy and Music in Early Modern England. University of Durham. Interdisciplinary conference sponsored by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. [www.dur.ac.uk/worship.network/wlm/](http://www.dur.ac.uk/worship.network/wlm/)

**20-21 November 2009** Purcell, Handel & Literature. Senate House, University of London. [www.music.sas.ac.uk](http://www.music.sas.ac.uk)

### SPECIAL BOOK OFFER

CHOMBEC has been donated a large stock of new copies of Edgar Hunt's book on Robert Lucas Pearsall, privately published in 1977. We offer them for sale at £7.50 each. Secure your order with a cheque payable to the University of Bristol, adding £2.50 for each copy that needs to be mailed. (Copies will be sent surface mail to territories beyond Europe.) Proceeds will offset CHOMBEC's general expenditure. Send your cheque and order to CHOMBEC, Department of Music, University of Bristol, Victoria Rooms, Queens Road, Bristol BS8 1SA, UK.