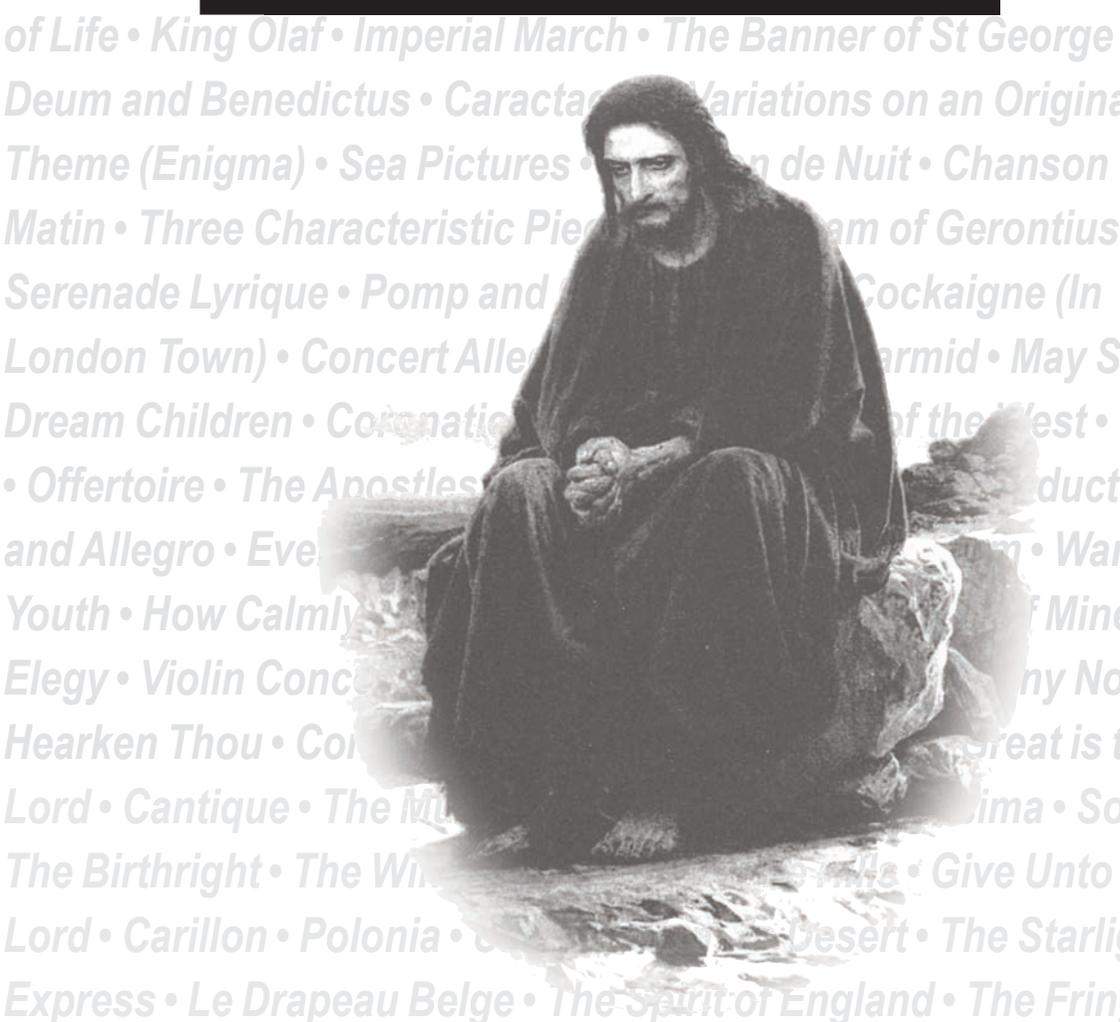


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The Elgar Society **Journal**



of Life • King Olaf • Imperial March • The Banner of St George
Deum and Benedictus • Caractacus Variations on an Original
Theme (Enigma) • Sea Pictures • L'Enfer de Nuit • Chanson
Matin • Three Characteristic Pieces • Ode to Gerontius
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King Arthur • The W... • F... • The H...

JULY 2003 Vol.13, No.2

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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: A detail from Christ in the Wilderness (1872) by the Russian artist Ivan Kramskoi (1837–87), the image most closely associated with Elgar's oratorio The Apostles, first performed one hundred years ago this coming October. This issue marks the centenary with a number of articles focussing on aspects of the first of Elgar's planned apostolic trilogy.

A Word to the Wise

Jerrold Northrop Moore

We warmly welcome Dr Northrop Moore to these pages to give his unique and personal perspective on the break up and sale of the Novello archive, based upon the many hours he spent amongst the papers to produce his bench-mark editions of Elgar correspondence.

The last issue's editorial lamented the scattering by sale of Elgar's correspondence with Novello—adding that I had published 'many, though by no means all' the letters. The position may not be quite so bleak. In the interest of cheering up the readership, I offer some memories from the making of my published volumes, *Elgar and his Publishers: Letters of a Creative Life* (Oxford University Press, 1987).

When Novello's managing director invited me to edit Elgar's correspondence with his firm, I was given every help. This included extended conversations with the retired Company Secretary, Harry Powell, whose service with the firm went back to 1916, shortly after Alfred Littleton's death. Mr Powell's vivid recollections included Elgar, Ivor Atkins, the redoubtable Henry Clayton, and many others. He gave his blessing to my publishing project for an interesting reason: that the continued presence of so many unpublished Elgar letters might tempt some future directors to 'flog them'. 'Verb. sap.', as Jaeger had written years earlier to Elgar.

Confronted with the mass of Elgar-Novello letters, it became apparent that they divided in two unequal piles. The larger pile concerned the composition, engraving, and printing of Elgar's music: letters of the highest interest. These I resolved to print virtually in their entirety. The only abridgements lay in summarising the one-liners acknowledging receipt of parcels and such.

The second pile of letters showed Novello acting as Elgar's agent for conducting concerts, a service they gave him over many years. Did Clayton think that *In the South* might do better for Bournemouth in December than *The Wand of Youth* Suite No. 2? Hundreds of such little questions raised and settled. There was also evidence of Elgar using Novello to raise his fees. Which of us is so wealthy as to have scorned such chances when offered?

In nearly every case, a letter to or from Elgar belonged exclusively to one pile or the other. The few exceptions showed clear divisions into paragraphs, inviting attention to the important side. All this I set out in the Preface to my volumes.

It might be thought, before reflection, that the whole mass should have been printed without a single golden word left out. But the important letters, about Elgar's compositions, already filled two volumes. Their published price in 1987 was £55. That lay heavy on my conscience, since I wanted every Elgarian who wished for the books to be able to afford them if at all possible.

Had the concert letters been interlarded, the price would have risen to £80 or £85 for three volumes. Worse still, in my view, a gripping and vital correspondence would have been diluted with endless recurring trivia. And the concert details were available from several sources at the Birthplace—the concert programmes, newspaper reviews, and many mentioned in Lady Elgar's diaries.

So I excluded the concert-arranging letters, and would do so today. Such letters may rightly be left to adorn the collections of Elgar devotees who long for a sample from the great man's hand. Nearly all of us began with

such desires, and I for one would be sorry to deny any Elgarian these little windows through which to see what he or she can. I remember the first Elgar autograph letter I ever bought, and recall vividly the sensations of touching it and thinking round it. Any such, in the right hands, can start reflection and insight.

The current position is this. The significant Elgar-Novello letters are all published in my two volumes. The letters 'unpublished by Moore' and recently offered with so many fanfares are all about concert-mongering. In my view, the Elgar Trustees were quite right to withdraw their offer for them. And the sale-room market was right to lower their monetary value from estimates not justified by the letters' contents.

JERROLD NORTROP MOORE is author of the biography Edward Elgar: A Creative Life (1984), which has been described as '...the greatest yet on any English musician', and by fellow biographer Michael Kennedy as 'a monumental achievement'. With his eight other books devoted to Elgar, including his editing of Elgar's correspondence, Dr Moore's contribution to our understanding of Elgar's life and music is unique in its scale and insight. He has completed what he says is his final book on Elgar, which will be published in 2004.

Elgar: 'the first English progressive musician'

Ian Parrott

It is a great pleasure to introduce a distinguished vice-president of the Elgar Society and biographer of the composer to offer his personal reflections on The Apostles. Far from being yet another work in the English oratorio tradition, Professor Parrott argues The Apostles presents Elgar at his most inventive and forward-looking.

For me *The Apostles* is probably Elgar's greatest or most characteristic choral composition. My copy of the vocal score (published 1903 at six shillings) belonged to a friend of my father's, John Henry Webster, who almost certainly sang in the chorus in 1904. I enthusiastically made a *motiv-tafel* before realizing that Jaeger had done 'Analytical Notes' for the work.

After a visit to Alfred Rodewald's Welsh house, Minafon ('Riverside') in the appropriately named Betws-y-coed ('Prayer-house in the woods') in August 1903, Elgar had finished the whole score (the work being first performed in Birmingham on 14 October). A couple of years ago I took a photograph of the house—what a wonderful, peaceful sanctuary in the mountains of North Wales for a composer who, for all his sometimes outrageous outbursts, was deeply imbued with the Christian religion and with Christ, the Man of Sorrows in the wilderness whose picture by Kramskoi he had at his elbow. Moreover, at this time, he was concerned to match Wagner's monumental four-day *Ring* cycle with a trilogy on a *Christian* subject, which he would treat in his own most idiomatic way. As we know, however, he wrote only one further part, *The Kingdom*, and failed to complete a third part.

Coming between *The Dream of Gerontius* (1900) and *The Kingdom* (1906), it seems that, while lacking some of the forward sweep of the former and the rather heavy complexity of the latter, it can be said that *The Apostles* stands at the pinnacle of Elgar's creative structuring. But it is much more than that: it represents the musical language of a great new thinker; a full-blooded modernist progressive, in fact.

Elgar, as a boy, had read of rudiments and of orchestration, not as a follower of precepts and 'thou-shalt-nots' but as a rebel. Much of his newness—the first English progressive musician' toasted Strauss in 1902—stems from this. So he stood out against dogmatism in music theory as in religion.

Part of his unorthodox approach to the Christian religion can be noted by his concern to deal with 'ordinary' men. Just as Gerontius was 'everyman', not a saint, so the Apostles were 'not cleverer than some of you here', as his early school-teacher had said. After having collected and read no fewer than fifty-eight substantial books on religious matters, Elgar might well consider himself qualified to compile his own text, which he did. He thought especially of Judas, who is treated, much as Mussorgsky had done with Boris Godunov, as a tragic villain; and he saw Mary Magdalene as a genuine repentant sinner. Do her consecutive fifths remind him of his youth? In Stainer's *Harmony*, signed Edward Wm Elgar, April 14th, 1883, when the author writes 'the student will do well to collect other examples [of consecutive fifths]', he adds: 'I won't'.

But surely it is the bold forward-looking new music which must make us stop in our tracks and think. The opening alone of this great work looks forward immediately to the style of Vaughan Williams and in the section when 'Jesus went out... to pray', 'In the Mountain,—Night', soon after the remote oboe group has suggested the Golan Heights, the unrelated chords are clearly an influence on the *Fantasia on a Theme of Tallis* of 1909.

VW in his most modest manner said that he didn't realise how much later composers had 'cribbed' from Elgar. If the Night is depicted with compelling melancholy, the Dawn bursts upon the listener as only Elgar can paint it. Not even the dawn of Debussy's *La Mer* a couple of years later can surpass it in brilliance and originality.

Most people are happy to say they know Elgar's orchestration is good, but how many realise the sheer originality of it? Elgar actually read Reicha's *Orchestral Primer* at the age of ten, but his marginal annotations, instead of being sycophantic, are mostly scornfully critical, clearly indicating that the juvenile reader knew more than the writer! Let us now take for example that most unlikely instrument as a part of the orchestra: the organ. When Gerontius went before his Judge, we heard the unflinching tone of two notes, *pianissimo*, on the organ—a totally unique effect. And now, instead of being used to prop up sagging singers with a traditional continuo figured bass, it is used again with staggering bravado. When Judas casts down the thirty pieces of silver, the clatter of blood money is not only of cymbal, triangle and glockenspiel but the macabre mixture of two-, four- and sixteen-foot stops on the organ!

Yes, he could out-do Bantock with antique cymbals and shofar, too. Although Elgar could muster an enormous body of exotic sound if he wanted to, he loved softness. When the gramophone was invented, he didn't, as a modern hi-fi crank would, turn it up; he turned it down.

Elgar made several visits to Wales in later years. One memorable occasion was in 1924. He'd had a successful time at the Aberystwyth festival in June, enjoying Arthur Williams's playing of the Cello Concerto. But two days later he was conducting *The Apostles* in Harlech. This new composition must have been 'very modern' for the sixteen bewildered choirs from remote mountain districts gathered together. Things were made worse, so it was said, when a little man jumped up, just as Elgar was about to raise his baton, and started to make a speech. After several minutes, Elgar is supposed to have turned, said, 'Shut up you fool', and launched into the oratorio. Afterwards his friend, Sir Walford Davies, with all the tact and charm that could be mustered, drove him to the mansion, Gregynog, 'tired but happy'—or so the visitors' book recorded.

It might be mentioned here that there is something of the gentle rather bland style of Walford Davies discernible in the Beatitudes section, (By the Wayside) of *The Apostles*. 'Melody,' wrote Sir Walford, 'speaks your joy while harmony shows your mind.'

Do we realize now how astonishingly modern *The Apostles* was in its time, coming soon after the era of insipid namby-pamby Victorian hymns? Across the Channel it was a time for new thinking with lavish orchestration: for example, *Madama Butterfly* (Milan, 1904) by Puccini, who was looked down upon by one of my Oxford tutors, Ernest Walker. Rimsky-Korsakov in St Petersburg was almost overlooked, while Strauss in Germany was considered by Scholes not always to have soared above the level of vulgarity. Jaeger may well have found some passages 'too jolly' or 'crude' in the new work, but Elgar, while appreciating his friend's views when the composition was in progress, usually went his own way nevertheless. Ernest Newman, on the other hand, arrogantly self-assured, had expected an old-fashioned, classical development while failing to appreciate the twentieth-century newness in the juxtaposition of motives at the beginning of Part II. He imagined children 'putting together painted blocks of wood'... As well might he have asked Debussy when the first subject would come back.

So, when I was in my impressionable years, the Twenties and Thirties, many other composers were hailed as beacons of the vaunted New Music, while Elgar was brushed aside. The know-alls of those days were deaf to the very personal language on their doorstep. England, they assumed was *das Land ohne Musik* in perpetuity.

Now, in my eighties, I am gratified to see a picture of Elgar with Worcester Cathedral adorning the back of a twenty-pound note. It means we now recognize that 'the first English progressive musician' has joined the ranks of the Great Masters, even if it has taken us one hundred years to find out.

IAN PARROTT is a composer, author and a vice-president of the Elgar Society. He was Gregynog Professor of Music at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth for over thirty years. His biographical study Elgar was published in the Master



Christ in the Wilderness (1872) by the Russian artist Ivan Kramskoi (1837–87). Receiving a postcard of the painting from Elgar, David Ffrangcon Davies—who was to sing the part of Christ in the première at the Birmingham Festival—wrote, ‘The strong loneliness of the Saviour, and His manifest self-forgetfulness, are so plain to be seen . . . I believe your realization of the Master will do a mighty work for the souls of men.’ The original oil on canvas work is currently housed at the Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.

Musicians series in 1971; his latest book, an autobiography, has recently been published by the British Music Society.

‘Everything I can lay my hands on’: Elgar’s theological library—Part One

Geoffrey Hodgkins

In assembling his own libretto for The Apostles Elgar consulted and studied a wide variety of biblical reference material including translations, concordances, commentaries and other theological writings. This article identifies and introduces these sources on the basis of those books which remain in the Elgar Birthplace collection and the 1918 inventory of the contents of Elgar’s London home, Severn House.

Elgar’s first oratorio *The Light of Life* (1896) used a text by Edward Capel Cure, a local Anglican clergyman, made up of biblical quotes supplemented by the librettist’s own poetry. Four years later, Elgar set Cardinal Newman’s *The Dream of Gerontius* for the Birmingham Festival, but cut out much of the later part of the poem. He accepted a commission from Birmingham for a new choral work at the 1903 Festival, and decided to fulfil a long-held ambition to write a large-scale oratorio on the life of Christ and the foundation of the Church. He told his first biographer, R. J. Buckley: ‘I have been thinking it out since boyhood, and have been selecting the words for years, many years’.¹ The inspiration for this work, as all Elgarians will know, came from some words spoken by his schoolmaster Francis Reeve over thirty years before: ‘The Apostles were poor men, young men at the time of their calling; perhaps before the descent of the Holy Ghost not cleverer than some of you here’.²

As a child, Elgar’s tuition in the Catholic faith had been provided mostly by Father William Waterworth of St George’s, Worcester, a Jesuit. There were no catechistic manuals in use: in all probability the priest instilled in his pupils the characteristics of Jesuit education as outlined by St Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the order. There are nine of these, and the second seems of particular relevance to what we know of Elgar: ‘Each person is known and loved personally by God. This love invites a response, and so we begin a search for the destiny and meaning of our lives...’ This combined sense of destiny and calling obviously made a deep and lasting impression on Elgar, and the commission for the 1903 Birmingham Festival seemed the right time to fulfil it. At the end of July 1902 Alice marked in her diary: ‘Began to be very busy collecting material for the Apostles’. Elgar, having just returned from Bayreuth, must have been aware that Wagner, early on in his career, had decided to write his own libretti. This was fundamental to his notion of *Gesamtkunstwerk*—the totally integrated music drama, where the words are an equal partner, and not merely a peg to hang the music on. Unfortunately for Elgar, the obvious source—the Bible—was not something he was particularly familiar with. This is not really surprising, as the Catholic Church placed no great emphasis on biblical knowledge by the individual believer, unlike the Protestant tradition. The faithful were expected to come to God via the priest and the sacrament. In fact, in some parts of the Catholic Church it was considered dangerous for lay people to study the Bible: they needed the clergy to give the correct interpretation, lest they fall into error; and private judgment of texts was forbidden. The Council of Trent (1545–63) had decreed that if Catholics read or owned a Bible without a licence, they should be refused absolution unless the offending article was surrendered to the authorities. Given this background, Elgar’s relative ignorance of the Bible is understandable, and can be gleaned from Dora Penny’s account of her visit to Craeg Lea in February 1903:

I found E.E. very busy with the 'book' of *The Apostles*. The study seemed to be full of Bibles. He had a Bible open on the table in front of him and there seemed to be a Bible on every chair and even one on the floor.

"Goodness!" I said. "What a collection of Bibles! What have you got there besides the Authorized and Revised Versions?"

"I don't know; they've been lent to me. I say, d'you know that the Bible is a most wonderfully interesting book?"

"Yes," I said. "I know it is."

"What do you know about it? Oh, I forgot, you *do* know something about it. Anyway, I've been reading a lot of it lately and have been quite absorbed."...

I think it very astonishing, when one looks at the words which are set in *The Apostles* and sees the immense skill with which they have been selected and put together, that the work was mainly done by one who was finding out the beauties of the Bible almost for the first time.³

As Elgar said to Buckley: 'When I propose such a work as this I first of all read everything I can lay my hands on which bears on the subject directly or indirectly, meditating on all that I have sifted out as likely to serve my purpose, and blending it with my musical perceptions'.⁴ The compiling of the libretto, then, was a major task, and enormously time-consuming. Elgar set about it purposefully and with a will. 'When he began "The Apostles" he saturated his mind with biblical literature. He was more absorbed in this than anything else written in Malvern.'⁵ Given his lack of expertise in this area, the question arises as to where he acquired these books. As he told Dorabella, some had been lent to him, so if the books were eventually returned to their owner(s) we have no means of knowing what they were. One possible source may be Capel Cure, then a parish priest in Dorset, whom he consulted first about the *Apostles* libretto. Another is Canon Raymond Pelly, the vicar of Malvern Priory. His wife Alice was involved with Elgar on the committee of the Worcestershire Philharmonic Society—although Elgar once said that she was 'not of much use'⁶—and an Elgar devotee, writing an effusive letter to him after the first performance of *The Apostles*.⁷

The success of *The Apostles* première in October 1903 and Elgar's obvious enthusiasm for the text caused others to offer help with the continuation of the project. In March 1905 R. H. Wilson, chorus master of the Hallé and the Birmingham Festival, sent Elgar a book by a nonconformist clergyman. In his covering letter to Alice, Wilson wrote: 'Having heard from Sir Edward and you, how eagerly theological works bearing on a certain subject are sought—and knowing something of the work in hand, I wondered if it would be of any interest to you to see it. The book deals with a subject not too frequently investigated, and if it should turn out to be of any use, please accept it from me.'⁸ The book is not named, and Elgar may have returned it.

Like some of his other interests, theology absorbed Elgar greatly during the composition of *The Apostles*, and although enthusiasm waned somewhat during the composition of *The Kingdom*, he turned to his books occasionally, to the extent of typing out sizeable extracts from Revelation in the 1920s, in a forlorn attempt at stirring inspiration for the third oratorio. Over forty of his books on theology are present at Broadheath, most containing Elgar's markings. Other theological books of Elgar's are named in the typed inventory from Severn House (ISH). This was undertaken after a burglary there in 1918, but sadly it is far from complete, listing the books by batches, and giving the number in each batch and one or two titles; for example: 'People's Dictionary of the Bible, Farrer's [*sic*] Christianity, Liddon's Bampton Lectures—24'. It is possible that the other books in this batch were also theological; and by this reasoning there could have been more than one hundred bibles and theological books in Elgar's collection, so that what we have left is less than half the original total. I have learned from Raymond Monk that many books were disposed of immediately after Carice Elgar's death in 1970, and a number of these are believed to have been on theology.

For most of the nineteenth century Christianity had been subjected to a series of attacks on nearly all its traditional beliefs. Research in geology, anthropology and biology, as well as history and theology itself, led to

the questioning of long-held beliefs. Many people became atheists; while other believers were shaken but retained something of their faith, like Tennyson in *In Memoriam*: 'I... faintly trust the larger hope'. Many works of biblical criticism were written, to be followed inevitably by ripostes from the traditionalists. Elgar's theological books are a real mixed bag, which would appear to confirm Brian Trowell's assertion of 'the unsystematic nature of [Elgar's] acquisitions'. Most are by traditional churchmen, or those who remained largely faithful to the tenets of the faith while admitting the validity of much contemporary criticism; but Elgar also owned books by theological radicals.

Given Elgar's lack of theological background, the major need in beginning to compile his libretto was to collect a large number of reference books, and this is what he did. There was Cruden's *Concordance*, the standard work of its kind, dating from 1737. What made this book particularly useful to Elgar was its subdivisions: for example, under the word 'Lord' are grouped together phrases such as 'against the Lord', 'the Lord his God', 'the Lord our God', 'the mouth of the Lord', and so on. There are forty-three such subdivisions of 'Lord'. This saved much time in seeking for an appropriate text. Elgar owned another concordance—the *Topical Bible* by American Orville J. Nave, first published in 1897. He bought it in October 1904 according to the verso of the flyleaf, and there are three marked entries: 'lameness', 'persecution of the righteous', and 'music' (the first two obviously relating to *The Kingdom*).

Then there were two large Bible dictionaries. That of James Hastings (1852–1922), a Scottish Presbyterian minister, came out in five volumes between 1898 and 1904. It therefore had the merit for Elgar of being up to date. The other was by Sir William Smith (1813–93), whose dictionary comprised '...the Antiquities, Biography, Geography, and Natural History'. It originally appeared in 1863 in three volumes. Smith was an expert lexicographer and classicist, and produced many works of reference. He edited the *Quarterly Review* from 1867 to his death. Elgar disapproved of Smith's reference to Judas (and to the one in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*), referring to them in a note as 'wholly inadequate & cannot be relied upon in reference to the motives of Judas'.

Elgar received the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*—thirty-five volumes costing £42, as he told Jaeger—as a Christmas present in 1902 from his Malvern friends the Jebb Scotts. He eagerly devoured the relevant articles, quoting from them in his unpublished notes on *The Apostles*.

Another reference book was the *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, published 1899–1903 in four volumes. It was written by Thomas Cheyne (1841–1915), Oriel Professor of the Interpretation of Scripture at Oxford, and J. Sutherland Black, a former assistant editor of *Britannica*. It was rather daring and unconventional, being somewhat pointedly dedicated to the memory of the notorious Scottish theologian, W. Robertson Smith, who was removed from his Chair at Aberdeen for his radical views on the inspiration of the Bible. The authors wrote that it was for 'all serious students, both professional and lay'. Yet another reference book was Edwin W. Rice's *People's Dictionary of the Bible*. This was a much smaller book, only two hundred pages long, compiled for the American Sunday School Union in 1893.

Elgar used at least two commentaries on the entire Bible. Matthew Henry (1662–1714) was a nonconformist, and his commentary of 1710 is universally regarded as one of the finest, being widely used to this day. The other was *A Commentary on the Old and New Testaments*, published in 1809 in seven volumes, a combination of several authors' work: Simon Patrick and William Lowth on the Old Testament; Richard Arnald on the Apocrypha; and Daniel Whitby, Bishop of St Asaph (1638–1726) on the New Testament. Elgar's notes on the contralto's passage in Part 2 of *The Apostles*—'Then Judas, which had betrayed Him...'—quote from Whitby's annotations to Matthew 27: 3, which Elgar also approved in an introductory note.⁹

Sadly, and with the exception of Nave's concordance, none of these reference books are present in the Broadheath collection.

When it came to the Bible itself, Elgar was conscious that the words of the Authorised Version (AV) of 1611 were extremely familiar to most people. This caused him to look to the Apocrypha and to other versions of the Bible to see if the freshness of their wording would make a greater impact on the listener, or elucidate the meaning he

wanted to give. On 1 June 1903 he wrote to Canon Gorton (who had read through the libretto and made comments): 'I am sorry you object to Apocrypha:—the fact that it is less known is in its favour: when used for making connective sentences etc. it does not call up associations like the O[ld] & N[ew] T[estaments]'. Elgar used the Revised Version (RV) of the Bible extensively in his libretti for *The Apostles* and *The Kingdom*; as with the Apocrypha, he hoped its relative unfamiliarity would catch the audience's attention. The Revised Version dates from 1881 (New Testament), completed in 1885 by the Old Testament. It was brought out in response to the growth in Biblical scholarship and to changes in English usage since 1611, which made it widely admired by scholars: however, most ordinary church-goers tended to prefer the version they knew.

Elgar's copy of the Revised Version is another missing from the collection, although there is a 'Revised' Apocrypha which had appeared in 1894. Elgar's copy dates from 1903, and his name-plate is pasted on the inside front cover, but there are no marks. His work on the Apocrypha was done from the AV, and the Broadheath copy is marked with several passages used in *The Apostles*—especially Judas's soliloquy and parts of Mary Magdalene's fantasy. Elgar also marked—but ultimately did not set—Tobit 14: 6, 7: 'And all nations shall turn, and fear the Lord God truly... So shall all nations praise the Lord, and his people shall confess God, and the Lord shall exalt his people...' This is very similar to the part of Psalm 22 ('All the ends of the earth...') used in the final chorus of *The Apostles*. Another marked verse—with three marginal lines—is Ecclesiasticus 3: 15: 'Many are in high place, and of renown: but mysteries are revealed unto the meek'. This is reminiscent of 'He hath chosen the meek' from the chorus 'The Lord hath chosen them'; and it also has echoes of Francis Reeve's statement. Another heavily marked verse (this time four marginal lines) is Wisdom 17: 8: 'For they, that promised to drive away terrors and troubles from a sick soul, were sick themselves of fear, worthy to be laughed at'. Elgar wrote the word 'Judas' at the top of the page.

There are two copies of the Authorised Version at Broadheath. One dates from 29 November 1902; it contains the inscription: 'Mem: Bought this in Liverpool with my dear friend Rody: used it for the *Apostles*'. This is an interesting inscription, as it might suggest that prior to this Elgar did not possess a copy of the whole Bible (though of course he could have been lent one). The other was bought in Alassio by Alice and inscribed to her husband just a few weeks after the *Apostles* première. It is unmarked and shows little sign of use. Alice was anxious for Elgar to be thinking of the follow-up to *The Apostles*, but he wanted a break; the death of 'dear Rody' shortly after the first performance of the work he loved so much had wounded the composer deeply.

There are two copies of the New Testament in the Broadheath collection—one AV and one RV. The Authorised is a 'red letter' New Testament, i.e. the words of Jesus are printed in red. The flyleaf is marked 'Edward Elgar: / Smyrna / Oct 1: 1905'. There are a few annotations in the Gospels, especially Matthew and John. At John 4, the account of Jesus and the woman of Samaria, Elgar has written at the bottom of the page: 'Simon Magus must have known all this. E.E'. There are many annotations in Acts, including the word 'Gerontius' linked to chapter 2, verse 17. Robert Anderson has pointed out that Elgar had originally set these words ('and your young men shall see visions', etc.) to music from the 'Angel's Farewell' in *Gerontius*.¹⁰ In the back cover Elgar has written out the order for the second part of *The Kingdom*: 'Miracle P[eter] & J[ohn] / Lame man / In prison / evening / B[lessed] V[irgin] & Mary Mag / release / & joining together / Eucharist'.

The Revised Version New Testament contains an 'Edward Elgar' name-plate, but is undated. However, on the inside front cover is a list of titles: 'I. The Apostles / II. The Kingdom / III. The Judgement x / IIII The Saints / The Vision / The Throne / The Holy City / the Fulfilment / x best'. This was clearly used for *The Kingdom* and beyond: there are only three markings in the Gospels, none of special significance; but many in the early chapters of Acts, including chapter 2 verse 15, where Peter explains to the people that the joy-filled, tongues-speaking apostles are not drunk, because of the early hour. Elgar has underlined the words 'seeing it is but the third hour of the day' and put an exclamation mark in the margin. The latter part of chapter 2 has a puzzling note in the top margin: 'S. Michael, patron st of the Church'. The Archangel Michael is only mentioned five times in the Bible—three in Daniel, and once each in Jude and Revelation. The Day of Pentecost is often described as the birthday of the church, but it is difficult to understand the connection with Michael here. The only other markings in this volume are six in Jude, and more

than twenty in Revelation, all relating to the third oratorio.

The early years of the twentieth century saw a whole number of different translations, such as the American Standard Version of 1901, and Weymouth's *New Testament in Modern Speech* (1903). Two more of these new versions were in Elgar's collection, maybe with a view to including an alternative rendering of a well-known passage from the AV.

The first was *The Bible in Modern English* by Ferrar Fenton, published in 1903. This was a private translation: Fenton was a businessman, totally sincere, and claiming fluency in Greek and Semitic languages. However, his translation was quirky, and although it enjoyed a certain vogue for a time (possibly because it was so different), it was never taken seriously as a translation. The very first verse of the Bible gives a flavour: 'By periods God created that which produced the Solar Systems; then that which produced the earth' (Genesis 1: 1). Elgar possessed Volume 3 (The Books of the Prophets), but was curtly dismissive of the book, writing in pencil on the flyleaf: 'p 203 / This fool has omitted / one of the finest lines in / all literature. why?' Fenton has not translated the final part of Amos 8: 3: 'They shall cast them forth in silence'.

Elgar also owned *The Twentieth Century New Testament* of 1904. The preface is signed 'The translators', who are not named, but who acknowledge their debt to Westcott and Hort, two of the team which produced the Revised Version. It was later revealed that the translating work was done by Mrs Mary Higgs (the wife of a Congregational minister in Oldham), Ernest de Merindol Malan (an engineer from Hull), plus an assortment of preachers and laymen. The purpose was to make the Bible understandable by children and working people. A later scholar, F. F. Bruce commented: 'How they succeeded in producing such an excellent version is difficult to understand'. There are only three annotations by Elgar, all from Revelation, once again with the third oratorio in mind.

Several other Bibles and aids listed in ISH are currently missing. One is *The Tradition of Scripture* (1906) from a series of 'Manuals for Catholic Priests and Students' by William Barry, one of the few Roman Catholic authors in Elgar's collection. Elgar also possessed Bishop Christopher Wordsworth's *Greek New Testament*, complete with introductions and notes; this was recommended to him by Canon Gorton in a letter of 17 January 1906, while he was working on *The Kingdom*.¹¹ This was a very scholarly version indeed, and hard work for anyone not conversant with New Testament Greek. Another Bible was that of George D'Oyly and Bishop Richard Mant, published in 1814 with 'notes explanatory and practical, taken principally from the most eminent writers of the United Church of England and Ireland'.

Although the Church was shaken by the claims made by science and by attacks on the reliability of the Bible, perhaps the greatest challenge to nineteenth-century Christians came from the reassessment of the person and work of Jesus. In short, the question most generally asked was: 'Is the Christ of faith the same as the Jesus of history?' The question was not new, but it was pursued with increasing intensity during the Victorian age. The first major work was *The Life of Jesus* by the German theologian D. F. Strauss which appeared in 1835. Strauss denied the historical foundation of all the supernatural elements in the Gospels, dismissing them as 'myth'. His book had an impact on scholars, but not so much on the Church at large; this was reserved for *The Life of Jesus* (1863) by Ernest Renan, a Breton who had begun training for the Catholic priesthood, but by the age of twenty-two he had rejected the major Catholic doctrines. Yet Catholicism continued to fascinate him, and his book was written in Palestine when on an expedition there. The terms Renan used to describe Jesus—an original genius; a great soul; a superior person; an incomparable artist; a lovable character; an idyllic and gentle nature—sympathetic as they might have been, were calculated to upset the faithful. Renan ascribed the miracles and other supernatural events to legends, much as Strauss had done. Because it was written in a very readable style (an English translation appeared in 1864) it quickly became a *succès de scandale*: it reached a sixteenth edition in 1879 and was translated into many languages. The strong reaction world-wide can be seen from the fact that the British Library contains over one hundred and eighty works critical of Renan's book.

We do not know if Elgar read *The Life of Jesus*. He never mentions it, but given its notoriety and the author's Catholic background, it is hard to believe he did not; particularly as Liddon's book, mentioned in the Severn

House list, was largely written to refute it. *The Divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ* by Henry Parry Liddon (1829–1890), Chancellor of St Paul's Cathedral, Professor of Exegesis at the University of Oxford, and a strong Tractarian, contains the eight Bampton Lectures of 1866.¹² In his preface Liddon writes: 'The present volume attempts only to notice... Some of those assaults upon the doctrine of our Lord's Divinity which have been prominent or popular of late years, and which have, unhappily, had a certain weight among persons with whom the writer is acquainted'. In an appendix Liddon identifies these works as those by Strauss, Schenkel, Ewald, Keim, Renan, and the author of *Ecce Homo* (at the time anonymous but now known to be Sir John Seeley). Liddon is particularly hard on Renan's book: 'Its one and only excellence is its incomparable style. From every other point of view it is deplorable... Its hero is a fanatical impostor, who pretends to be and to do that which he knows to be beyond him, but who nevertheless is held up to our admiration as the ideal of humanity... a character devoid of any real majesty, of any tolerable consistency, and even of the constituent elements of moral goodness'. Liddon refers several times to Renan, mostly from *The Life of Jesus*, but also from another book *The Apostles*.

I would give a great deal to see Elgar's copy of Liddon, as any markings would be of the utmost interest. The book gets a mention in a letter from him to Sidney Colvin in April 1917, where it is linked to F. W. Farrar, Dean of Canterbury: '*Farrar & Liddon* (Bampton lectures I think) have marvellously minute indexes & get quoted out of all relation to their worth & consequence'.¹³ Farrar is best known for his *Life of Christ* of 1874, which was immensely popular and went through twelve editions in a year.

Renan's book was the first in a series of eight under the title *History of the Origins of Christianity* (1863–83). The others were *The Apostles*, *Saint Paul*, *The Antichrist*, *The Gospels and the Second Generation of Christianity*, *The Christian Church*, *Marcus Aurelius and the End of the Ancient World*, and an index. Elgar owned copies of *The Apostles* and *The Antichrist* and these are annotated, particularly the former, with fifty-eight pencil additions. However, it is strange that though it shares the same name as Elgar's 1903 oratorio and is quoted by Elgar as one of the four books referred to when shaping his libretto for that work, Renan's *Apostles* takes up the story *after* the death of Jesus; it begins with the resurrection (which of course Renan denies), but most of the book covers the beginning of the early church in Acts, which is the source of *The Kingdom*. A solution could be that Elgar's notes (which he wanted published, but which never were) date from a period when he still intended to write a single, gigantic oratorio (i.e. prior to June 1903).

The other three books Elgar acknowledges are Hillard's *Life of Christ*, Latham's *Pastor Pastorum*, and Archbishop Whately's *Lectures on the Characters of Our Lord's Apostles*. The Rev. A. E. Hillard taught at Clifton College and produced a number of Greek and Latin textbooks and exercises (many still in print). The full title of his book is *A Continuous Narrative of the Life of Christ*. Hillard has arranged passages from the four Gospels to give a continuous chronological narrative. 'It is intended to give boys a clearer idea of the connection between the parts of Christ's ministry and the order of events in it than they obtain by reading the Gospels in succession'. He intended that the *Life of Christ* should be read '*...once* by each boy at school, say in the Third or Fourth Form'. Of Elgar's four 'source' books, Hillard is missing.

Pastor Pastorum, subtitled *The Schooling of the Apostles by Our Lord*, was published in 1890, and went through several reprints. The Rev. Henry Latham (1821–1902) was Master of Trinity Hall, Cambridge. Elgar acquired the latest edition (1902). There are some fourteen markings by Elgar. Latham died on 5 June 1902 and, coming close to the time when Elgar began to start work on *The Apostles*, it is tempting to wonder if he perhaps saw an obituary of Latham which prompted him to buy the book. In a letter to Canon Gorton the following year, he spoke of his 'plan' including 'the fruit of all the teaching (schooling) of the Apostles'. 'Schooling' (used in Latham's subtitle) is not a common word, and Elgar may have used it unconsciously.

Richard Whately (1787–1863) was Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford and Professor of Political Economy. In 1825 he became Principal of St Alban Hall, Oxford and was one of the 'characters' in the city. Chadwick describes him thus: '*...with rough manners and huge frame, eating vast helpings at high table, smoker of many pipes, wearing hairy untidy garments, utterly unclerical in appearance and caring nothing for convention... [he] once*

preached a sermon with one leg dangling out of the pulpit and shocked Bishop Bathurst [of Norwich] by receiving him with feet on the table'. Whately selected for his vice-principal at St Alban Hall one John Henry Newman, who became his disciple: Newman later wrote that Whately taught him to see with his own eyes and walk with his own feet (meaning moving away from his evangelical beliefs). When Whately was appointed Archbishop of Dublin in 1831, Newman half expected that Whately would invite him to go, and that his conscience would tell him to accept. But it did not happen, and one is left pondering on what might have been the future of Christianity in England (particularly in the Anglican Church) if Newman had left the country at this time. Whately's book was published in 1851; Elgar owned the 1893 edition. There are only nine marked passages, the most substantial relating to Judas; Elgar valued Whately's interpretation, as he told Thomas Dunhill in 1905: 'I hope you have Whately's lectures on the Characters of our Lord's Apostles—do read the 'Judas'—de Quincy can be neglected, but Whately sums the matter up almost adequately.' According to ISH, Elgar possessed the complete works of the English essayist Thomas de Quincy (1785–1859), published in 1889 in fourteen volumes, but they are missing. The article on Judas is found in Volume 8, 'Speculative and Theological Essays'.

Hillard's was not the only school-book owned by Elgar. *A Handbook to the Gospel according to St Matthew* by Canon W. C. E. Newbolt is quoted twice in Elgar's notes, in relation to the treachery of Judas and Jesus's cry from the Cross. The book, which used the Revised Version, was published in 1900 and was written 'for the use of teachers and students'. Newbolt (1844–1930) was a High Churchman who was vicar of Malvern Link from 1877 to 1887, later Principal of Ely Theological College, and then Chancellor of St Paul's Cathedral.

Another set of Bampton lectures was used by Elgar while compiling his libretto, although ultimately nothing came of them. These were the 1827 lectures given by Henry Hart Milman (1791–1868), later Dean of St Paul's Cathedral, entitled *The Character and Conduct of the Apostles considered as an Evidence of Christianity*. In the sketches for the *Apostles* libretto a note reads: 'Mem.—for Contention see Milman, pp. 60, 61 &c.'¹⁴ Elgar's idea was to combine the scene by the wayside, which has the disciples plucking ears of corn as they walk along (Mark 2: 23), with the dispute which arose among the disciples about who should be the greatest (Mark 9: 34). Milman's second sermon has as its text 1 Corinthians 1: 27–28: 'But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise'. Milman relates this to the Apostles: 'Does the previous conduct of the apostles, as we receive it on their own authority, justify us in anticipating this strict subordination, this unusual harmony, or this patient submission of individual opinion to the suffrage of the majority? It appears indisputable from the Gospels, that before the resurrection, the seeds of mutual jealousy and mistrust subsisted among the twelve. Personal ambition mingled with their views of their Master's aggrandizement'. As we know, this scene of 'contention' was never composed: the 'By the Wayside' movement is a peaceful reciting of the Beatitudes from Matthew 5.

On the same page as the Milman reference Elgar writes: 'Mem. Why not, after the prayer of Jesus, (chos. Orch &c) make the change—the waking up—come from the temple; the morning call to prayer & ?? See p. 40 Delitzsch'. Franz Delitzsch (1813–90) was a German Old Testament scholar. Of Jewish extraction, he translated the New Testament into Hebrew in 1877, and published a number of commentaries on Old Testament books. The book Elgar used was called *Jewish Artisan Life in the Time of Christ*. It was written in 1868, and is quite short. Chapter 4 is called 'A June Day in Jerusalem during the last decade before the Birth of Christ', and it is from this that Elgar took the description of the sunrise and Morning Psalm in Part I of *The Apostles*. He lent the book to Canon Gorton (who quoted from it in his *Interpretation of the Libretto*) and in August 1903 to Jaeger. However, the Delitzsch and the Milman books are not mentioned in ISH and are also missing from the current collection.

When beginning to map out his libretto scheme in 1902, Elgar selected several episodes from the Gospels which had already been 'dramatised' in Longfellow's 1871 verse-drama *The Divine Tragedy*. Yet he was forced back to Scripture for his text, as he was anxious to use the exact words. The problem was solved by making extensive use of two books. One was Pinnock's *An Analysis of New Testament History*, first published in 1850 (Elgar owned the 1894 edition). It contained 'Questions for Examination' for divinity students, and there were

relevant questions at the foot of each page. William Henry Pinnock (1813–85) of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge had written several elementary textbooks and scriptural manuals, as well as works on ecclesiastical law. Part III of Pinnock's book was entitled 'A Brief Analysis of New Testament History', a chronological arrangement of the details of Christ's life and the growth of the early church. Elgar used it in conjunction with Edward Robinson's *A Harmony of the Four Gospels*, first published in America in 1845. Robinson (1794–1863) was Professor of Biblical Literature in the Union Theological Seminary, New York. The *Harmony* covers the events of the Gospels chronologically, but actually prints the text of the Authorised Version, whereas Pinnock's book merely gives a summary of the events. In the *Harmony*, where the four Gospels all cover the same material (such as Peter's denial), they are printed in four parallel columns on the same page. Elgar could thus easily compare the versions and choose which one suited him most. (A good example of this is the storm at sea in *The Apostles*, which Elgar takes from Matthew 8 and 14, and Mark 6.) The libretto sketches contain schemes based on these two books; and the books themselves are both heavily marked, as might be expected.

Elgar did possess a rather provocative book about Jesus. *Historical Evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ* (1907) by Kirsopp Lake (1872–1946) challenged the sufficiency of the evidence for the empty tomb. Lake held professorships at Leyden and later at Harvard. Significantly, perhaps, the book was published after the two biblical oratorios were written, and may indicate a liberalisation of Elgar's beliefs.

These, then, so far as we know, provided the material from which Elgar produced the libretto for *The Apostles* in 1903. In a second part of this article, we shall look at the books he used for *The Kingdom*, and for the projected third oratorio.

1. Robert J. Buckley, *Sir Edward Elgar* (London, 1905), p. 74.
2. Buckley, p. 8.
3. Mrs Richard Powell, *Edward Elgar: Memories of a Variation*, fourth edition (London, 1994), p. 54.
4. Buckley, p. 75.
5. MS notes by A. Troyte Griffith, quoted in Percy M. Young, *Alice Elgar: enigma of a Victorian lady* (London, 1978), p. 138.
6. Percy M. Young, *Letters of Edward Elgar* (London, 1956), p. 98.
7. EBML (Elgar Birthplace Museum letter) 3563. Possibly as a result of his wife's reaction to *The Apostles*, Canon Pelly offered the Priory to Elgar for a performance there (EBML 3558).
8. EBML 3868.
9. This note appears in *The Apostles* in the Elgar Complete Edition (Volume 8), where the author is wrongly transcribed as 'Whiteley'.
10. Robert Anderson, *Elgar in Manuscript* (London, 1990), p. 77.
11. British Library, Add. MS 47905B, fols 244–7.
12. The Bampton lectures were eight sermons given annually at St Mary's Church, Oxford in memory of John Bampton, Canon of Salisbury (d. 1751), their subject being 'the exposition and defence of the Christian Faith as expressed in the Creeds, on the authority of Scripture and the Fathers'.
13. Young, *Letters*, p. 230. Farrar's Bampton lectures of 1886 were entitled *The History of Interpretation*. Despite Elgar's comments, Liddon's lectures are regarded by no less an authority than Professor Owen Chadwick as 'the finest Bampton lectures of the century' (*The Victorian Church*, II, 75).
14. British Library, Add. MS 47904B, fol. 45.

Geoffrey Hodgkins was Editor of the *Elgar Society Journal* from 1991 to 2002. He edited the *Gerontius companion*, *The Best of Me* (1999); and in partnership with Dr Charles McGuire is currently writing a book on the origin of the libretto for the *Apostles* project.

The Immortal Sextet

Charles A. Hooley

The author reviews the careers of the six soloists who took part in the première of The Apostles, which Elgar himself conducted, and briefly surveys their recorded legacy.

Of all Elgar's oratorios, *The Apostles* calls for the largest group of soloists, six in all. For its first performance at the Birmingham Festival on 14 October 1903, the composer chose a stalwart crew, five from his homeland and the other from Canada. Four had taken part in previous premières, the newcomers being Emma Albani, the Canadian, and Robert Kennerley Rumford. They came from different backgrounds, of course, but fashioned similar careers. So, who were these immortals, the creators of Elgar's apostolic gem?

The contralto we've already met (JOURNAL, March 2003, p. 11–24). With her unique brand of warmth and sweetness, Muriel Foster had made her Angel in *The Dream of Gerontius* so utterly appealing; now she set about to impart the same magic to Mary Magdalene.

Amongst the others, without doubt the doyenne was a petite Canadian prima donna, EMMA ALBANI, as the Virgin Mary and the Angel. She was born in 1847 to the Lajeunesse family in Chambly near Montreal. Her parents labelled her Marie-Louise-Cecile-Emma no doubt with high hopes. It was not Emma's way to disappoint so she quick-marched to the pinnacle of her profession, becoming Canada's first, honest-to-goodness, international opera star.

She was only eight when she astonished everyone at the Sacred Heart Convent in Montreal by singing operatic arias to her own accompaniment on the piano. Eventually she moved to Paris to study with Gilbert-Louis Duprez, then to Milan for time with Francesco Lamperti. In 1870, she made her début as Amina in *La Sonnambula* in Messina. After guesting in Malta and Florence, she came to Covent Garden on 2 April 1875 to offer Amina again, then *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Martha*, *Rigoletto*, *Linda di Chamounix* and the London premières of *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin*. Her Elsa proved a 'revelation'!

She did conquer the world's operatic stages, but her true home was at the Garden. Who could forget her 'deliciously girlish' Eva nor 'finely-thought' Isolde and when Hérold's *Le Pré aux Clercs* was revived in 1880, her Isabella sung 'with great effect'. In 'Souvenirs du jeune âge' her eyes would mist as memories of her vast, snow-enrobed homeland flooded back. Londoners with Queen Victoria in the vanguard grew to adore the plucky Canuck.

When not busy in opera, she often sang in oratorio with tenor Edward Lloyd. Together at the Norwich Festival of 1881, they sang in Sullivan's *Martyr of St Antioch* and in the first performance of Cowen's *St Ursula*, and in 1889 Berlioz's colourful *The Damnation of Faust* with Andrew Black and a débating Robert Radford. A busy Handelian too, she sang between 1888 and 1902 in at least nine *Messiahs* on New Year's evenings at the Royal Albert Hall.

By 1886, she had reached her prime, those heavier roles having taken their toll. Nevertheless she made her Metropolitan Opera début on 23 December 1891 as Gilda in *Rigoletto*, then as Desdemona in *Otello* with de Reszke, Donna Elvira, Valentine (*Les Huguenots*), Elsa and Senta. By 1896, she chose to lay aside



Emma Albani



John Coates

costumes and greasepaint and turn to oratorio and concerts and so, when Elgar was looking, she was available. Later he would describe her voice as 'golden'.

She retired in 1911, but in 1916 she joined Clara Butt, Edward Lloyd and a khaki-clad Kennerley Rumford for a huge Red Cross Concert in the Albert Hall. In the twenties, a series of bad investments thrust her into hard times, and into the music halls to survive. Aghast, Melba teamed with Elgar and Sarah Fischer, Albani's protégée, to stage a benefit at Covent Garden on 25 May 1925. Melba sang, as did Rosina Buckman, Dinah Gilly and Radford. Emma was also elevated to Dame Commander of the British Empire. The grandeur long gone, Dame Emma died penniless and alone in 1930.

As 'John', JOHN COATES brought top value. Elgar knew him as 'Arch-Chanter John' recalling a famous singing cleric of their distant past. Born on 20 June 1865 near Bradford in Yorkshire, Coates 'arrived' on stage as a baritone in 1899, singing nightly in *The Absent-minded Beggar* at the Alhambra. Deciding his baritone was 'run-of-the-mill', he paused to reframe his voice as a tenor. A wise move, for Coates would quickly excel in opera, oratorio and in concert.

At Covent Garden, he sang a fine Walther in *Tannhäuser* on 15 May 1901, then Melot in *Tristan und Isolde*. For his efforts, he was awarded the dubious task of portraying Claudio in Stanford's *Much Ado About Nothing* on 30 May. To many it was aptly named, though the music possessed a certain charm. It seems audiences were not ready to hear their own language sung at the Garden. On a loftier plain, he sang *Faust* with Melba, Kirkby Lunn and Plançon. Although Coates held his own there in the very best international company, it was his sole appearance with such an august group.

He left an eager audience in Germany to respond to a call, 'William Green is ill. Can you sing *The Dream of Gerontius* at Worcester on 11 September 1902?' Thus he began a run with the Three Choirs Festival that lasted until 1926.

He was in Cologne singing Romeo and Lohengrin when he decided in April 1907 opportunities existed with the Moody-Manners and Carl Rosa opera companies, and with Beecham's burgeoning enterprises. For TB he sang Hoffmann a couple of dozen times in 1910. Early in 1911, he turned to touring, first with Ernst Denhof for more Wagner in Leeds, Manchester and Glasgow, then in October, with Quinlan to visit the UK, South Africa and Australia, not returning till January 1913.

His career flourished a further dozen years until 1927, when he moved into teaching and BBC work. Remarkably in 1933 at age seventy, he joined Elgar to appear with the Hallé Orchestra for a final *Gerontius*. 'There stood John Coates grasping the back of his chair, living through every phrase with all the intensity of feeling we first experienced some 30 years ago—it was grand to renew that early association of composer and singers' wrote the *Musical Times* in April, 1933. Elgar's tenor died on 16 August 1941 after a long illness.

Baritone ROBERT KENNERLEY RUMFORD, who sang Peter, was born in Hampstead in 1870. He attended King's School, Canterbury on a scholarship that helped him prepare to enter his father's business. In Frankfurt to study German, he took to entertaining friends, and did so well commerce was quickly forgotten. After studying with Alfred Blume, he gave his first concert in 1903. Tosti attended as did Maude Valerie White who was impressed. She wrote *Three Little Songs* for him. In 1897 Rumford laid eyes upon a gangly mam'selle from Bristol, a singer also on the way up—Clara Butt, of course. Both quite tall, they gazed easily right into each other's eyes, while uttering sweet nothings. Like Foster, Rumford never fancied himself in operatic garb.

He and Clara married on 26 June 1900 amidst great fanfare, with both Black and Albani in attendance. Emma stepped forth to sing 'O God, Thou art worthy to be praised', an anthem that was Sir Arthur Sullivan's special endowment.

Many a husband might have fretted, but Rumford easily played second fiddle to Clara during her travels in

Britain and far-flung outposts of the Empire. Late in 1912, a Canadian reporter queried Clara about Emma Albani. 'Ah! Albani!' was her quick response, 'Yes, I know her so well... there was never another singer with such a lovely *legato* as hers.' Composers of the day wrote or adapted songs and duets for the famous duo. One, Liza Lehmann, composed *Four Cautionary Tales* and *a Moral* to witty lyrics by Hilaire Belloc, which Rumford and Clara premièred at the Albert Hall. Rumford proved to be an intelligent, musically well-educated singer with good style but vocally less well endowed than his wife.

Rumford and Clara were prominent in New Year's *Messiahs* at the Albert Hall in 1911 and 1912. When the war did begin, he was variously reported active in Red Cross causes and as captain in British military intelligence. After Clara died in 1936, he re-married in 1942 and lived on until 9 March 1951.

Baritone DAVID FFRANGCON-DAVIES as Christus enjoyed a rare distinction as one of five singers who appeared in the first Proms concert on 10 August 1895. He must have pleased for he was back fifty-two times over the next decade to sing a wide array of operatic excerpts and songs.

He was born Dafydd Thomas Davis in North Wales at Bethesda, Gwynedd on 11 December 1855, and educated at Friars School in Bangor. Later, he tacked on 'Ffrangcon' as a fond salute to the range of hills near his home.

At Jesus College in Oxford, he applied to take holy orders, but discovering his fine voice changed all that. At first he sang tenor but at the Guildhall School of Music with Richard Latter, Albert Randegger and William Shakespeare, he became a baritone. The proud owner of a voice ranging from bass E to top B flat, he made his début in Manchester on 6 January 1890. Then on 26 April, he sang the *Lohengrin* Herald at Drury Lane with the Carl Rosa Company, and on 31 January 1891 the original Cedric in Sullivan's *Ivanhoe* at the English Opera House, London.

Now a sensitive and conscientious artist, David took his talent overseas between 1896 and 1898 to principal concerts and festivals in USA and Canada. He arrived in Cincinnati to sing *Samson et Dalila* in concert on 21 May with Marie Brema and Watkin Mills. Based in Berlin, he reaped acclaim at the main German and Swiss cities, but he was polishing his technique in *lieder* too. A chance to sing at Queen's Hall on 19 March 1900 convinced him to return to stay the following year. Favourable responses came in bundles as he went about singing new works by Elgar and others at all the principal festivals and concerts. It is claimed he owed his career (and income) to *Elijah*, a role he sang so often that when he did, he sounded like an Old Testament prophet.

In 1903 at year's end, he combined teaching at the Royal Academy of Music with production of a book, *The Singing of the Future*. In May 1906 he visited Cincinnati with Elgar to sing *Gerontius* and *The Apostles*. Back home in 1907, overworked and depressed, he suffered a nervous breakdown that abruptly squelched his singing and left him mentally unbalanced. It is said that when he attempted *Elijah* anew, he felt he was the prophet! He died in a Hampstead asylum on 13 April 1918.

Interestingly, his daughter Gwen became a soprano who in 1919 created Etain in Boughton's *The Immortal Hour*. Later she appeared as an actress on radio and on TV where her crossed eyes proved an asset. She lived a lively one hundred years.

Judas Iscariot was assigned to ANDREW BLACK, a Glasgow chap born in 1859, who functioned as an organist, until his good voice propelled him into vocal study in London and in Milan. When he first sang in public in 1897, such was his success at the Crystal Palace, he switched to oratorio. By 1893, he gave opera a try in the title role in Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman*, causing many to believe he was Charles Santley incarnate. In Hanley he sang *Samson* with Albani, Ben Davies, Bantock Pierpoint and an exciting newcomer named Clara Butt. That year, he also entered academia as Professor at the Royal Manchester College of Music.

A Hull favourite, he first came in 1889 to concertize on 11 October and again for Mendelssohn's *St Paul* on



Kennerley Rumford with his wife Clara Butt

22 November. He returned to sing Dvořák's *The Spectre's Bride* (1890), Parry's *Job* (1897), Handel's *Acis and Galatea* (1901), a Handel and Bennett concert (1901) and *Elijah* (1903).

With at least four *Gerontius* performances under his belt in 1903, including one in Birmingham, Black was primed and ready for Elgar's latest. Another ten years and he wound up his singing career. He died in Australia in 1920.

After such a resounding reception, *The Apostles* became familiar fare in Britain and Germany. The four men repeated their Birmingham success during a special Elgar Festival at Covent Garden on 15 March 1904, with Agnes Nicholls, 'whose beautiful pure voice and sympathetic style made her almost ideal' and Madame Kirkby Lunn, 'who sang well like the accomplished artist she is...' (*Musical Times*). Surely Muriel Foster, if she had been in England, would have sung. She did return to sing in *The Apostles* on 8 September in Gloucester.

Can they be heard today? Unfortunately the answer is 'No' for Muriel and Ffrangcon-Davies, but at least the others did leave lasting memories. Fifty-six-year-old Albani visited HMV's studios two months after *The Apostles* to record the first of an eventual twelve sides. Even so late, the magic in her singing is apparent. The Hérold aria, the only relic from her operatic heyday, with most of her others, can be enjoyed on CD.

Coates recorded his first sides in May and June 1907, his last, three arias from Holbrooke's *Bronwen* on 23 September 1929. He waxed seventy-one sides overall. The *Bronwens* can be savoured on Symposium 1130 while stirring accounts of Elgar's 'In the Dawn' and 'Speak, Music' will be familiar through their reincarnation on the *Elgar Interpreters on Record* CD, Vol. 2.

Recording solo, Rumford favoured songs by English composers of the day, songs such as Cowen's 'Border Ballad', Clutsam's 'Myrra' and Squire's 'Three for Jack'. He recorded six duets with Clara, their most popular being 'The Keys of Heaven' which is now featured on Pearl CDs.



David Ffrangcon-Davies



Andrew Black

Black's bright and breezy style suited that era's recording process to a tee, resulting in just over fifty discs. His 'Leap, leap to light' from *Caractacus* in 1906 is a 'first' he recorded eight years after being in the work's première in Leeds. It is also a part of the *Interpreters* CD, Vol. 2.

For a truly unique experience, try *The Crystal Palace, 1851–1936* (Symposium 1251) to savour not only a galaxy of the greatest voices in Handelian classics, Albani with 'Ombra mai fu' from *Serse* and Black in 'O Ruddier than the Cherry' from *Acis and Galatea*, but also to find a strange aura of musical life as it was in 1903.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Wayne Turner and Graham Oakes for filling gaps in the Ffrangcon-Davies segment and to Dennis Foreman for his research into early performances of *The Apostles*.

Sources

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CHARLES HOOEY lives in Canada. He has a passionate interest in singers of the early part of the twentieth century, and it was his research into Caroline Hatchard which led him to discover the first complete performance of The Spirit of England was in Birmingham on 4 October 1917 (see JOURNAL, November 1996). He also contributed a chapter on the singer Charles Mott to Elgar Edition's Oh, My Horses! Elgar and the Great War (Rickmansworth, 2001) and an article on Muriel Foster to the Elgar Society Journal (March 2003).



Muriel Foster

*(All photos in this article:
Lewis Foreman collection)*

'Shophar, sho good' ¹: early American performances of *The Apostles*

Richard Smith

The first performance of The Apostles in the United States took place in New York some four months after its British première. This article documents this and subsequent early US performances, including those conducted by Elgar himself in 1906 and 1907, and considers the reception of the work by the American musical press.

Following the successful American premières of *The Dream of Gerontius* in Chicago on 23 March and in New York on 24 and 26 March 1903, Herbert Willard Gray, Novello's agent in New York, wrote to Elgar:

The reception of 'The Dream of Gerontius' last night by the New York Oratorio Society under Frank Damrosch was so enthusiastic that I took the liberty of cabling you. I now send you the newspaper notices, and may add that the performance in Chicago on the 23rd was quite as successful.²

It will be noticed that the performances in the two cities followed closely upon each other, but why was this? For an answer, one has to look at the relationship between two of America's most prominent conductors during the second half of the nineteenth century, Theodore Thomas in Chicago and Leopold Damrosch in New York. There existed, and still does, a friendly rivalry between America's two largest cities and at that time it often manifested itself in a race to perform a new musical work.

The German-born Theodore Thomas had arrived in New York in 1845, making his first important conducting engagement in a production of Donizetti's *La favorite* at the city's Academy of Music on 29 April 1859. In 1864 he commenced his Irving Hall symphonic soirées which grew in range and sophistication to equal the best programmes in Berlin, London, Paris and Vienna. In 1869 he made the first of many wide-ranging tours of the USA and Canada which eventually led both Boston and Chicago to establish their own permanent orchestras. In 1877 he was elected conductor of the New York Philharmonic, a post he held, with one short break, until 1891.

Leopold Damrosch was born in Posen in 1832. After abandoning a medical career he became a violinist, playing in the Weimar Court Orchestra under Franz Liszt between 1855 and 1859. He left for New York in 1871, co-founding and conducting the New York Oratorio Society in 1873 and the New York Symphony Society in 1878. The New York Symphony Orchestra under Damrosch and the New York Philharmonic under Theodore Thomas then commenced an intense rivalry, often vying with each other to premier new works.

Eventually an unsuccessful musical venture and continuing rivalry with the Damrosch family led Thomas to accept an offer from a group of Chicago businessmen to form a resident orchestra in that city. This he established in 1891, but the new Chicago orchestra continued its rivalry with the New York Oratorio Society then led by Walter and later Frank Damrosch (after the death of their father in 1885) and the New York Symphony Orchestra under Walter Damrosch.

A great advocate of Wagner, Thomas was also to become Elgar's first American champion. In an interview he gave in 1902, he said of Elgar:



Left:
Leopold Damrosch (1832–85), seen here with his younger son Walter (1862–1950). During the late 1870s Damrosch commenced an intense rivalry with Theodore Thomas, the pair often vying with each other to premier new works.



Right:
Born on 11 October 1835 at Esens in Germany, Theodore Thomas was often described as the 'father of the permanent orchestra' in the USA. He was a great champion of Elgar's music, but died on 4 January 1905 before the two could meet.

There is not a composer now prominent who is so well equipped, so able as he! Not one in all Europe! ...Elgar, you see, is first of all a violinist and everything he has written is so marked that there is absolutely no doubt left as to how it should be bowed or phrased. He understands all the other instruments of the orchestra equally as well, and the result is everything 'lies well' for the instrument and is sure to sound as it should. Brahms left everything to the executant, and even in Wagner there is always room for difference of opinion as to what the phrasing and bowing should be, but Elgar always indicates exactly, and while his work often is tremendously difficult and original, and daring in mode and manner, yet he knows what he asks of the player, and he never asks what is impossible or will not sound.³

Thomas had already conducted the US premières of the overture *Cockaigne* (in November 1901), the 'Enigma' Variations (in January 1902) in Chicago and was shortly to give the first performances of the first two *Pomp and Circumstance* marches. He must have also had a considerable influence in staging the American première of *The Dream of Gerontius*, although the assembled forces from the Chicago Orchestra and Apollo Musical Club were conducted by Harrison M. Wild. The success of the American premières of *Gerontius* in March 1903 led to *The Light of Life* being performed in New York during the following month, but now interest was switching to *The Apostles*, work of which was beginning to reach America.

In May 1903, the Tennessee-born tenor Ellison van Hoose, who had sung *Gerontius* in the New York première, wrote to Elgar, 'I have many messages from America for you. F. Damrosch wants to see the score of *The Apostles*!'⁴ Damrosch's interest in the new work was confirmed in a letter from Henry R. Clayton⁵ to Elgar dated 25 June 1903:

In connection with the same subject Mr. Damrosch of New York, who is I suppose the best known Conductor in the U. S. America, has been pressing our New York Manager to give him (Damrosch) the First performance of 'The Apostles' in America. But he is anxious to make up his 1903-4 programme at once, & does not seem disposed to do so *till he has seen the work*. So our New York Manager is pressing us to send him a rough proof copy at the earliest moment.⁶

The early interest shown by Frank Damrosch seems to have forestalled Chicago in this instance and enabled him to conduct the first performance of Elgar's new work on 9 February 1904 at Carnegie Hall. The New York Oratorio Society and the Musical Art Society were supported by Shannah Cumming (the Blessed Virgin and the Angel), Janet Spencer (Mary Magdalene), Edward P. Johnson (St John), Gwilym Miles⁷ (St Peter), Frederick Wheeler (Jesus) and David Bispham (Judas).

The comprehensive *New York Times* review of this performance was headed 'The work coolly received' and continued:

"The Apostles" was listened to with attention, and it was clear that in parts it made a marked impression. But it could hardly be denied that the impression was in spite of some of the most prominent and persistent defects of the work. It seemed, in a word, to be one in which the inspiration frequently halts; without a large sweep of line; episodic in its structure, without consistency and sustained in power as a whole. The composer is certainly entitled to the benefit of all the doubt that may arise from the fact that as it stands now *The Apostles* is an incomplete work; the final culmination of which he set before himself...

...There are long stretches of dullness and tediousness in the oratorio. Sometimes the composer seems as one overcome and hampered by the very vastness of his scheme and his apparatus. More often he seems to have little to say and to be saying it laboriously; and then there will suddenly come some poignant phrase, some passage of tender expressiveness, some superbly built-up climax that takes captive the listener in a way that few modern composers can do as Elgar can. These beauties are episodic though their sum is considerable. The prologue is one of the most extended of them. The morning scene, with the keen, penetrating note of the shofar—the sacred ram's horn of the Jewish ritual—and its oriental color is one.

The chorus, "the Lord has chosen them," is another. The choral outburst, "Proclaim unto them that dwell on the earth," is thrilling and convincing. The exquisite phrase of Mary, "Hearken, O daughter," addressed to the Magdalene are inexpressive, and the scene of Judas with the High Priests, with all its realism of jingling pieces of silver, fails to impress itself. Expressing in music the words of Christ is a task that few composers have found means for, and it cannot be said that Mr. Elgar has succeeded.⁹

On the 24 March 1904 the work was repeated at Carnegie Hall.⁹ The forces assembled were similar to those of the American première, but with Mrs Theodore J. Toedt taking over from Shannah Cumming as Mary and the English mezzo-soprano Muriel Foster¹⁰ replacing Janet Spencer as Mary Magdalene. The *New York Times* review of this performance was considerably more favourable:

The chorus and orchestra under Mr. Damrosch's direction had worked hard to prepare for the previous production; but there had plainly been still more labor profitably expended on it since then and there were more confidence and certainty in last night's performance, a greater freedom and finish. Moreover, the two solo parts for female voices were more competently sung than on the previous occasion, and the music allotted to Mary Magdalene is of such importance that the improvement counted for much in the effect of the whole.

This was sung by Miss Muriel Foster, one of the most admired English contralto singers of the present day, and the one to whom the part was intrusted at the first performance of "The Apostles" under Dr. Elgar's direction at Birmingham last autumn...

... "The Apostles" gave an effect of greater continuity and directness than it did upon its first hearing. This was partly, no doubt, owing to the improvement in the performance; but partly also to a greater familiarity with its style and the insight into its complexities gained through the repetition. It still seems more the product of reflection than of inspiration, and there are long passages that cannot seem other than labored and lacking in consecutive logical development.

On the other hand, the extraordinary brilliancy of the orchestration and the many vivid and stirring effects that are gained through the orchestra's co-operation with the chorus—effects that immensely increased the vividness of the setting and the atmosphere of reality surrounding the sacred story—were more striking than ever. Whatever may be thought of "The Apostles," its originality and strength cannot be denied, nor the glowing sincerity with which it is written. Quite apart from the technical mastery and the command of modern resources with which it is achieved, it is a work in spirit and style such as no other living master could produce. Its method of treatment gives new significance and new possibilities to oratorio.¹¹

Not long after this second performance, Elgar actually met its conductor on 10 June 1904. Alice Elgar recorded in her diary: '...into town after lunch, called on Mrs. Earl & then went to Gt. Malvern Station to meet Mr. F. Damrosch... Took him to the Imperial Hotel & showed him the Priory... then we walked down to meet E[dward] who came about 6. Delightful man.'

Perhaps because of Thomas's death,¹² it was not until two years later that Chicago premiered *The Apostles*. This performance, like that of *Gerontius* three years earlier, was given at the Auditorium Hall by the Apollo Music Club¹³ conducted by Harrison M. Wild. The Hall was almost full for the performance, and the singers were massed closely together in the shape of a crescent, enclosing the orchestra, an arrangement that brought the tones of the instruments and voices into a unified volume of sound. L. M. McCauley of the *Chicago Evening Post* wrote:

Had the chorus and soloists been absent, the performance of the orchestra would have been enough for the evening. There was no break in the marvellous spell of tones woven by stringed and wind instruments above the deep undertones from drums and the great organ. The recurrence of the "Gospel" and "Mission" motifs announced early in the work spurred interest whenever it threatened to lag, and the occasional superb crescendos of harmony swelling to tremendous volumes of music carried the emotional feeling to heights of

mystery. As in much that he has written before Elgar displayed pictorial ability, so in this work he introduces picturesque effects. The brazen gates of the temple clang, the sea surges, the noisy soldiery and rabble pass and the silver pieces fall clattering upon the pavement. Yet with all this there is an absence of melodic phrase to haunt the memory, and there is no solo in the entire work that singers can take apart from the work as a gem in its musical perfection, as may be done with portions of the oratorios of other days.¹⁴

George P. Upton of *The Chicago Tribune* commented:

Considered from the conventional oratorio standpoint, it is ultra-modern, and as far removed from the Handel and Haydn standards as a Wagner music drama is from the *bel canto* of Donizetti or Bellini. The instrumentation calls for an orchestra equipment well nigh as large and diversified as Richard Strauss uses in a symphonic poem. Indeed, in England, where the Handel traditions are still revered, its demands in this direction as well as its general construction, have already exposed the composer to some sharp reproach. And yet, strange as it all seems, when considered as oratorio, it holds the attention of the hearer as if by some magic spell, with its dignity, its refinement, its religious fervor, and its wonderful tenderness, as did the 'Dream of Gerontius'.¹⁵

Shortly afterwards, Elgar himself conducted a performance of *The Apostles* in America. During his first visit to the country in 1905 he had contracted with Lawrence Maxwell to perform the work at the prestigious Cincinnati Music Festival,¹⁶ to conduct *The Apostles* and *The Dream of Gerontius*¹⁷ at its seventeenth series of concerts in 1906. The performance of the former took place on 2 May with Sir Edward conducting the augmented Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra with an enormous four-hundred-strong chorus. Corinne Rider-Kelsey sang the Blessed Virgin and the Angel, with Janet Spencer¹⁸ repeating her role as Mary Magdalene. Herbert Witherspoon sang St Peter; Charles W. Clark, Judas; the parts of Jesus and St John were sung respectively by the English soloists David Ffrangcon-Davies and John Coates, who had taken these roles in the world première in 1903.

Alice Elgar reported in her diary: 'To the Music Hall... Fine performance. Ffrangcon & Coates splendid & giving the true keynote. E. conducted splendidly, & the impression was profound—Great audience.' The reviews of the performance were somewhat contradictory. One newspaper reported: 'Coates, English tenor, alone of the soloists, seemed inadequate for the part' while *Musical America* complimented the chorus and all the individual performers with the exception of John Coates whose 'conception of the part of *John* was lacking in convincing sentiment'.¹⁹

The *Cincinnati Times Star* had a different view: 'Mr Coates's voice is covered in emission, though of fine quality and tone, and his interpretation placed him in the first ranks of oratorio singers.' The same paper felt that Herbert Witherspoon had forced his voice to fill the auditorium, 'which process introduced a most regrettable vibrato.' The newspaper was extremely complimentary of the other soloists and chorus however. Of Elgar himself, the newspaper commented: 'As a conductor, Sir Edward produces results by the intensity of his mental attitude rather than by the firm rhythm of his baton. He was most cordially received and recalled at the conclusion of the oratorio'.²⁰

Elgar himself could not understand why the audience insisted on applauding after each scene. In an interview afterwards he said:

"Why ruin the dignity of the performance by applause between the episodes?"

"But aren't you satisfied with Cincinnati's enthusiastic greeting?" asked the reporter.

"I know nothing about it," replied the composer. "I walk to the desk, take up my baton, and set about my work. I am merely an artist and as an artist I'm satisfied with nothing on earth!"²¹

Overall, the occasion proved an outstanding success, the concert taking a total of \$26,196.50²² with the ten boxes selling for an total of \$2,445 the highest bid being \$300 by Mrs C. R. Holmes, President of the Cincinnati Musical Association.



A contemporary architect's drawing of the Cincinnati Music Hall complex as it looked when completed in 1878. The centre of the complex is the 3,630-seat Springer Auditorium where Elgar conducted in May 1906.

The following year Elgar returned to the United States, mainly at the invitation of Andrew Carnegie, but also to conduct concerts in New York and Chicago. As Lady Elgar explained to their good friend Alice Stuart-Wortley²³: '...but what is more horrid is the reason, that dear Edward has to start on Saturday, 2 March, for the U.S.A. in the Carmania, & as I have been away so long, he says I must stay at home now—He is to conduct 'The Apostles' & 'The Kingdom' in N. York, & an Orch. Concert in Chicago.'

After arriving in New York, Edward went to stay with his good friend Julia Worthington in her luxurious flat at the Wyoming, 853 Seventh Avenue. The middle of the month was occupied with rehearsals for *The Apostles* and *The Kingdom* at Carnegie Hall, only a block away from the Wyoming. The performance of the former took place on 19 March with Elgar conducting Frank Damrosch's New York Oratorio Society, his first professional appearance in the city. After the performance the *American* reported: 'At the conclusion, Mr. Frank Damrosch embraced Sir Edward Elgar with un-Teutonic fervour, to which Sir Edward responded with quite un-British warmth.'²⁴

The *New York Times* gave a considered review of the work, an extract from which stated:

At its previous performances here 'The Apostles' was found to be a composition of unequal merit, one which notwithstanding certain passages of great power, of tender and poignant expressiveness, of deep characterization, is lacking in broad and continuous development and in high and sustained inspiration. In these respects it seems to stand lower than Sir Edward's 'Dream of Gerontius'. It is a noteworthy attempt to vivify the oratorio form by the use of all the resources which the development of modern means of expression has put at the command of the modern musician; and Sir Edward Elgar is a master of them all. His orchestra is raised to the

highest point of eloquence by his skill and finesse in orchestration. His treatment of the chorus has not only imposing grandeur in the effects of great masses and the building up of climaxes, but is even more remarkable in his disposition of subtler effects of color and skilful polyphony: and there are more than a few passages in which his setting off of the solo voices in contrast with the choral masses and in a union with them presents new and beautiful effects.²⁵

The *New York World* concentrated more on the performance itself:

Sir Edward Elgar, the English composer, received a royal welcome last night at the Carnegie Hall when he appeared under the auspices of the Oratorio Society to conduct his work, "The Apostles". The warmth of the greeting, however, was swallowed up by the enthusiasm and spontaneity of the recalls at the close.

It was the tribute of sheer admiration for the musician who entirely loses himself in the music that the man is merged in the thought. There have been greater conductors than Sir Edward. As a cementing force of perfect unities his baton more than once failed of its office. There were ragged moments when chorus and orchestra fell perceptibly apart. But as a master of sympathetic interpretation, reading, dignity and dramatic intensity, the passion of the spirit in his own most wonderful passages could hardly be excelled.

The majesty of movement, the lucidity of expression which are the distinguishing characteristics of the oratorio were never weakened or belittled, and Frank Damrosch may congratulate himself on the special chorus from the Musical Arts Society, which so much better than the soloists, carried this into effect.²⁶

A more personal tribute to Elgar came in a letter from one of the chorus:



The mezzo-soprano Janet Spencer was to sing three times under Elgar's baton, as the Angel in Gerontius, and as Mary Magdalene in both The Apostles and The Kingdom.

Dear Sir Edward,

Because it is ungrateful not to return thanks to those who bring us moments of inspiration, you must pardon me for writing to you the gratitude for your music, that I would be quite too shy to express had I to speak.

...Something of that reserve of power I felt in your leadership; something significant of the hidden life of the spirit; I am glad to have had the pleasure of realising your personality in this pleasantly impersonal way. One is grateful for every noble conception of life, that makes it seem worth while to go on into the business of living.

It is a great regret to me that I cannot be here for the Kingdom.

With sincerest admiration,

A. J. Walker.²⁷

A week later Elgar conducted the same orchestra and chorus in the American première of *The Kingdom*, Elgar's American friends Julia Worthington and Samuel Sanford attending both this and the earlier performance of *The Apostles*. In a letter to Alfred Littleton, chairman of Novello, Elgar revealed his own doubts about the quality of the performances:

The two things went fairly well; some points good but usually too 'assertive' for me. All are amiable men and mean well: I have read nothing & don't believe what my friends say! so I am not in a position to say much about my work.²⁸

Thus it appears the consensus of early American critical opinion of *The Apostles* was generally similar to that in Britain. The feeling was that although there were many individual moments of great beauty in the work it lacked the overall inspiration of *The Dream of Gerontius*. Neither *The Apostles*, nor *The Kingdom* which followed, is complete in itself and both tend to suffer from inconsistencies, with Elgar perhaps placing too much emphasis on the role of Judas in the former. Perhaps Michael Kennedy best explains the feeling on both sides of the Atlantic: 'It is... when secular vigour is sharply contrasted with the sensuous appeal of the lyrical passages, that causes the works to sound episodic.'²⁹

1. Letter from John E. West, Novello's music editor, to Elgar dated 4 March 1903. EB (Elgar Birthplace) letters file no. 8233. (Following the transfer of the Elgar letters collection from the Hereford and Worcester Records Office to the Elgar Birthplace Museum, the number reference was retained. Thus, HWRO 705:445:8233 became EB letter file no. 8233).
2. EB press cuttings file for 1903–04.
3. Article in the *Chicago Musical Courier* of 10 September 1902 from the EB press cuttings file for 1902.
4. EB letters file no. 5845 dated 5 May 1903.
5. Henry Reginald Clayton was company secretary of Novello & Co., Elgar's publishers.
6. EB letters file no. 2788.
7. The baritone Gwilym Miles had sung in the American première of *Gerontius* in Chicago.
8. *New York Times*, 10 February 1904.
9. It was by no means unusual for several performances of a particular work to be repeated in rapid succession in America, a practice that is still common today.
10. This was Muriel Foster's third appearance in the USA. Previously on 18 and 21 March she had sung 'In Haven' from Elgar's *Sea Pictures* with the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Walter Gericke at Brooklyn and Hartford respectively.
11. *New York Times*, 25 March 1904.

12. Sadly, Elgar was never to meet Theodore Thomas, who died on 4 January 1905, some six months before Elgar's first visit to America.
13. Known today as the Apollo Chorus of Chicago.
14. *Chicago Evening Post*, 24 April 1906, p. 6.
15. *Chicago Tribune*, 24 April 1906.
16. Thomas and Maria Longworth proposed the biennial festival in 1871, the first event being held in May 1873 at the Exposition Hall under the direction of Theodore Thomas. The first two festivals proved so successful that a group of patrons raised the money for a new permanent brick hall to be built to replace the old wooden structure. Following its completion in 1878, a permanent May Festival chorus of Cincinnatians was established.
17. Theodore Thomas had conducted a performance of *The Dream of Gerontius* at the previous (sixteenth) festival on 13 May 1904 with the British soloists William Green and Muriel Foster, the bass part taken by Watkin Mills.
18. Miss Spencer replaced Louise Homer who was suffering from shock as a result of being in San Francisco at the time of the infamous earthquake on 18 April 1906.
19. Cutting from *Musical America* of 12 May 1906 in the EB press cuttings file for 1906.
20. *Cincinnati Times Star*, 3 May 1906.
21. Telegraphed by the New York correspondent of the *Evening Standard*.
22. Approximately £5,250 at the time.
23. EB letters collection.
24. Cutting from *The American* (20 March 1907) in EB press cuttings file for 1907.
25. *New York Times*, 20 March 1907.
26. Cutting from *New York World* (20 March 1907) in EB press cuttings file for 1907.
27. EB letters file no. 5831 (dated 19 March 1907).
28. Jerrold Northrop Moore, *Elgar and his Publishers: Letters of a Creative Life* (Oxford, 1987), p. 669.
29. Michael Kennedy, *Portrait of Elgar*, third edition, (Oxford, 1987), p. 205.

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RICHARD SMITH has published over twenty books on historical aviation, but his retirement as a teacher of software development with British Telecom a few years ago has enabled him to turn his attentions to researching the life of Elgar. He has had an affection for the man and his music since his teens, and fate has now given him the opportunity to express this in more practical terms. His first article, entitled 'Why Americans graduate to Elgar', appeared on the Society's website and he is currently working on a book on Elgar's North American connections.

A Provincial Performance of *The Apostles*

Norman Staveley

Almost four years after its first performance in Birmingham, The Apostles reached the north-east town of Hull, an occasion presented here as a snapshot of musical life in provincial British towns during the early twentieth century.

In 1909, Sir Edward Elgar, with the London Symphony Orchestra, visited seven towns in what he described at the tour's conclusion as 'the loathed North'. My home town of Kingston upon Hull—usually referred to simply as 'Hull'—was included in the tour, and the citizens given their first chance of hearing the composer's First Symphony (and others of his works including *Sea Pictures*, sung by Phyllis Lett) in their new, splendid, and acoustically fine City Hall.

This was not Hull's introduction to Elgar's music. The Hull Philharmonic Orchestra's concert on 8 December 1898 had begun with the *Imperial March*. And although it was four years before Elgar reappeared (when in 1902 his *Cockaigne* and Tchaikovsky's '1812' overtures were presented to the city for the first time) our composer's vocal music was already known to the city's two choral societies.

The Hull Vocal Society, conducted by Dr G. H. Smith, a prominent local organist and keyboard teacher, stole a march on the Hull Philharmonic, and took the 'first to present Elgar' honour by performing *King Olaf* in the previous month, November 1898, just two years after its North Staffordshire première. *The Banner of St George* followed the year after, and *The Black Knight* in 1905. Twenty years then elapsed before they felt able to tackle *Gerontius*, thus leaving the Hull Harmonic Society the honour of giving the city its first two performances of the oratorio, both in 1905—rather late in the day when one considers the several earlier performances by England's other provincial choruses.

Equally late was their March 1907 performance of *The Apostles* in the Assembly Rooms (now the civic-owned New Theatre) for which they had booked Madame Gleeson-White, Alice Lakin (the much-acclaimed contralto who had sung in each of their 1905 concerts), Gervase Elwes, William Higley, Richard Burnett and Ivor Foster. (For an unstated reason, Francis Harford replaced William Higley at the performance.)

The day before the concert, hurried telegrams passed between the Society and Elwes's agents, Ibbs & Tillet Ltd, because the singer's mother had died that very morning, and he asked to be excused the engagement. John Coates, who had sung at the 1903 first performance, was available and was gladly accepted by the Society officials, although they were not too pleased that Coates's fee was ten guineas more than Elwes's. In the end, Elwes bore the difference himself, but even so the concert deficit was sixty-four pounds, which seemed to prove to the committee that 'there was not a demand in Hull for Sir Edward Elgar's works', as they reported at the next annual meeting.

Nowadays it is not unusual for new music to be explained and discussed beforehand, either within a performing group or at music appreciation classes. In 1907 this was exceptional, but Dr Thomas Keighley, Professor of Harmony at the Royal College of Music in Manchester was invited by the local branch of the Incorporated Society of Musicians to talk to a public audience at St Matthew's church schoolroom. The

newspaper report in the Hull Daily Mail of 8 February 1907, whilst admitting that it could not do justice to such a lecture, made it clear that Dr Keighley's main aim was to illustrate at the piano all the leit-motifs in the work, to explain the source of many of them, and the use to which they were put by Elgar. The lecturer considered that, as with Wagner's *Ring* cycle, it was vital that the listener should understand the musical construction of *The Apostles* before hearing the work, for 'this modern method of writing oratorio music [could not be] compared with the manner of Bach, Handel and Mendelssohn'.

When reading contemporary reports of concerts given almost one hundred years ago it is not easy to 'hear' what might have been the sound and effect of the performance, in this case by choir, orchestra, and soloists. We have some evidence remaining in the variety of extant recordings, and we know that provincial amateur orchestras, though 'stiffened' with visiting professional players, would not produce the sounds we hear today. Choral singing has improved, and soloists' styles and techniques have advanced. So, although there was a glowing newspaper report of *The Apostles* on that occasion, we cannot know how it would compare with a present-day performance.

Notwithstanding these caveats, we must accept that, according to the best standards of the early twentieth century, and although 'it would be untrue to declare that the performance... touched the point of perfection', the conductor, Walter Porter, a highly respected and competent musician, was 'to be congratulated upon having been able to bring his vocal and orchestral forces to so high a point of excellence'.

The principal singers were acclaimed. John Coates 'sang as only a true artist could sing, and with a beauty and warmth of feeling that it would be next to impossible to surpass'. Alice Lakin was Mary Magdalene, whose 'exacting music was superbly sung', and Gleeson-White's 'expressiveness and artistic sense' as the Virgin Mary were praised.

Music writers and critics could be relied upon to comment on those who did not quite reach expected heights: as Peter, Francis Harford's singing 'lacked the necessary repose [although] excuse may be found in the fact that he was singing with undoubted earnestness'. (Unrelated, but as an instance of critics' wish to share their weariness with their readers is a comment made in Hull in 1893 after a Melba performance of *The Lost Chord*, that this too-popular song was 'surely worn to its last thread'.)

The Apostles was attended by 'a very large and deeply-interested audience', but the work has only once been given in Hull since 1907. *Gerontius* of course was the favourite with choirs and, because of that, audiences had little opportunity to come to terms with Elgar's subsequent oratorios. The city's two choral societies—the Vocal (founded 1848) and the Harmonic (founded 1850)—merged in 1929 to become the Hull Choral Union, guided until his death in 1957 by its first conductor, Norman Strafford. The choir continues to flourish, but nine performances of *Gerontius* in that seventy-two-year period compare sadly with one presentation of *The Apostles* in 1938.

For that performance the soloists included famous names—and voices—remembered today: Isobel Baillie, Mary Jarred, Edward Reach, Harold Williams, Roy Henderson, and William Parsons. All were praised by the music reporter, 'C. F. D.', but for him and others Roy Henderson dominated the whole performance: '... this was the finest solo work we have heard in recent years. It was not merely brilliant in its technique; it was flooded with spiritual significance. Roy Henderson sang the part joyfully, with obvious sincerity and a kind of inward repose which brought all the truth and beauty from that familiar poetry.'

Perhaps Hull's neglect of *The Apostles* is little different from its fate in other similar provincial centres which have a restricted conurbation, but currently in such areas there are likely to be more proficient orchestras, and better (if smaller) choirs than there were in the 1930s. We live in hope that a third performance might be considered, but the financial requirement for an audience of 1,500 to fill the City Hall battles against the effect of the decline of music teaching in our schools, and the emphasis given in the National Curriculum to jazz and its successors at the expense of 'classical' music.

NORMAN STAVELEY is author of the book Two Centuries of Music in Hull published by Hutton Press. He is a retired accountant who, over a period of some fifty years, has been singer or treasurer (and occasionally both at the same time) with a number of ensembles in the city of Hull, including the Hull Bach Choir, the Hull Choral Union, and the Kingston Opera Society.

REPORTS

A Special Flame: the music of Elgar and Vaughan Williams

The British Library, London, 29–30 March 2003.

A two-day symposium jointly organised by the Elgar Society and the RVW Society boasting a distinguished international panel of speakers offered a prospect dozens of English music enthusiasts found impossible to resist. The new British Library's well-equipped conference facilities provided a comfortable business-class setting for about one hundred and eighty first-day delegates. Though numbers fell off slightly on the second, the gracious presence of Ursula Vaughan Williams—whose autobiography *Paradise Remembered* was published in 2002 (signed copies on sale)—and Evelyn Barbiroli emphasised to all who attended (as well as those who will now wish they had) that this was an event of some considerable quality and significance. It is expected proceedings will be published in due course, and thanks are due to the conference organisers and staff at the British Library for providing such an informative and enjoyable event conducted in such pleasant surroundings.

The obvious question remained unasked and unanswered, at least during the public papers, though it may have been raised in the course of the convivial private debates which punctuated proceedings: Who was the greatest? After all, the RVW Society's literature states: 'Vaughan Williams is arguably the greatest composer Britain has seen since the days of Henry Purcell', a claim similar to one made in the press for Elgar in the wake of a Richter *Gerontius* in the early 1900s, which devotees of the composer must surely have repeated many times since.

Instead, presentations took the less controversial but more enlightening and diplomatic 'compare and contrast' approach. No speaker is better placed to make such an assessment than Michael Kennedy, who began the weekend's proceedings with his keynote address entitled, 'Elgar and Vaughan Williams: a 21st century celebration'. As a biographer of both composers and a personal friend of VW, he offered interesting examples of mistaken musical identities, concluding that each composer in his own way had bequeathed English music 'something personal, something national, and something eternal'. Elgar Society Chairman Andrew Neill followed up with a review of both composers' social backgrounds, shedding light on their essential but indefinable Englishness. Husband-and-wife team Jonathan Darnborough (piano) and Clare-Louise Lucas (mezzo-soprano) then shared their insights into the vocal writing of Elgar's recital version of *Sea Pictures* and Vaughan Williams' Fredegond Shove settings, both of which feature on their forthcoming CD release.

Lunch on Day One was followed by Lewis Foreman's encyclopaedic whistle-stop tour of English music that anticipated, reflected or sublimated the First World War, offering a context for better-known 'battle songs and elegies' such as Elgar's *The Spirit of England*. Both Byron Adams and Hugh Cobbe developed theses which explored the direct connections between the composers. Adams' sophisticated argument examined the nature of Vaughan Williams' cultural inheritance from Elgar, the passing of the mantle signalled by his conducting *Gerontius* at the Leith Hill Festival shortly after Elgar's death. (It is worth noting that Byron Adams was one of several speakers to refer explicitly to passages in *A Sea Symphony* as being inspired by Vaughan Williams' affection for the arching phrase at the opening of *Gerontius* which sets the words: 'And Thou, Thou art calling me'; most interestingly, they seemed to land on different parts of the symphony to illustrate this point.) Hugh Cobbe is currently engaged in preparing an edition of

Vaughan Williams' letters, and his examination of the composers' correspondence naturally focussed for the most part on VW. In the meantime, Michael Pope's elegant and statesman-like address 'Stanford, Elgar and Vaughan Williams: influences and reflections' had offered thoughts drawn from his vast experience as a pioneering music producer at the BBC.

The evening concert afforded a rare opportunity to hear four great English chamber works side-by-side: Elgar's Quartet and Piano Quintet, and Vaughan Williams' Phantasy Quintet and *On Wenlock Edge*. Musicians from the City of London Sinfonia—Nicholas Ward and Jane Carwardine (violins), Stephen Tees and Matthew Souter (violas), and Jo Cole (cello)—were joined by Piers Lane (piano) and James Gilchrist (tenor). One cannot but admire the bravery, stamina and musicianship which allowed such beautiful performances to emerge from an acoustic which, whilst perfect for the spoken word, was far from ideal for live music.

The second day's presentations were no less impressive than the first. Charles McGuire's contribution contrasted the two composers' divergent approaches in their oratorios and examined their reception. Whereas Elgar's *Apostles* and *Kingdom* (presented to an upper-class Birmingham Festival audience) focus on the individual as flawed and human, Vaughan Williams' musical portraiture (specifically in his work *Sancta Civitas* premiered before a middle-class Oxford audience) reveals the individual as the expression of a community. David Owen Norris offered a brilliant and stimulating extempore performance built around his own and others' canvassed thoughts on the musical legacy of the two composers. Illustrations of the extraordinary subtlety in their piano writing emphasised his call-to-arms that any legacy depends upon those who admire the music making it available and accessible. On which front Robert Anderson was, as always, in engaging form in offering thoughts arising from his editorial work on Elgar's *Crown of India* score, due to appear as the next volume in the Elgar Society Edition. His conjuring of images of the times in which the work was written brought to life an unjustly neglected opus containing music from Elgar's top drawer. RVW Society Chairman Stephen Connock rendered a similar service to Vaughan Williams' *The Poisoned Kiss*, newly recorded and now eagerly anticipated thanks to the generous examples with which his informative introduction was plied.

The chairmen of both societies took a day-a-piece as host, with Andrew Neill chairing the final round-table session on the theme 'Eleven Symphonies: do they travel?', which explored the international response to English music. Panelists included Byron Adams, Lewis Foreman, Charles McGuire and David Owen Norris. Unhappily, as the discussion and the day drew to a close a shadow fell with the collapse of Margaret Fotheringham whilst making an eloquent contribution from the floor. Those present will remember that her last words—which looked forward to the feast of Elgar performances taking place during the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra's 2003–4 season—rang with optimism for the cause she embraced.

Philip Maund

English Music, Concert Life, and Theatre, 1830–1960

Shakespeare Institute (University of Birmingham),
Stratford-upon-Avon, 9–10 May 2003.

Set in beautifully kept gardens, the Shakespeare Institute in Stratford-upon-Avon is always a pleasure to visit. Acquired by the University of Birmingham in the 1950s, it is now a full time educational establishment dedicated to the study of its namesake, and the leading site for such study in the world. Previously it was the home of Marie Corelli (1855–1924), a novelist of the early twentieth century who spent her time ordering her fellow Stratford residents about, which did little to heighten her appeal to potential

acquaintances. In 1922 our friend Elgar was invited to tea with Corelli in her wonderful eighteenth-century two-storey gazebo situated in the grounds of the house. This was an attempt at social networking, and by all accounts Sir Edward couldn't wait to get away!

This weekend the University's Department of Music took over the institute for a two-day conference on English Music, Concert Life, and Theatre, 1830–1960. Scholars from all over the country were among the intimate audience gathered in Corelli's Music Room to hear papers given on topics as diverse as Ethyl Smyth's *The Wreckers* and the foundation and development of public subsidy bodies CEMA and ENSA during World War II. A plenary forum concluded the first day in which those present debated the hot topic of whether current musicology concentrates too much on what Beethoven ate for breakfast rather than the crotchets and quavers he penned.

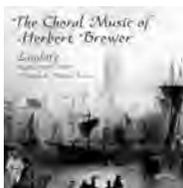
Of the six sessions that spanned the two days, Elgar was the only composer to have one to himself. Within this session we were treated to three papers, the first given by Dr Daniel Grimley from the University of Nottingham. Despite Elgar's assertion in his Birmingham University lectures that abstract music was music 'at its height', Dr Grimley presented his case that Elgar was equally partial to story-telling in his music, should the mood take him. Taking, appropriately enough, *Falstaff* as his subject, Grimley talked us through a dramatic layout of the work, drawing our attention to where in the music the action was taking place. During questions, discussion ensued regarding the final eight bars of the work, a late addition by Elgar. Could Falstaff still be alive in these bars if his death had previously been assigned earlier music? Perhaps he was only semi-conscious at this point, lingering on? Perhaps. Such is the problem with programme music.

Corissa Gould, a PhD student from the University of Southampton, followed with a paper on Elgar as Imperialist. Taking *The Crown of India* as her route into the composer's mind, Gould argued that Elgar used the commission as an opportunity to express his position on the regime. Despite the large fee attached to the work and the poorer quality of some of the music, Gould maintained Elgar would not have accepted the commission had it gone against his principles to do so, simply to profit financially. This sat uneasy with some in the room who obviously believed no such weight lay behind the work, and Gould was left to field some searching questions.

Third on trial was Nicholas Hawker, a postgraduate student at Birmingham who presented an interesting paper in a mature and varied style. His remarks were centred around Jaeger's analysis of *The Apostles*, written as a set of programme notes for the work's first performance in 1903. He commended Jaeger's pioneering work, but was resolved that in future it should be left in context; too much has it choked fresh appraisals of the work, in his view. Rather, Hawker used the analysis as a basis for his own exploration into the organic relationship between many of the usually dissociated themes. This was supported by reference to Elgar's known preference for organic structure, and examples of how in *The Apostles* this thinking is crafted into musically coherent language, which also serves to echo the relationship between characters in the narrative. Professor Julian Rushton, chairing the session, was quick to show his appreciation of this paper and commented that it would be 'a great help' to his own journey through this work. Unfortunately, the questions that followed did not, on the whole, capitalise on the opportunity afforded for expansion on the topics raised.

Four papers followed in the final session of the weekend and a fascinating but tiring day came to a close at half past six. The challenging array of scholarship presented over the two days demanded those attending to have an eclectic awareness of music in this period in order to fully enjoy every paper. The encouraging contingent of younger scholars will, no doubt, have benefited from the little mercy shown to them when questioned on their papers by their established counterparts. Such events are to be highly commended, and indeed the weekend was endorsed by the presence of many 'movers and shakers' in the world of musicology, some of whom joined us when we retired for further, less formal discussion elsewhere. Gratitude is due to Stephen Banfield and Paul Rodmell for staging the event.

CD REVIEWS



The Choral Music of Herbert Brewer

Let the People Praise Thee; As the Hart Pants; Blessing, Glory, Wisdom, and Thanks; Magnificat and Nunc dimittis in B flat; O Death, Where is Thy Sting?; God is Our Hope and Strength; Prevent us, O Lord; Magnificat and Nunc dimittis in C; O Lord God; 'A Solemn Prayer' from The Holy Innocents; God Within; Bow Down Thine Ear, O Lord; Magnificat and Nunc dimittis in D.

Laudate directed by Howard Ionascu, Joseph Nolan (organ)

Priority
PRCD 797

Herbert Brewer was at Gloucester Cathedral from 1896 to 1928. He approached Elgar for a Three Choirs work in 1898 only after Rosalind Ellicott, daughter of the bishop, had failed to produce her scheduled music. Elgar recommended Coleridge-Taylor instead, and the result was the admirable Ballade in A minor. Brewer had no fear of novelties or indeed controversy in connection with the festivals. He also enlisted Verdi for 1898, including the Stabat Mater and Te Deum just months after their Paris première in April, 'for the first time in England and by permission of the composer'. If *The Promised Land* by Saint-Saëns in 1913 was as safe as promised, the closing scene of Strauss's *Salome* was a major risk. Whether citizens of Gloucester prayed for its failure as fervently as those of New York had previously done is not recorded. Elgar's approval was probably assured thus far, but when Scriabin's *Poème de l'extase* was performed in the Cathedral during the 1922 festival, Elgar cried 'enough'. Wulstan Atkins, whose funeral I have just attended but who was kissed as a baby by Brewer in March 1905 (Brewer claimed the nurse was about one hundred and twenty), reported Elgar's muttered comment: 'To think that Gloucester Cathedral should ever echo to such music. It is a wonder that the very gargoyles don't come tumbling down!'

To look for comparable daring in Brewer's compositions would be a fundamental mistake. As organist and choir master to an age-old institution, he planned his work as part of the magnificent tradition that had served the Church of England's music so worthily for so many centuries. He wrote two festival cantatas, *Emmaus* to words by Joseph Bennett and generously orchestrated by Elgar in 1901, and *The Holy Innocents* of three years later, from which 'A Solemn Prayer' in eight parts is one of the most moving offerings on the CD. But the majority of the music was designed for liturgical use. There are three settings of the Magnificat and Nunc dimittis, two for Gloucester and one for Hereford. The last pair was for Three Choirs festivals, and the contrast between the generous opulence of 1895 and the comparative economy of 1927 makes fascinating listening. Brewer's still, small voice is heard to lovely effect in three brief pieces, *As the Hart Pants*, *Prevent us, O Lord*, and *O Lord God*. Perhaps here is the essence of Brewer, contemplative and expressive within a small compass and with simplest means. At the other extreme is *God Within*, written in the last year of Brewer's life for the 1928 Sons of the Clergy festival in St Paul's. There are the signposts set up by Parry and Elgar that had guided Brewer on his distinguished path, a point

emphasised by the expression mark 'nobilmente'.

We have heard recently much more of Elgar's orchestration than Brewer's, and it would be good to know how effectively he scored the more festive works on the CD. As it is, we must make do with the admirable organ playing of Joseph Nolan in St John's church, Holland Road, London. If his exuberance sometimes overshadows the choir, this is a fault of balance rather than any failure on the part of the seventeen voices that make up the Laudate team. There is no doubt of the group's accomplishment, and they manage the considerable range of the music under Howard Ionascu with appropriate sensitivity and élan.

Robert Anderson

David Owen Norris plays Elgar—Vol. 1: Solo Piano Music

Five Improvisations; *Skizze*; Presto; Waltz: *Enina*; *Chantant*; *Griffinesque*; Sonatina; *Imperial March*; *In Smyrna*; Three Bavarian Dances; Serenade; Concert Allegro op. 46; *Adieu*.

David Owen Norris (piano)

David Owen Norris should need little introduction to members for he is one of the foremost musicians in the land, a very fine pianist endowed with an immaculate technique, and an artist possessed with a winning way of firing the imagination of his audiences, whether playing or talking to them in his uniquely engaging manner. What is more, he has a meticulously serious approach to research. His booklet notes are hugely informative and I don't want to plunder them for too much background information for this review, but instead encourage the reader to buy the disc, for every lover of Elgar should own it (and not just because it is the latest from Elgar Editions, which we should all support). On 6 November 1929 Fred Gaisberg sat the seventy-two-year-old Elgar down at a piano in the Small Queen's Hall in Central London and recorded him in five improvised pieces beginning with a meditation on a ballet tune from Rossini's *William Tell*, all of which David Owen Norris reproduced sixty-five years later at the Bergen Festival, playing this non-notated music by ear. Elgar had an on/off, uneasy relationship with the piano (he is more associated with the violin) but these pieces, ranging in length from the minuscule *Enina-Valse* at a bare fifty-four seconds to the Concert Allegro exactly eleven minutes longer, span the sixty years 1872–1932, in other words from the youthful age of fifteen to a couple of years before his death.

Elgar was clearly no mean pianist judging by what one hears here, and he writes well for the instrument, apart from too many 'split' chords in the improvisations, but that, like a string-player's portamento, is probably a stylish characteristic of the times. The piano writing is subtle and resourceful, wide-ranging in colour and tone, highly detailed in its demands and absolutely specific about tempi and dynamics. In one instance (*Skizze*) he demands a virtually inaudible *pppp* followed by a *further* diminuendo, while at the end of the *Imperial March* (unmistakably Elgarian despite the unfamiliar environment of the piano) he requires the full force (*tutta forza* and a left-hand tremolo) to bring out its orchestral quality. Elgar's biggest undertaking, and the nearest he got to a full-blooded piano concerto, was the Concert Allegro written at the request of Fanny



Elgar Editions
EECD002

Davies, one of Clara Schumann's pupils, who appears to have completely misunderstood its composer's intentions and thereby earned it a negative reception from public and critics alike. This did not do Elgar's self-belief much good as a composer for the instrument while he also appears to have lost confidence in his pianism, despite the fact that this occurred at exactly the time of the five improvisations recorded by Gaisberg, which may explain why only *In Smyrna* (a truly beautiful piece inspired by a Mediterranean cruise in 1905) and a few miniatures followed. Owen Norris has a fascinating explanation for the reasons the Concert Allegro went pear-shaped in Davies's hands (or 'Fanny's finicky fingering'), including the damning deduction that she had played it at half its proper speed. More significantly, he has restored the cuts made at her suggestion by enterprisingly shining a torch through pasted-over sections of the manuscript in order to read Elgar's original intentions.

Also included is the solo piano version of *Scenes from the Bavarian Highlands* in which Owen Norris employs a finely judged Wiener-waltz *rubato* in his playing of the first dance by bringing forward the second beat of the bar then delaying the third. In the second dance he produces a magically wistful quality, and concludes the work with a whirling dervish of a finale. To conclude, the Concert Allegro already mentioned is framed by a Serenade and the aptly named *Adieu*, for by 1932 this indeed represented a farewell to most things in his life, including his erratic relationship with the piano. The playing is full of telling poignancy. To avoid confusion, the suffix 'Volume 1' on this definitive disc means that what is yet to come lies in the field of transcriptions, not because there is more original piano music to come. It was John McCabe whose 1977 disc was called 'the complete piano works'—well, as they say, the show is not over until the fat lady sings and, with no disrespect to David Owen Norris, the fat lady has now sung, for now we can surely believe that with this remarkable disc, we do indeed have Elgar's complete piano works.

Christopher Fifield

Hallé Elgar

Symphony no. 1 in A flat, op. 55; *In the South (Alassio)*, op. 50; *In Moonlight (Canto popolare)*.

Christine Rice (mezzo-soprano), Mark Elder (piano),

Hallé Orchestra conducted by Mark Elder

Mark Elder is making something of a name for himself as an Elgarian, and is in the best of possible places to do so considering that his predecessors in his post at Manchester include Richter, Harty and Barbirolli. On the other hand that roll-call could make a hard act to follow. The full orchestra is listed at the back of the booklet, and one wonders how many were playing in Barbirolli's day thirty-odd years ago, for the three conductors listed above form a fairly continuous line to pass on the tradition, while Elgar himself was a frequent guest and friend to all three men. That does not happen these days. Now we have moved on, the Free Trade has given way to the Bridgewater Hall. Michael Kennedy has given the Elder era his blessing, and quite rightly so: the first

movement of the symphony, right from its stately outset is full of Elgarian ebb and flow, and the balance of tempi is generally finely judged. The scherzo fizzles with excitement, tautly controlled in its dynamic range and colourfully judged in highlighting instrumental solos, although Lyn Fletcher's sweet tone as leader could have been given more prominence. The link to the Adagio is particularly effective in its tension, the interpretation never self-indulgent. Elder's background in opera is at its dramatic best in the introduction to the finale, where the opening bass clarinet and bassoon transport the listener into the realms of Nibelheim. I have never heard the combined first and second trombones sound so effective (just a hair's breadth on the right side of vulgarity) in the second half of the bar at fig. 110. The back-desk string players clearly enjoy their fifteen bars of fame (they also have another chance to shine later), and then the Allegro itself gets underway at what seems like an overly-hurried tempo, but actually turns out to be a shade under the composer's marking of *minim=84*. The second thematic idea at fig. 114 and again at fig. 137 correctly ignores the piano dynamic (Elgar told Richter on 3 October 1909 that it should be *forte*), the Hallé brass blaze away as the movement develops, and the woodwind triplets at fig. 127 are prominent where over-exuberant violas and cellos often smother them. Fig. 130 threatens overt sentimentality (it's a hard moment to resist and one never wants it to be over, in my experience of conducting this symphony), but the outburst at the climactic top B flat half a dozen bars before fig. 134 is effective only because of a finely controlled crescendo, held back until the last possible moment. I regret the absence of the Barbirollian hiatus across the bar-line four and three bars before fig. 143, but the portamento linking G to D in the first violins at the second and third bars of fig. 144 is a stylish touch, while the brass in this passage are superb. Elder does not hang around at the *stringendo*, more like a *subito più mosso*, its excitement topped by a final crescendo to the last chord, which will satisfy.

The generous supply of Elgar continues with an equally exciting account of *In the South* (*Alassio*), the Hallé at its best, the glorious horns enjoying their moments of Richard Strauss. This is hardly surprising, as Elder's forays into that composer's operas were always highly rewarding experiences during his heyday as Music Director at English National Opera in the 1980s. His interpretation emphatically underscores the mutual admiration between Elgar and Strauss, with lush string textures followed in stark contrast by the edgy brittleness of the 'conflict of armies' section between fig. 20 and 26. Timothy Pooley's excellent viola solo has delicate poignancy, inspiring Laurence Rogers (principal horn) to a couple of lyrically shaped responses. Then it's back to more Strauss (those single *allargando* bars of four quavers straight out of *Rosenkavalier*), though the Elgarian fingerprints are never far away, such as the occasional connecting portamento in the strings. From fig. 53 more excitement is generated by ever-increasing speeds and meticulously observed dynamics (Elgar and his masterly use of sudden changes to piano), but as is so often the case with Elgar, it's the horns who lead a hero's life, or in this instance, a *Heldenleben*.

In July 1904, three months after *In the South* was given its first performance, Elgar set some verses by Shelley to the *canto popolare* and called it *In Moonlight*. With the viola solo fresh in the ear it makes a fitting conclusion to this disc, and Christine Rice sings it with both feeling and warmth of tone.



Hallé
CD HLL 7500

'Enigma' Variations, op. 36; Serenade for string orchestra, op. 20; *Cockaigne* ('In London Town'), op. 40; *Chanson de Matin*, op. 15 no. 2; Original finale to 'Enigma' Variations (world première recording).

Hallé Orchestra conducted by Mark Elder

Elder continues with this mostly familiar Elgarian fare in a radiant account of 'Enigma' which, apart from an opulent degree of lingering at the end of C.A.E., gets straight to the heart of each personality and its idiosyncrasies. The strings surmount the Mendelssohnian skittishness of Steuart-Powell with ease, rush up and down the stave in 'Troyte' with impressive unanimity of ensemble and intonation, and find a radiance with which to suffuse both Meath Baker and Jaeger in glorious tone. Of the many fine solos Lynsey Marsh's clarinet is outstanding in the 'Romanza' and as Ysobel, so too Jenny Galloway's personification of Winifred Norbury's trilling, and the two of them fuse in Dorabella's stuttering habits. Listen out in her variation for more-than-*pianissimo* moments in Graham Salvage's bassoon playing (fig. 39–40), which bring out details not usually heard here. Whilst on the subject of *pianissimo*, the start of 'Nimrod' is magically quiet as the first violins sustain their G between variations, followed by a solemnly paced account with arching phrasing and an eye for detail, including some highlighting of lovely moments for cellos. Dan the bulldog makes a stunningly virtuosic leap, paddle, and barking shake during his brief appearance, while Basil Nevinson never played the cello as finely as Peter Worrall at the start and conclusion of his variation. A rough-hewn finale packed with detail, complete with organ, concludes this thrilling account.

If you like your string playing liberally coated with portamento, then the performance of the Serenade for strings is one you will surely enjoy. It's an account which comes from the heart, eloquently shaped and delicately paced from first note to last. *Cockaigne* gets an energetically vital interpretation from Elder in Wagnerian Elgar (as it happens, *Die Meistersinger*, so often recalled here, was the opera Elder conducted in his one and only foray into the political maelstrom of Bayreuth in 1981). The rest of the disc is a gentle-spirited *Chanson de matin* followed by a revisit of 'Enigma' with the original finale (a substantial ninety-six bars shorter than we are used to, and without the organ) which Jaeger and (according to him) Richter thought too abrupt a conclusion. Actually this original ending is rather good but they were probably right, though Elgar accepted the advice with grudging reluctance.

After some dubious appointments by the orchestra in more recent years, Mark Elder has undoubtedly done wonders for the Hallé since he took up the post in 2000. Long may his own era last.

Christopher Fifield

Music for Organ

Sonata in G major, op. 28;

'Enigma' Variations, op. 36 (trans. Keith John)

Keith John (organ)



Hallé
CD HLL 7501

On 2 November 1899, Ivor Atkins played the *Variations* at the end of one of his Worcester organ recitals; he played them again during the course of a recital in October 1900. I discovered these facts—in the late 1980s, working in Worcester Cathedral with Dr Vernon Butcher—from an examination of the scrapbook in which Atkins pasted his recital programmes. Until recently this puzzled me, for although some of the movements can be translated without too much difficulty into the terms of the organ—'Nimrod', for example—many of them are so orchestral in conception, and so virtuosic even in orchestral terms, that I could not see how two hands and two feet could possibly reproduce them on an organ, however well equipped with the sort of gadgets that organists like to have. This astonishing CD is proof that it can be done, and I have to say immediately that I have seldom heard anything quite as devilishly brilliant as Mr John's rendering of 'Troyte' and 'G.R.S.'.

Clearly, the impediments to playing the *Variations* on the organ are not insurmountable, and even the textures of those fast movements can be captured by manuals, pedals, swell-boxes and pistons, given the supple fingers and feet of a virtuoso like Mr John. But whilst it is good to have an idea of the sounds Atkins managed to wrest from the Worcester Hope-Jones in 1899 and 1900, I do not know that this transcription is something I would want to come back to frequently. For one thing, the orchestral arrangement is infinitely more sophisticated than anything the most skilful of organists can produce even from the largest organ. For another, the big Harrison & Harrison organ at the Temple Church is not the most engaging of Arthur Harrison's organs, having little of the magic of those at St Mary Redcliffe, Bristol, say, and Westminster Abbey. I have always felt that the Temple organ, originally built for a ballroom in a Scottish castle, sounds unhappy in its new home, and this recording seems to point up such relatively inedible features as the woolly Large Open Diapason and the honking, leathery Tuba. Of course, that is a criticism of the instrument and not Mr John's undoubted skill as a transcriber, but there is something hard and unyielding about organ tone, and listening to this transcription played on any organ would inevitably in my view be less rewarding than hearing the orchestral original.

Mr John was a chorister at Gloucester under Herbert Sumsion, and his grand performance of the G major Sonata bears comparison with that of his old choirmaster on the Gloucester Harrison & Harrison in 1966. But whereas Sumsion gave what I have always regarded as an admirably literal reading of the score, there are times when Mr John seems to think that Op. 28 is another orchestral work needing transcription, and I felt that his registration was occasionally just a little far-fetched. Organists should remember the G major Sonata was written for a classic Hill organ of the 1870s and that such instruments were not capable of producing the Tower Ballroom sounds one can make on a big twentieth-century Harrison or Willis. The temptation to gild the lily is one

that organists must resist, and there are places where Mr Johns yields to it rather alarmingly.

Anyone interested in the reception of Elgar's music in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and its propagation through organ transcriptions, should make a point of studying this CD. I recommend it.

Relf Clark



Hyperion
CDA67363

ICE on Fire

Serenade for string orchestra, op. 20, plus music by Mozart, Boccherini, Robert Farnon, Barber and Paul da Vinci.

Innovation Chamber Ensemble, Richard Jenkinson (artistic director)

The City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra has, for several years, borne an imaginative family of musical offspring—smaller groups playing a range of music from the contemporary to the tango. At the end of last year a new string orchestra—ICE (an acronym for the Innovation Chamber Ensemble)—burst onto the musical scene. Sixteen CBSO string players directed by cellist Richard Jenkinson gave concerts in Birmingham, the Wigmore Hall and elsewhere to considerable acclaim, and made their first CD. It is disappointing but not surprising that this exciting event went mostly unnoticed by the more 'senior' of our record review magazines. The CD is produced by Blue Rhythm, a West Country recording company better known (though perhaps not to the esteemed readers of this journal) for pop music. This recording made at a 'live' concert is bright and clear, and the playing as one would expect is stylish and imaginative.

The works performed are by Mozart, Elgar, Boccherini, Barber, Farnon and da Vinci, a satisfying mixture. The Elgar piece is the Serenade for strings, op. 20, ideally suited to the sounds and size of ICE. The Serenade has a misty history. Was it based on the *Three Pieces* for strings of 1888, as some authorities think? The names and tempi of these pieces are known but they do not correspond to the three movements of the Serenade. No manuscripts exist to finally answer this question. W. H. Reed thought that the work was 'sketched' later in 1892. After Novello refused it, Breitkopf and Härtel published it in Leipzig in 1893. Possibly the slow movement, the lovely Larghetto, was first played separately, but the first complete performance had to wait until twelve years later, in 1905. By then Elgar, who conducted it at the Bechstein (now the Wigmore) Hall, was a famous composer. This fragile almost nervous work, it seems to me, is more aptly titled 'serenade' than its more substantial predecessors by Dvořák and Tchaikovsky. That is, if you understand 'serenade' to mean a song sung in the evening, in the open air, to one's lover. ICE play it faster than Barbirolli's last recording but, interestingly, slower than Boulton's! The playing is precise but with the right amount of breathlessness this piece needs.

The concert also includes the second of the three divertimenti of 1772 by the sixteen-year-old Mozart, very crisply played, and the almost contemporary G major cello concerto of Boccherini, composed for a virtuoso and here played by one—Richard Jenkinson. His beautiful playing is also featured in the *Song of Scandia* by

Robert Farnon, that true craftsman of first-class light music. The third cello work was inspired by the Irish peace process—*Hope* (Concerto for Cello and Strings)—by Paul da Vinci, who sensibly is Worcester-based and made his name in the world of pop music. *Hope* is highly original, has echoes of Holst harmonically, a poignant slow movement, and certainly rewards the listener after several hearings. The Barber Adagio I found to be less convincing. Personally, I think it should be played either by a string quartet—its original form—or by a normal large body of strings, nothing in between.

I congratulate the players and producers of this CD. At a time when 'classical' music seems to be sadly less relevant to contemporary society, a new approach is certainly needed if the average age of concert-goers is to be lowered. ICE and Blue Rhythm have the right ideas and deserve the encouragement of all of us.

Jack Slater

BBC Legends: Janet Baker

Songs by Gluck, Lully, Marcello, Berkeley, Finzi, Vaughan Williams, Britten, Purcell, and Warlock.

Janet Baker (mezzo-soprano), Geoffrey Parsons (piano)

Most of this CD comes from a recital Janet Baker gave with Geoffrey Parsons at the Cheltenham Festival on 4 July 1983. Always a fine interpreter of English song, it is particularly good to hear her in Finzi's Shakespearean cycle *Let Us Garlands Bring*, usually sung by a baritone. She brings a mixture of intimacy and grandeur to *Fear no more the heat of the sun*, the finest song in the set, and immediately lightens the mood with the playful *O Mistress mine*. The work concludes with a serene rendition of *It was a lover and his lass*—her intelligent response to Shakespeare's text and Finzi's sensitive settings is a joy to hear.

Serenity also pervades RVW's wonderful song *Silent Noon*. Less familiar is *Tired* from the posthumously entitled *Four Last Songs*, settings of poems by Ursula Vaughan Williams—Dame Janet perfectly captures its quiet beauty and her joyous singing of *Linden Lea* is both delightful and unforgettable.

She is also a renowned interpreter of Britten, and her close association with the composer resulted in roles being specially created for her. Here she sings four of Britten's folk-song arrangements. *Down by the Sally Gardens* is full of regret and sadness, and her singing of *O Waly, Waly*, a folk-song about the fading of love, is full of tragic intensity, her colouring of the text perfectly attuned to Britten's magnificent setting. This is a fine example of Dame Janet's artistry.

This is also to the fore in the two Purcell pieces. There is ringing splendour in *Sleep, Adam, sleep* and in the virtuoso 'alleluia' conclusion to *Lord, what is man*.

The CD concludes with four fine songs by Peter Warlock. These and the two Purcell pieces come from a recital given at the Concert Hall, Snape Maltings on 10 June 1968 as part of the Aldeburgh Festival. There is the chance to compare Warlock's setting of *It was a lover and his lass* with Finzi's. Warlock's, while simpler, is no less valid. *Rest, sweet nymphs* is sung with a profound warmth and engaging affection—a perfect gem, perhaps the greatest song on the disc! The final extrovert song, *The Jolly Shepherd* with all its hearty vitality, ends the programme in fine style.



Blue Rhythm
BR104

Janet Baker is one of the supreme interpreters of English song, and this splendid CD should be welcomed by all—do seek it out.

Kevin Mitchell



BBC Legends
BBCL 4117-2

LETTERS

From: Richard Smith

I would like to congratulate Charles Hooey on his excellent article 'Muriel the Gorgeous' (JOURNAL, March 2003, pp. 10–24). However, I would like to add and perhaps correct a little on Miss Foster's second American visit in 1904.

She arrived in America in March 1904 as described by Mr Hooey, but her first engagement was with the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Walter Gericke at Brooklyn on the 18th when she sang 'In Haven' from Elgar's Sea Pictures. She repeated this performance at Hartford, Connecticut, three days later and on 24 March she sang the part of Mary Magdalene in the second American performance of The Apostles at Carnegie Hall with the New York Oratorio Society under Frank Damrosch.

The New York Times of 15 March reported that 'the two solo parts for female voices were more competently sung than on the previous occasion, and the music allotted to Mary Magdalene was of such importance that the improvement counted for much in the effect of the whole. This was sung by Miss Muriel Foster, one of the most admired English contralto singers of the present day, and the one to whom the part was entrusted at the first performance of The Apostles under Dr. Elgar's direction at Birmingham last autumn.'

After this, Muriel went to Toronto where she took part in the recital described by Mr Hooey. From Boston Symphony archives records, it would appear that Miss Foster returned to the USA early in January 1905, where she repeated her performance of Sea Pictures at several venues, again under Walter Gericke.

From: Michael Trott

I am able to add some facts to Arthur Reynolds's interesting article on Percival Hedley and his bust and medallion of Elgar (JOURNAL, March 2003, pp. 3–9). The bust is a fine one in likeness and originality of conception, and I much appreciated its appearance on the sleeves of the Decca LPs of Elgar's symphonies, conducted by Solti.

It is clear from Elgar's correspondence with A. J. Jaeger that Elgar was sitting for Hedley as early as 1899 (letter of 25 October). Elgar seems to have got on well with him: 'Where's that genial Sculper, Hedley? It's quite time I saw myself in bust form' (letter of 28 January 1900). Things dragged on, as Jaeger explained: 'Hedley, the skull-ptor was here last night... he has not forgotten you, nor your bust' (letter of 4 November 1900). The medallion portrait was available first: '(Hedley) says that Mr Nevinson of Chelsea has one' (letter from Jaeger of 2 December 1900). Elgar sat again for Hedley, this time for the bust, at Frank Schuster's home, 22 Old Queen Street, in March 1904: 'the sculptor is now here doing his bust' (letter from Lady Elgar to Polly Grafton, 17 March).

At the back of my copy of R. J. Buckley's Sir Edward Elgar (1905) are various musical advertisements, in one of which Novello's, Boosey's and Schott's offered bronze and plaster medallions and silver and bronze medals of Elgar, as shown on the book's title page, prices ranging from 2s. to 3s. 6d. Then it announced: 'Just completed: a life-size bust of Sir Edward Elgar (ad nat.)—particulars on application'. (It is clear here that 'ad

nat.' meant from life.) So the bust was completed by 1905 and there was an intention to offer replicas. The advertisement goes on to mention Hedley's plaquettes of celebrated musicians, including 'Elgar (conducting his new Overture "In the South")'; presumably, this was another project not followed through.

From: David McBrien

I recently gave a talk to the Bromsgrove Society about the connections between Elgar and Bromsgrove. (Elgar's sister Pollie had lived in, or just outside, the town between 1883 and 1936.) In the subsequent discussion I was assured by several people that Elgar had written a Mass, now lost, for the local Roman Catholic church, St Peter's, Rock Hill, Bromsgrove, to which he had often accompanied Pollie on his visits and where his niece Madge was organist for many years. I was later sent a photocopy of an extract from A History of the Catholic Church in Bromsgrove (1992) by John Newbold which reads as follows:

[A] famous person connected with the parish was the composer, Sir Edward Elgar (1857–1934) whose sister, Susannah Mary Grafton, lived at Perryfield House. Elgar used to attend the church when staying with his

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Another correspondent, Ernest Blamires has kindly provided a copy of the advertisement from Buckley's biography cited in Michael Trott's letter. He also draws attention to the mention of the 'In the South' plaquette and asks: 'Does any other reader possess this plaquette, and if so, would they please provide a photograph of it to the Journal?'

sister and he composed a Mass specifically for St Peter's. In 1948 Tom Banks, the retiring choirmaster, offered the Elgar music to Miss Ellen Neenan. Ellen declined the gift feeling someone with greater musical knowledge would better appreciate the score. Why the music was given away at all and what became of it has to be added to the catalogue of unsolved mysteries associated with the parish.'

I have not been able to find any reference to this Mass in any of the books on Elgar which I possess and I wonder whether this is because the existence of the Mass has already been investigated and dismissed as improbable and/or merely an unverifiable rumour. However, if it is because none of the scholars knew of the Mass, perhaps a systematic search for it should be initiated. The choir at St Peter's was likely to consist entirely of amateur, untrained voices so the work was unlikely to have been very ambitious. Even so, unlike Elgar's other Catholic church music it would seem that this would have been a product of his maturity. Whatever the case, it is exciting to suppose that there are pieces of Elgar's music still to be discovered.

From: Christopher Fifield

To expand a little on Paul Kampen's fascinating letter (JOURNAL, March 2003, p. 56) in response to my memories of Barbirolli conducting the National Anthem at Hallé concerts in the special way he did (JOURNAL, November 2002, pp. 274–5)—you'll find an example of the horns playing a 'falling seventh' par excellence nine bars before letter M in Pomp & Circumstance No. 1. Better still, listen to it on BBCL4100-2 when Kathleen Ferrier sings 'Land of Hope and Glory' on track 12 at 2' 15"; but best of all, a little further on at 3' 35", the climax of the chorus, which I'm sure would have been heard in Moss Side and beyond.

100 YEARS AGO...

A major interruption to the composition of *The Apostles* came at the beginning of May when Edward and Alice spent a week at the Morecambe Musical Festival. The combined choirs sang *The Banner of St George*, and Elgar's new part-song *Weary Wind of the West* was used as a test-piece. The Festival President, Canon Gorton, showed great interest in *The Apostles*, and promised his help with the libretto. Muriel Foster came to Malvern on 9 May for two nights to go through the Mary Magdalene music. These were fraught times, as Elgar laboured to complete the work for the autumn. There is only one diary entry between 13 and 30 May—usually a sign of domestic stress.

On 4 June the Elgars went to London for the performance of *Gerontius* in Westminster Cathedral, the work's London première. The visit also took in some concerts in the Strauss Festival, and Frank Schuster's guests included Lord Northampton and the Stuart Wortleys. Despite the success of the concert, the diary records: 'E. tired & worried over "Apostles" music'. He was 'badsley' again, and not well enough to attend Carice's First Communion on 11th. On 14th and 19th he was 'very busy with great chorus'—the last section of *The Apostles*.

On 20th Edward and Alban Claughton cycled to Longdon: then 'went on later with his wonderful chorus'. Another visit to the capital saw the London première of the *Coronation Ode* on 25th, attended by the King and Queen (postponed from the previous year due to the King's illness). But now drastic action was necessary: on 27th, before returning to Malvern, Alice took matters into her own hands: 'A. to Novello to say it must be only 1 & 2 parts of the Apostles music. Saw Mr. Clayton. Very nice & sd. it wd. be quite as well & E. *not* to worry'.

The following day Edward began to orchestrate the work, and on 3 July they left for Minafon, Alfred Rodewald's cottage at Betws-y-coed in North Wales, where most of the orchestration was done. This was a very happy time for them: Rodewald was a charming host, and Elgar wrote to Jaeger (whom he arranged to go there to write the *Apostles* 'Analysis'): 'It is quite free & easy here—you dress as you like & do exactly what you please—no formality or any nonsense'.

Another visitor was R. H. Wilson, the Birmingham chorus-master, on 18th, who, with Jaeger and Rodewald, heard Elgar play *The Apostles*. 'A. felt & Mr. Wilson sd. it was an aftn. that wd. be remembered & I think written about—Most marvellous music. Each listener deeply affected & intensely moved & excited. Mr. Wilson sd. he felt quite paralysed—there was nothing like it. Very nice day altogether'.

There were a number of excursions in Rodewald's car—the 'Buzzer'—but it was not always reliable; on 19th Jaeger and Rodewald's friend Gordon Chapman took Wilson to the train, but the car broke down, and despite spending more than three hours working on it, they had to spend the night at Corwen. The 'old mouldy' Buzzer was sent back to Liverpool, and Chapman brought 'Cousin Charlie's splendid car' back with him. Elgar did not go on some of these trips as he was too busy orchestrating. When her term ended, Carice came to join them for the last week there.

Returning to Malvern on 31 July, they had a visit from Canon Gorton on 3 August; he was to write an interpretation of the libretto. The full score was finished on 17 August, and the rest of the month was spent correcting proofs and corresponding with Jaeger about the latter's Analysis.

Geoffrey Hodgkins

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