

Pomp and Circumstance. Penning the words of 'Land of Hope and Glory'.

Arthur Christopher Benson (1862-1925) was the son of a former Archbishop of Canterbury, a poet and schoolmaster at Eton, one of England's most prestigious schools. Shortly after the death of Queen Victoria in January 1901 he had written the words for a Coronation Ode for the new king, Edward VII. These were then offered to Elgar who suggested the fitting of the trio tune. Benson replied: 'I will try & write you ... a finale on the lines you indicate though the metre is a hard one.'

Thus the words 'Land of Hope and Glory' were married to the finale of Elgar's *Coronation Ode*. Benson then produced a modified version of the words for performance as a separate piece, as requested by Booseys, these differing considerably from those for the *Coronation Ode*. It is the chorus from this that is now so familiar to British audiences:

*Land of Hope and Glory,
Mother of the Free,
How shall we extol thee,
Who are born of thee?
Wider still and wider
Shall thy bounds be set,
God who made thee mighty,
Make thee mightier yet.*

Elgar was later to set three other poems by Benson, *In the Dawn* and *Speak, Music* (Opus 41) and *Speak my heart*.