



# BRIO

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ASSOCIATION OF MUSIC LIBRARIES, ARCHIVES AND DOCUMENTATION CENTRES*

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## Brio: Journal of IAML(UK & Irl)

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## EDITORIAL

Roger Taylor gets snow-bound in Stornoway and embarks on a journey that will take him to Switzerland by way of Manchester. Callum Thomson, a native Scot, finds much to interest him in a collection which has come to Manchester by way of London. From the cloistered retreat of Aberdonian academe Pat Ballantyne regales us with news of a highly colourful Scotsman, while Richard Turbet gets even more entrenched in the byways of researching a very English composer. Still north of the border Karen McAulay tells us all how to become bloggers; meanwhile, back in Manchester, Martin Thacker pays tribute to the career of one of the most respected figures in the development of the city's Henry Watson Music Library. Last but not least, Liz Fawcett introduces us to a remarkable popular music archive not a million miles up the M6.

So, (have you noticed – apparently “so” is the new way to start sentences) welcome to the Calendonian/Mancunian *Brio*! It wasn't planned to be like that, honestly it wasn't, although it's been obvious that the journal has really been itching to sport a tartan cover ever since it was allowed the privilege of a green one. This is simply a reflection of the huge range of resources and talents out there in music library land. When I became *Brio* editor, I asked myself what I could bring to the journal, and high on my list of priorities was to be able to use its pages to draw the reader's attention to those fascinating collections which many of us are sitting on but which don't always achieve more than a local publicity. It's still a priority; whether or not I've been successful in realising it is for others to decide, but it's a priority nevertheless. However, if there's a lot to read in this issue, the credit doesn't go solely to those who have contributed articles. That this *Brio* carries no less than seven reviews is all down to the sterling efforts of Marian Hogg as reviews editor. As I've mentioned before, the fact that she can produce such a magnificent array of reviews is all the more praiseworthy given that she's also got her work cut out as the mother of a ten-month old daughter. Long may her good work continue!

*Geoff Thomason*

## CURVED AIR:

## L.W. DUCK AND THE HENRY WATSON MUSIC LIBRARY

*Martin Thacker*

I first met Leonard Duck on a Thursday evening in January 1982, in surroundings which were new to me but habitual to him. At that point, he had been retired for nearly a year, whereas I had only just taken up his vacated post. The long balcony lounge of the Free Trade Hall, with its queues for refreshments, was the background against which he and his wife were pointed out to me, drinking coffee and watching the music-loving world go by.

In those days, the Hallé concerts were much more obviously steeped in tradition than they are now. The hall, though dating in that particular incarnation only from 1951, was nevertheless on the site where the series had begun in 1858. And the original façade had been preserved: the tall windows behind Mr. and Mrs. Duck were the same which had been there in Charles Hallé's time, and Hans Richter's, and Hamilton Harty's. All concerts began with the national anthem. The programmes told you, as they had always done, how many times a piece had previously been performed there, in the formula "xth time at these concerts." Everybody seemed to know everybody else, but they had to catch up on the news quickly, for as soon as the concert was over they would find themselves out on the street: after all, the Free Trade Hall was run by the City Council! Yet this was not a picture of fossilised decline: the concerts in these years of James Loughran's conductorship were generally better attended than they had been in the final years of Barbirolli's.<sup>1</sup>

The Hallé concerts were an essential part of Leonard Duck's world, and his programme notes (of which more later) were a characteristic part of the Hallé experience. He was of a retiring disposition, and my greeting caused a look of real alarm to pass over his face. I feared that in over-compensating for my own shyness, I might have done more harm than good, but not many weeks later he and his wife invited me to dinner at their home in Wilmslow. They had qualities which tend to be in short supply today: they were unassuming, courteous and friendly, engaged in their retirement in a variety of creative pursuits. Some of these were habitual to them: playing the piano and composing for him, painting for her, hill-walking for them both; but they took full advantage of the adult education available at the Wilmslow Guild: Edith took up wood-carving; Leonard also became a painter in both oils and water-colour, and a photographer, and he took classes in local history, religion, and astronomy. He was particularly keen to increase his understanding of the connection between science and religion.

He had been born on 6 February 1916, at Sutton Coldfield, in the West Midlands – slight evidence of this could be heard in his speech all his life. He first learned music from his mother, who was an accomplished amateur pianist. At the age of ten he won a scholarship to Bishop Vesey's Grammar School. As well as music he enjoyed the strategic challenge of chess, and during his teenage years began his lifelong love of hill walking and cycling. A great deal of his profound knowledge of classical music and other subjects must have been gained by self-education: like some other outstanding music librarians of his generation he went neither to university nor to conservatoire.

By the outbreak of the Second World War he had served his apprenticeship in various libraries in Birmingham, gaining his A.L.A. in 1937. Already an independent thinker, he felt that he must register as a conscientious objector, and immediately began a tough outdoor life on the land. Three years in civil defence followed, during which he drove ambulances in blitz-torn London, and later in Liverpool. In the latter city he discovered the Society of Friends (Quakers), finding in their reflective method of worship, and their Peace Testimony, a mirror of his own ideals. In 1943 he married Edith Speirs, a member of an established Quaker family. After the war he returned to the West Midlands and worked for a while in the Dudley public libraries. Then, in 1948, he and his wife moved to Manchester, where he took up an appointment as sub-librarian in the Henry Watson Music Library.

This was the vintage age of the Henry Watson (which had also had a veteran period), for it had recently moved to spacious accommodation, only half of which it still occupies, on the second floor of Manchester Central Library. Re-opening it on 16 September 1947, Sir John Barbirolli had referred to it as "the most living library I have ever had the good fortune to use." The floor-plan was highly unusual, the building itself being a rotunda. Writing in 1952, Leonard Duck described it as

*A long, wide, curved corridor: it extends half-way round the circumference of the Central Library building.<sup>2</sup>*

Space was used with a prodigality verging on abandon, as can be seen from one of the accompanying illustrations. Watson's second collection of instruments, the first having been given to the Royal Manchester College of Music, was at last able to be displayed, with a degree of accessibility to the public which would nowadays be out of the question. Included were an Italian virginal of circa 1600, a Tschudi-Broadwood harpsichord of 1791, a three-quarter Stradivarius violin, five pianos dating from 1771 to 1830, viols, a serpent, an ophicleide, some Bach trumpets, and much more. Duck warned, however, against putting the cart before the horse:

*The library houses all these because it happens to have room for them: it does not consider itself to be a museum, and will not thank you for referring to it by that title . . .<sup>3</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Beale, Robert. *The Hallé: a British orchestra in the 20<sup>th</sup> century*. Manchester: Forsyth, 2000

<sup>2</sup> Duck, Leonard. The Henry Watson Music Library in *Musical Times* 93:1310 (April 1952), p.155–9

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*



The Henry Watson Music Library as it looked from 1947 to 1960



The golden age of the Henry Watson Music Library in the mid-50s.

Leonard Duck demonstrates Henry Watson's Italian virginal of c.1600

Retirement day, February 1981. Leonard Duck flanked by Anne Ransley, Assistant Librarian and Hilda Walsh, Sub-Librarian



Credits for the pictures: 1981 pic: Chris Ransley. Other pics: Manchester Archives and Local Studies

Somewhere among all this was a den occupied by John F. Russell, who, having been employed by the City Council since 1902, was content to allow Leonard Duck to do most of the day-to-day work, while he himself wrote programme notes and received friends amongst resident and visiting musicians: many of the famous names of the day made a point of visiting him in the library when they came to Manchester. Russell had been Watson Music Librarian since 1920, but his knowledge of the library went back to Henry Watson's own day, when it had operated from the latter's house in Chapel Street, Salford. Russell had been one of the earliest city council staff sent to the library after Watson's death in January 1911. It was he who devised the classification scheme for printed music which is a hallmark of the library, basing it on a Dewey outline but using all the numbers from 100 to 999 – except, of course, 780, which was for the books. Dewey mnemonics abound, however – for example, the number for oratorio full scores is 530 – from the final digits of 785 and 783. Russell wrote in 1921:

*The music itself, however, is classified by form. For instance, pianoforte solos, whether original compositions, transcriptions of orchestral works, or arrangements from operas, are all placed under the general broad class of pianoforte solo. Again, full scores, whether of symphonies, overtures, oratorios, masses, operas, are all brought together as full scores . . . The practice of classifying by form of instrument or arrangement has, of course, anomalies. An opera, in its various forms, will be found in a number of different places, i.e., under full scores; vocal scores; pianoforte arrangements, both solo and duet; excerpts as songs; and numbers transcribed for violin and piano, etc. These items, however, are always asked for in the specific form desired.<sup>4</sup>*

Duck echoed him in 1952:

*This principle of division by form (as the librarian would express it) is carried out all through the classification. Opera as such has no place . . . it is a system made for practical musicians.<sup>5</sup>*

Other distinctive Watson Music Library features also descend from Russell: sets for choirs and orchestras are still “multiples”. Short religious choral works of any kind are “anthems”. Secular ones are “partsongs”. Long choral works are “cantatas”, unless they are oratorios or masses. Items missing from sets of music brought back by societies are “short-in-returns”, and music too thin to stand on the shelves is “sheet music”. The card catalogue was highly sectionalised to avoid filing difficulties, since uniform titles were not used rigorously.

Russell, in his outgoing, friendly way, inspired many, including the young Michael Kennedy, who wrote of him thus:

*“Johnnie” Russell was a great librarian. The thousands of people who have used the magnificent library over which he presided with such geniality probably know little of the administrative genius needed to ensure that their varying needs were met. Johnnie had this genius, which he concealed by a seemingly casual, un-erudite approach. He always remembered, too,*

<sup>4</sup> Russell, John F. *The Henry Watson Music Library* (pamphlet prepared for the annual meeting of the Library Association, Manchester, 1921)

<sup>5</sup> Duck. *op. cit.*

that a library is a humanitarian place, and he enjoyed helping his friends to run a fact to earth or to choose a book, often, as I well know, suggesting something off the beaten track which invariably proved to be a stimulating choice. When he retired he missed his work dreadfully . . .<sup>6</sup>

In the same way Leonard Duck, in his more self-effacing way, was to inspire a slightly younger generation.

Duck spent five years as Russell's deputy, at the end of which he was 37. He had been married for ten years and had a two-year old daughter, Barbara. Coronation year, 1953, would be a milestone in his own life for several reasons. On Russell's retirement, he finally succeeded to the Librarianship of the Henry Watson Music Library. In this year he published his only full-length book: *The amateur orchestra*, a concise but thorough treatment of all aspects of its subject; historical, administrative, and artistic.<sup>7</sup> He had in print by this time several arrangements and editions of 18<sup>th</sup>-century music, and had recently published a lengthy illustrated description of the Watson library in *Musical Times*.<sup>8</sup> And on 23 March he was present at the meeting which led to the foundation of the UK branch of IAML, becoming the Library Association representative on the committee.

The following April, the branch Annual General Meeting was held at Manchester Central Library: committee minutes of 10 March 1954 include the following vital preparations:

. . . we should book 30 teas at 1/6d per head, through Mr. Duck, with an outside caterer, and allow 3d per head for an urn of tea to be provided by the Manchester Libraries Catering Department . . .

At that AGM, the first ever certificate of honorary membership was presented to John Russell: a mark of respect which had been proposed by Duck himself at a committee meeting on 22 October 1953. Russell spoke to the meeting about the early years of the library and the personality of Henry Watson. Leonard Duck then spoke about the present-day HWML, after which the meeting divided into two groups, to be given guided tours of the library, presumably by Russell and Duck themselves.

Leonard Duck remained on the IAML committee, representing the Library Association, for 22 years until 1975, speaking seldom, but ready to contribute when he felt that something needed to be said. When IAML was preparing a memorandum for submission to the Committee on Public Libraries in England and Wales, in February 1958, he wrote to Walter Stock (the redoubtable secretary/treasurer) as follows:

Since I shall not be present I feel that I should query two points in the memorandum . . . Two statements in the third section strike me as being questionable. The first is "a high proportion of these twelve thousand [music] students borrow records from public libraries". Can this

<sup>6</sup> Kennedy, Michael. *The Hallé tradition: a century of music*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1960, v

<sup>7</sup> London: Dennis Dobson, 1953

<sup>8</sup> See note 2

really be true, in view of the fact that the majority of gramophone libraries are situated in the metropolitan area?

Secondly, in the paragraph following, is it notorious that since the war a good many societies have had to cease their activities for lack of music which is expensive and often hard to obtain? This is not my experience. In every case where societies known to me have ceased to function it has been because of lack of interest in their community. Moreover, as a matter of fact, although admittedly expensive, it surely is not hard to obtain (except of course certain recondite items).

Although he sat silent through the majority of meetings, he would often produce a sample of dry humour which showed that he was wide awake. One day in the late 1970s, the Central Library Briefing Group were hearing a report of the proceedings of the Cultural Services Committee, which in those days usually included a lengthy list of the travels and social contacts of Timothy Clifford, then Director of Art Galleries. At the words "the Director had the privilege of lunching with Lord and Lady Sainsbury" Duck murmured to his neighbour "I often have a Sainsbury's lunch".

The Watson Music Library never included recorded music (except, long after Duck's time, a closed-access collection of vinyl from 1994–2003, which though extensive was by that time obsolete, and a few CDs for a short time in the 1990s). Duck's strenuous efforts to establish a record library nearly succeeded in October 1962, when his thoroughly costed proposal was quoted verbatim in the City Librarian's own report to committee. But the Council feared legal complications. A further report was submitted in September 1964, after the passing of the Public Libraries and Museums Act of that year, but by that time the City Librarian had decided to split the collection among various other departments and branches. In other ways, too, this library was different from most others represented in IAML (UK & Irl). Though neither a national nor an academic library, it had a large collection of early printed music and, from 1965, a sizeable quota of manuscripts. It also ran the most extensive of all national services of choral and orchestral sets: in effect it was a mail-order warehouse in the best Manchester tradition. Duck described the stress-ridden nature of this side of the operation in 1952:

*The success of the scheme may be said to depend on these representatives [of borrowing societies], who may jeopardize a whole season's plans by not returning music to time. Real calamity is often averted by the ingenuity of the staff, but there are times when the air is thick with trunk-calls and telegrams . . .*

Hilda Walsh, his sub-librarian from 1962, remembers him arriving hurriedly in the stacks with the cry "if I can't find six more Vivaldi *Glorias*, we're sunk!" To anyone who has tried running such a service these quotations do not sound like exaggerations – and he of all people was the least inclined to make a drama out of a crisis. Nowadays trunk-calls and telegrams have become emails and faxes, and Manchester limits its service to the North West of England, lending about ten percent of what was usual in Leonard Duck's day and the decade following his departure.

All these characteristics of the Watson Music Library made the experience of Leonard Duck and his staff essentially different from that of colleagues elsewhere. Developments of the 1950s and 60s further combined to ensure that the IAML Annual General Meeting of 1954 would remain the high water mark of the fortunes of the library. In 1955 a new City Librarian, the dynamic and colourful David I. Colley, soon began to show an interest in measuring the impact of the Music Library. The Chairman, Alfred Logan, was of the same mind, but they sometimes seized the wrong end of the stick. Colley to Duck, 28 March 1956:

*A detailed explanation of the 25% decrease in issues which you reported to the Chairman is required.*

Duck's reply was a tasteful blend of Jeeves and Sir Humphrey Appleby:

*I have not made a report to the Chairman at any time; my report to you dated 6 January did however point out that "the issue of anthems was 7,453 in the quarter October-December 1955, compared with 9,709 in the corresponding quarter of 1954. This accounts for two-thirds of the drop in issues during the last quarter". Is this the matter referred to, please?"*

Colley urged greater contact with the users of the Music Library, a good effect of which was a civilized series of "at homes" – talks and chamber recitals, held in the late 1950s to publicise the library and its instruments. The first, in 1955, was planned as a forum in which to discuss ways of "increasing the usefulness of the Music Library". Colley to Duck, 19<sup>th</sup> July 1955:

*I want you to start planning your arrangements for this, which should include*

*(a) Some kind of display*

*(b) Perhaps a short recital on the harpsichord*

*(c) A list of guests. The Chairman suggests that the principal guest should be Sir John Barbirolli, who might be asked to speak for ten minutes or a quarter of an hour.*

There followed a list of nineteen suggestions for guests, including "the Dean of Manchester", "someone from the B.B.C. Northern Region", "Full press support", "The Parks Band Master" (against this Duck wrote in pencil: "I???"), "Mr. Iles, Belle Vue Band Contest Organiser" (Duck annotated this: "Deceased, 1951"), and "A representative of the Co-operative Union of Choirs" (he wrote: "what's that?")

The "at homes" meant that for several years Leonard Duck now added the duties of concert manager to his schedule. We find him writing to Maurice Aitchison, of Manchester University Music Department, on 21 November 1958

*The harpsichord is kept up to modern concert pitch and tuned regularly by contract and again of course on the day of a concert. Facilities for practice could be made available on Tuesday evenings.*

On the whole, Colley's undoubted zeal was unfortunate in its effects. He pushed up the use of the mail order service to a level which at peak times was simply unsustainable: urgently-needed sets would be hidden amongst literally hundreds of identical brown paper parcels. He initiated his infamous "packet of tea" policy, which had sets issued and received through a hatch at the bottom of the library stairs by staff who were not equipped to deal with queries (needless to say, queries almost always arose). An organisation and methods review of 1959 (Colley was abreast of all the fashionable management trends) removed staff from the Music Library and showed an insensitivity to the special nature of printed music which caused the highly efficient sub-librarian, Jean Hickling, to leave Manchester and return to London (before coming north, she must have worked for Westminster Libraries, since we find her representing Lionel McColvin at a IAML (UK) committee meeting on 22 October 1953). Worst of all, in a manifestation of the 50s craze to open more and more subject departments, the Music Library lost half its floor space on the foundation of a Fine Arts Department in 1960. No longer was there room to display the instruments, which mouldered for years in storage at Withington branch library,<sup>9</sup> and never again would the Music Library be an integral department: it had henceforth to share a counter, and its clerical staff had overlapping duties with the Arts Library.

An initiative of David Colley's in 1965 did, however, add a dimension to the Watson Music Library which greatly increased its international reputation. On the death of Sir Newman Flower, formerly Chairman of Cassell, Colley successfully negotiated the purchase of his Handel collection, containing manuscripts originally copied for Charles Jennens, Handel's patron and librettist. More interestingly still, the collection had an Italian section which later proved to contain previously unknown Vivaldi violin sonatas,<sup>10</sup> and a version *Le quattro stagioni* which differs in important respects from the previously known text. Asked to examine and report on the collection, Duck initially advised against its acquisition, on the grounds that the HWML had not previously contained many manuscripts, and that many of the printed Handel scores were simply duplicates of items in Watson's own collection. However, very shortly after the arrival of the collection, he had prepared and published an efficient finding list.<sup>11</sup> Later he was given full credit by Michael Talbot for leading him to the uncatalogued part of the collection, where Talbot made the Vivaldi discoveries:

*... I was delayed, however, by the Music Librarian, Mr. Leonard Duck, who, knowing, naturally, of my general interest in late Baroque music, asked me whether I would like to have a look through some uncatalogued material from the same collection ... Mr. Duck's offer was of a kind that one does not easily refuse, so I went down into the stacks with him ...*<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> They are now in the collection of the Royal Northern College of Music

<sup>10</sup> RV3, 12, 757, 755, 759, 758, 6, 22, 17a, 760, 756, 754

<sup>11</sup> Duck, Leonard. The Aylesford Handel manuscripts in *Manchester Review* 10 (Autumn 1965), p.228–232

<sup>12</sup> Talbot, Michael. Unpublished text of a talk delivered at Manchester Central Library in 1995

His philosophy of service was expressed in the introduction to a talk he gave in about 1950, while still sub-librarian. This introduction, deleted in pencil on the typescript, must have been important to him, since it appears again in a draft of his first annual report to the Libraries Committee, 1953–4, though there too, it is deleted, with a comment in the margin: “put in next year.” His thesis was that modern production methods had robbed work (i.e. what people do for a living) of its creative aspect. Not only that, but

... as the diversions which are available for leisure hours are too often themselves commercialised and mass-produced, the workers are frustrated and find in them no relief or fulfillment. There follows a seeking after easy ways of self-forgetfulness, leading to an undue love of the sensational, the violent and the superficial, and typified by the cult of the motion-picture.

The music librarian’s task, therefore, was

... not to supply facts, but to release the imagination and to correct the false sense of values to which I have referred.

This would not be an inappropriate mission for a librarian today, who would, however, have to embrace many more types of music than Duck envisaged in the early 1950s:

The library has no “speciality”, or any aversions, apart from the world of jazz, which it does not attempt to cover.<sup>13</sup>

Beyond jazz there were, of course, forms of activity which he did not stoop to mention at all. But before labeling him elitist, one must remember that these views were fairly typical of their time, and that he did eventually introduce a jazz piano section, creating for it a new number within Russell’s classification scheme.

He inherited from John Russell the task of writing programme notes for the Hallé concerts, though the conservative Hallé continued to use Russell’s notes whenever they played a work which he had previously annotated: in 1964–5, Russell’s notes were still far more numerous than Duck’s. Their styles were those of different eras: Russell had frequent recourse to formulations such as “a heavenly melody is first announced by the cellos”, whereas Duck was more terse, factual, and analytical. He made use of examples in music notation, and his writings are often of real value when an analysis of a work is requested by a student. His humour, variously described as “dry” or “impish” often appears in the notes. Quoting the line

Deemest thou praiseworthy wedlock’s breach, then prate thou yet farther and call it holy that shame now blossom forth from bond of twin-born pair!

from *Die Walküre*, he commented

Her reactions are expressed with force if not brevity.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Duck, Leonard. The Henry Watson Music Library in *Musical Times* 93:1310 (April 1952), p.155–9

<sup>14</sup> Hallé programme, 21 and 22 April 1965: excerpts from *Der Ring des Nibelungen*

He wrote with authority, his judgements backed up by wide reading, and he did not mince words. Later in the same note, he speaks of

... a moment in which the pasteboard figure of Wotan comes to life in music that causes the creaking mechanics of the plot to fade away.

He retired in 1981 after thirty-three years at Manchester Central Library. In various ways he had had a considerable influence, and had helped many scholars, creative artists, and ordinary citizens. Interviewed on BBC radio in 2000, Sir Peter Maxwell Davies referred to him by name as someone who had helped him in his youthful quest for self-education among the scores of the Watson Music Library.

He flourished during an active retirement of twenty years, though saddened by his wife’s death in July 1991. He learned to use an early version of Sibelius, and his output as a composer increased as he got older: at the end of his life he had, and still has, as many as twenty original compositions in print.<sup>15</sup> He wrote for a wide range of instrumental ensembles: a *Concertino* for piano and strings, a *Concerto grosso* for trumpet, piano and strings, string quartets, and a work for five winds, two violins and cello, entitled *Equilibria*. Among many works for wind instruments are *Impressions* and *Inscapes* for oboe and piano, *Tone sketches* for trumpet and piano, *La cloche* for flute and piano, *The silver huntress* for horn and piano, a *Partita* for woodwind quartet, and, in lighter vein, *Concertissimo!* and *Knight errant* for flexible woodwind ensemble. At least one of his pieces was used in the Associated Board grade syllabuses. Altogether he mustered forty entries in the British Library catalogue.

He died on 6 March 2002, aged 86. The memories of his friends, family and colleagues are remarkably synoptic: all speak of his efficient mastery of his field of activity, his quiet authority, his wide reading, and his knowledge of diverse subjects. As well as all this, there is a collective memory of his most important trait of all – he was there when you needed him!

Thanks are due to Barbara Whiteford (*née* Duck), some of whose notes on her father’s life and compositions are quoted verbatim in this article; and to Hilda Walsh, Anne Ransley, and David Taylor, erstwhile colleagues of Leonard Duck.

Martin Thacker was Librarian of the Henry Watson Music Library, Manchester, from 1981–2004, and is Secretary of the Manchester Musical Heritage Trust

<sup>15</sup> Publishers: AV Music, Chappell, Cramer, Hinrichsen, OUP, Phylloscopus, Piccolo, Piper, Woodwind Plus



## FROM THE HEBRIDES TO THE HARRYS A DISCOVERY OF HUBERT HARRY

Roger Taylor

Dusk on a February Sunday. Within minutes of my arrival at Ullapool there are flakes in the air. Within an hour it's a blizzard. "You'll be OK tomorrow – they're warmed by the Gulf Stream." Not so, as I slither off the storm-tossed ferry onto impacted snow in Stornoway.

Five days later, the snow has melted. I drive north from Harris for the return to the mainland. I'm in the Lochs area of Lewis where I could knock on the door of Vanderbeek & Imrie Ltd. and ask "Any chance of a cup of tea and a chat about Mapa Mundi?" I'm listening to BBC Radio 3. A week of daytime music on the car radio with perfect Hebridean reception has been a rare treat. From 10 am I'm enjoying Rob Cowan's *CD Masters*. "And finally" says Rob "a track by a pianist I know nothing about, recorded in Switzerland." Now, I readily confess to liking Bach on the piano and after just a few bars I pull over to listen to what sounds like wonderful piano playing. I turn to the Radio Times. 7 February 2003, 11.23, Bach, arr. Hess, *Ertödt uns durch dein' Güte (Jesus nahm zu sich die Zwölfe, BWV 22)*, Hubert Harry, piano. From a quiet and serene start, the chorale builds through a perfectly-judged crescendo to a crashing octave-laden climax. Tremendous applause follows. I've quite forgotten about Mappa Mundi.

A week later and back amongst my familiar reference volumes, I seek out "Hubert Harry". Zero. I turn to the web. Again, zero. It's a faint hope, but, with Rob Cowan's Swiss clue, and via the IASA<sup>1</sup> website, I e-mail the Fonoteca Nazionale Svizzera (Swiss National Sound Archives) in Lugano. Yes, they possess "several" LPs by the pianist Hubert Harry. They are published by Armida. Back to the web, but again nothing at all about "Armida". "Do you have an address for Armida?" I ask Lugano. "Contact Siegfried Droews." "Ja" says Herr Droews, and translating his reply in German I learn that he has published six CDs of music performed by Hubert Harry, but available only as a box-set costing well over £100. Oh dear, I think, I'd have to be *very* good all year for Santa to bring that for me at Christmas. Then, on my screen, Christmas comes early. Herr Droews has forwarded my e-mail address and I receive a message from Heidi Harry. She and Hubert send their best wishes and are delighted to know that he has been broadcast on Radio 3. Contact is made!

It was no use, I had to come clean. I was no impresario, or publicity guru, or recording publisher, or for that matter expert on piano playing. I just liked what I'd heard, possess a scarred nose from sticking it often where I

<sup>1</sup> IASA – International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives

oughtn't, and like to rise to a challenge when information does not come readily to hand. Curiosity and cats – I must be well past my nine lives. Heidi and Hubert were most gracious in accepting my all-too-plausible confessions of modesty. As well as giving me the information I had sought, they gifted to me the 6-CD set which included an insert biography of Hubert. The recordings were all of live performances given in Lucerne, although with audience applause surgically removed by Armida. With live performances, technical imperfections are often mitigated by a sense of occasion and interpretational cohesion sometimes compromised in spliced studio recordings. These, however, were performances of assurance both technically and interpretationally, increasingly rewarding with repeated listening. This was an individual pianistic voice of great capability combined with what one could describe as pedigree borne of assured training and serious thought. But first, who is Hubert Harry?

Hubert Harry was born in 1927 in Dalton-in-Furness, an industrial town in what is now Cumbria, to the south of the Lake District. His was a musical family – mother a singer, father an organist and composer, an elder brother able to take over a parish organist when his father died in 1938. Two years after his father's death, when his brother entered the navy, Hubert assumed duties as parish organist from 1940, at the age of 13, to 1946. Hubert must have been regarded as a child prodigy. He was playing the piano at two and a half, and at four could play the Rachmaninov C sharp minor prelude. During the mid-1930s he commenced studies at the Matthay School in Manchester with Hilda Collens. Hubert remembers the once-a-week 3-hour rail journeys via Lancaster to Manchester for the one-hour lesson with Miss Collens, followed by the 3-hour journey home. In the published history of the School<sup>2</sup>, the earliest of four references to Hubert records a summer students' concert at the Milton Hall on 8 July 1937. The Manchester Guardian next day, without naming Hubert, reported:

*Quite an astonishing performance on the pianoforte was that of a boy of nine, who gave some little pieces by Schumann with such aptness of touch and sensibility of feeling that it is possible on the strength of this early appearance to predict a bright future for him. In these days fluency among extremely youthful pianists is not rare – the competitive festivals prove that – but the boy heard last night shows certain qualities that enable him, to some extent at least, to re-create his music in terms of his own imaginative insight.<sup>3</sup>*

Not long after that concert, with Harry still at a remarkably young age and as demonstration of confidence in his own ability, friends arranged the purchase of his first Steinway grand piano. He still possesses the original receipt indicating an agreed instalment repayment plan, guaranteed by Walter Carroll, to be repaid by income from private recitals.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Robert-Blunn, John, *Northern accent: the life story of the Northern School of Music*. Altrincham: John Sherratt & Son Ltd., 1972, p.44. The Matthay School (founded 1920) formally became a public institution in the autumn of 1943, taking the name "The Northern School of Music"

<sup>3</sup> Matthay School of Music students' concert, in *Manchester Guardian*, 9 July 1937, signed "G.A.H."

<sup>4</sup> The piano stayed in the UK possession of Hubert's older brother until his death in 1963, only then being removed to the Harrys' residence in Lucerne

Studies continued throughout the War years. Robert-Blunn describes the financial difficulties which seemed to blight the Matthay (subsequently Northern) School of Music from its earliest days.<sup>5</sup> He reports of its Oxford Road premises that:

*The sum of £25,000 was needed 'to provide a building that would be really adequate'. The extension fund was launched as the school celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary. As part of the celebrations, and also as a way of getting the extension fund off to a good start, five concerts were given at the Houldsworth Hall in June and July [1945] . . . The fifth and final concert on July 27 was a representative miscellany. This included much vocal work. The school choir, conducted by [Gertrude Riall], sang part-songs and a setting by Hubert Harry of a poem from Housman's A Shropshire lad ['Loveliest of trees'] . . ."*<sup>6</sup>

Robert-Blunn fails to mention that the Housman setting was preceded by Hubert playing the Liszt B minor sonata! Further fund-raising concerts were held in the autumn, including a solo recital by Hubert on 19 October 1945, again at the Houldsworth Hall:

*This young player is only eighteen years of age, but he has already on several occasions given evidence of possessing musical gifts of no common order. He has reached the stage when he will be expected to rely on his own sense of interpretation and to show an individual outlook as an artist. School influences have their strong effect on a young performer's mentality as on his technical style, but he must respect scholarly principles without betraying any sign of scholasticism in his playing. It was obvious last night that Mr. Harry has gone far towards fulfilling such requirement, and . . . there was much present achievement to praise and much promise of bigger things to come very soon.*

*The pianist was at his best in Liszt's Mephisto waltz, and the manner in which he took in his stride the most exacting technical passages in that extravagant work was a proof of fine executive ability and of resourcefulness in the matter of tone colour. The fact that he can handle a broad canvass with considerable ease and confidence was also shown in his performance of Beethoven's C major Sonata from Opus 2 . . . [In addition to Chopin's G minor Ballade and E major Scherzo,] The little Study in A flat was beautifully placed; so was the big Rhapsody in B minor by Brahms. All the playing during the latter piece combined vigour and a high degree of imaginative insight and subtlety.<sup>7</sup>*

Another solo recital took place at the same venue on 10 May 1946:

*Mr. Hubert Harry is a young pianist who during the last year or so has passed steadily and rather quickly from the student stage into the sphere of concert performance . . . His most impressive achievement on this occasion was his playing of Liszt's exacting Sonata in B minor, for he was able to relate with surprising effectiveness Liszt's various mannerisms of style as a piano virtuoso with what Liszt wanted to say as a romantic tone-poet. The interpretation rose to the music's intensity and to sweeping climaxes without that sweeping away of rhythm and outlines which occurs in many performances we hear nowadays. In Chopin's F minor Ballade . . . there was much that was praiseworthy: the eloquence of the player's touch,*

<sup>5</sup> Difficulties in stark contrast to the financial health of its rival Manchester College of Music with which it amalgamated in 1973 to form the Royal Northern College of Music

<sup>6</sup> Robert-Blunn, John, *op cit.*, pp.61–62. His assertion that the conductor was Ernest Read is incorrect

<sup>7</sup> Mr. Hubert Harry's recital, in *Manchester Guardian*, 20 October 1945, signed "G.A.H."

*for instance, gave poignancy of expression to the more wistful passages. The poetic quality of movements by Brahms and the quaintness and vivacity of two movements by Poulenc were well realised. Mr. Harry commands a big range of tone. His delicate effects are usually fascinating . . . The main significance of the recital was its freshness and spontaneity and its stretches of brilliant playing in the largest work chosen.<sup>8</sup>*

During the 1940s, amongst the artists visiting the Manchester School was Cyril Smith. Notoriously uncompromising, and sparse with praise, he held a master class when Hubert was 16 or 17 (1943/44). A fellow student and lifelong friend of Hubert's, Rob Jones, remembers a girl performer beforehand being veritably savaged by Smith. Then Hubert performed Liszt's *Funérailles*. Smith did not interrupt and was silent when Hubert finished. Then he asked brusquely "Are you tired?" "No." "Well you ought to be!" Apparently this was the closest Smith ever came to a compliment.

Another frequent visitor was Clifford Curzon. Robert-Blunn reports that "In March [1937] Curzon had spent two days at the [Matthay] school giving master classes in piano playing to senior students."<sup>9</sup> Hubert does not remember being involved at that stage. However, Curzon was a regular visitor to Manchester and during the war years they certainly became not merely acquainted but friends. In January 1946 Hubert passed the Performer's Diploma, two months later the Teacher's Diploma, thus becoming a Licentiate of the Royal Academy of Music. It was Curzon who advised Hubert to travel to Switzerland, providing him with a letter of recommendation to Edwin Fischer. In Lucerne Hubert participated in a master-class given by Fischer, performing the Liszt sonata. Staying in Lucerne, he studied subsequently with Paul Baumgartner.

In November 1946 Hubert attended a charity concert given by Dinu Lipatti at the Hotel Schweizerhof, Lucerne. Lipatti had held a Professorship at the Geneva Conservatoire since 1944. Hubert remembers this encounter as a turning-point in his life and career. He spoke with Lipatti after the concert and was invited for lessons at Lipatti's residence in Geneva. Lipatti was already weakened by leukaemia, and Louis Hiltbrand had been appointed to assist with his Professorship. In 1949, Lipatti had to relinquish the post and was succeeded by Nikita Magaloff. However, Magaloff's international career enabled him to spend little time in Switzerland. Owing to Lipatti's ill-health, only a few lessons were possible, and Hubert continued afterwards with Hiltbrand whom he regarded as a great teacher and with whom he kept in contact until his death in 1983.

Another significant contact was made in 1948. It is one of Hubert's great regrets that he never met Rachmaninov, but he did become friends with the Rachmaninov family (widow Natalya, daughter Tatjana and granddaughter Sophie) who were resident in the lakeside Villa Senar at Hertenstein near Lucerne. Hubert became a frequent visitor, playing Rachmaninov's piano, accompanying Sophie with her grandfather's songs, and giving recitals there in 1949 and 1950.

<sup>8</sup> Mr. Hubert Harry's recital", in *Manchester Guardian*, 11 May 1946, signed "G.A.H."

<sup>9</sup> Robert-Blunn, John, *op cit.*, p.41

Hubert's own archive identifies a number of concerts given during those early years in Lucerne. At a Schlusskonzert, 3 July 1948, he played Chopin's third sonata op.58. At another, Wohltätigkeits-Konzert, 3 December 1948, he gave a concert with Emil Naef (baritone), with solo piano works by Bach, Rachmaninov, Schumann (*Toccata*, op.7), Chopin and Liszt (*Sonata in B minor*). In 1950 (20 April) is the first identified concerto performance – Franck's *Variations symphoniques* (with the Allgemeine Musikgesellschaft Luzern). These years as a student in Switzerland culminated in 1950 with the award of two prizes in Geneva. In June he won the Prix de Virtuosité avec Grande Distinction of the Geneva Conservatoire, a prize awarded only four times in the previous twenty years. In September he was first prize-winner of the Concours International de Genève. The latter coincided with his appointment as teacher at the ten year old Lucerne Conservatoire, subsequently Dean of the Piano Department where most of the piano teachers were his former students. The die was cast.

It is a measure of Hubert's promise that he continued to be "monitored" by his teachers at Manchester. Robert-Blunn alludes to the reputations of many ex-pupils being extolled by the Northern School of Music in its self-publicity generated to increase much-needed financial support. By 1949, "The pianist Hubert Harry, one of the most brilliant pianists produced by the school, was reported to be pursuing successfully his studies in Europe."<sup>10</sup> In the early 1950s, following concerts in France, Belgium and The Netherlands, Hubert returned to England twice to perform at the Royal Festival Hall, London. His début appearance was on Thursday 30 October 1952 with The Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Stanley Pope, playing the *Emperor* concerto in an all-Beethoven programme. *The Times* critic found little to enthuse about Pope's too literal interpretations ("... it was difficult to banish from the mind the motto of a renowned musical institution in South Kensington – "the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life"), and Hubert suffered faint praise by association – "The pianist . . . made a favourable impression so far as his reliable fingers and eminently sane outlook went."<sup>11</sup> Likewise *The Daily Telegraph* – "... the playing of the soloist, Hubert Harry, was remarkable for perfect balance and technical precision rather than for its heroic qualities."<sup>12</sup>

Two years later, Hubert returned to London for another Royal Festival Hall concerto performance with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted again by Stanley Pope of Tchaikovsky's B flat minor piano concerto on Monday 18 October. A week later, on 25 October, came Hubert's début solo concert at the RFH Recital Room presented by The Symphonia Concerts Society. The programme commenced with Bach's *Toccata in E minor*, followed by Beethoven's *Sonata in C minor, Op.111*. After the interval came the Chopin third sonata followed by Balakirev's *Islamey*. An annotation in a copy of the concert programme held in the RFH Archive indicates that the

<sup>10</sup> Robert-Blunn, John, *op cit.*, p.77

<sup>11</sup> A Beethoven programme, in *The Times*, 31 October 1952

<sup>12</sup> Unheroic Beethoven, in *The Daily Telegraph*, 31 October 1952

recital concluded with the Bach chorale *Sanctify us by thy goodness (Ertödt uns durch dein' Güte)* – the same as broadcast by Rob Cowan forty nine years later.<sup>13</sup>

Robert-Blunn reports incorrectly the concert as including Brahms and Bartok, but adds:

*Miss Collens led a strong contingent from the [Northern] school and received "convincing aural evidence of [Harry's] steadily maturing talent and musicianship". The recital was followed by a grand reunion in the foyer of the Festival Hall and then by "a lively supper party" before Miss Collens and the Manchester delegation headed for Euston for the overnight train back to Manchester. Work at Oxford Road began, as usual, early the same morning.*<sup>14</sup>

This was to be Hubert's last public concert in England. Apparently his decision to devote himself to teaching disappointed Hilda Collens and Clifford Curzon. Advertisements for those 1954 London concerts had appeared alongside such luminaries of the time as Barbirolli, Beecham, Isaac Stern, André Navarra, Moura Lympany, Fistoulari, Anthony Collins and Solomon. In an e-mail to me (3 July 2003), Heidi Harry wrote that Hubert "has always kept very much to himself, and has done none of those things which need to be done for a career as a concert-pianist. The concerts were always a great challenge to his need for privacy." Hubert remembers also never having been paid a fee for any of those London concerts – a young pianist was expected to regard the publicity and exposure as sufficient recompense!

In 1955 a young lady from Santiago, Heidi Pfenniger (whose father was Swiss, her mother Chilean) returned to Switzerland to continue her piano studies in Zurich. Subsequently she joined Hubert's professional class at the Lucerne Conservatoire. They married in 1957, and have been resident ever since in Lucerne. Hubert played twice in South America, the first time by an accident of amazing coincidence. Heidi's parents wished her marriage to be confirmed in Chile. While Heidi flew to Chile (at her father's insistence), Hubert arrived in Naples to board a ship bound for Buenos Aires. Also boarding was the Swiss "scratch" orchestra Collegium Musicum Helveticum (formed by Richard Schumacher from the cream of Swiss orchestral players) with which Hubert had performed in the past. It was agreed that in Santiago Hubert would perform with them the Bach D minor concerto. In mid-Atlantic, a concert was given in the First Class Lounge where the grand piano had to be secured to the floor – Hubert does not remember whether the same safety precaution applied to the piano stool too!<sup>15</sup> During a return visit to Santiago in 1959 it had been planned for Hubert to perform

<sup>13</sup> This chorale became a talismanic encore conclusion to many of Hubert's recitals. Apparently he initially adopted *Jesu, joy of man's desiring*, but felt he could no longer perform it after Lipatti's death. Incidentally, the *Radio Times* citation was incorrect in suggesting it as a Myra Hess arrangement (she never published it). Hubert's is based on the O.U.P. 1935 version by Harriet Cohen

<sup>14</sup> Robert-Blunn, John, *op cit.*, pp.86–87

<sup>15</sup> Soon after, Schumacher enigmatically disappeared and the "scratch" orchestra disbanded

Rachmaninov's fourth concerto. However, the local orchestra was found to be on strike, and so instead Hubert gave a solo recital.

More than 40 years later, the Harrys engage in a lengthy exchange of e-mails with the scar-nosed provincial music librarian. They have recognised that the 6-CD format is not economically viable even for well-heeled Lucerne folk. Consequently, they are taking over responsibility themselves for the marketing and distribution of the CDs to be repackaged separately. A public relaunch is planned for 21 November 2003: would I be able to attend? A new seventh CD will include live performances of Hubert's own arrangement of *Pictures from an exhibition*, plus 2-piano works performed by himself and Heidi. I am invited to spend the next day with the Harrys at their residence high on a hill overlooking Lake Lucerne.

The Friday November evening event was highly-charged and emotional – without doubt electricity was in the air. Five hundred people attended, including at least fifty of Hubert's former pupils, overflowing the chandelier and mirror-bedecked conference room of the lakeside Grand National Hotel, the largest in Lucerne. A brief recital – the first time he had played in public for nine years – included Scarlatti, Chopin, Schumann and some of the Scriabin Op.11 preludes, and was received rapturously. After forty minutes, it ended with *Ertödt uns durch dein' Güte*, invoking a stir of knowing acknowledgement. It was moving to witness the warmth of his reception and the personal greetings afterwards.

The scar-nosed provincial music librarian thus satisfied his impertinent curiosity as far as Hubert Harry was concerned. But a further question remained – how had Rob Cowan come to broadcast that February track in the first place? “A track by a pianist I know nothing about, recorded in Switzerland” he had said. Rob has revealed how good fortune (“simple and unexpected”) resulted in his own discovery of Hubert Harry. Browsing at an LP stall in Watford Market through a recently-acquired large collection, he found an Armida double-LP set –

*It was cheap. I'd never heard of HH so, as I'm always on the lookout for new material for CDM, I tried my luck . . . and was bowled over, especially by the Bach. The transfer to CD was my own – not bad I hope – and the applause perfectly genuine.*<sup>16</sup>

Rob had had enthusiastic responses from listeners to that February *CD Masters* broadcast. He “. . . had previously played it at two Gramophone Society recitals, each time earning a healthy round of applause (rare at these events, I can promise you!).”<sup>17</sup> A week before the Lucerne relaunch, on Sunday morning 16 November 2003 on the BBC Radio 3 *The Cowan collection*, he played four tracks as his *Innocent ear* feature, identifying the

<sup>16</sup> E-mail by Rob Cowan to Roger Taylor, 3 November 2003. It refers to Armida LPs HH 101/2, recordings dating from 7<sup>th</sup> November 1968, their contents reissued variously on Royss Music CDs 1 and 2. The CD transfers however omit audience applause

<sup>17</sup> E-mail by Rob Cowan to Heidi and Hubert Harry, 8 November 2003. He adds “As soon as I heard the Bach I programmed it, as certain then as I am now that it can edify and uplift people as much as Myra Hess's “Jesu joy . . .” did for previous generations.”

music and performer immediately following the broadcast.<sup>18</sup> Such is his enthusiasm that he recommended Hubert's playing in his end-of-the-year recommendations for *The Independent* newspaper:

*... If you fancy trying a real curio, something that whenever I've programmed it on Radio 3 has drawn sheaves of enthusiastic response, I'd recommend the playing of the British-born Hubert Harry. Venerated in Lucerne as a teacher, warmly perceptive in Beethoven and Liszt, Harry's noble playing of the Bach chorale Ertödt uns durch deine Güte cannot fail to stop you in your tracks.*<sup>19</sup>

The brief time I spent with Hubert in Lucerne enabled me to glimpse the warmth and humanity which has endeared him to students and audiences alike. He has been described to me as never having uttered an ill word of anyone. His modesty is indeed self-effacing, and he takes a genuine pride in the success of those whose playing he has informed. I found myself understanding and recognising a tribute by his friend Rob Jones:

*I first got to know Hubert in 1946. Nothing has changed him in all those years. Humble, perfectionist, disregarding of his own achievements and always ready to find something to praise in others. A loyal servant of music, and a great pianist. Only now has he agreed to give a wider musical public the opportunity of sampling his impeccable grasp of pianistic styles from Haydn to Debussy.*<sup>20</sup>

There is something in Hubert's playing which reflects the great influences that he readily acknowledges – the poise of Curzon, clarity of Lipatti, unsurpassed musicianship and pianism of Rachmaninov, and interpretational humanity of Fischer. He has said that, throughout his years of teaching, he gave concerts simply to prove to his students that he could still do it! The archive of material that Heidi has now arranged and ordered reveals more than this giveaway comment suggests. Year by year, decade by decade, albeit mainly in Lucerne, reports of his concerts indicate both an extraordinarily wide choice of repertoire and a depth of appreciation by his audiences. Photographs indicate packed venues and reviews glow. In addition to solo recitals, there is some chamber music (mainly as The Lucerne Trio in the 1960s), plus a world première – on 31 August 1963, the first performance of Martinů's *Concertino for piano trio and string orchestra [No.1]*, H.231 (1933) at the Lucerne Festival (Lucerne Trio – Hubert Harry, piano, Walter Prystawski, Violin, and Esther Nyffenegger, Cello, with the Lucerne Festival Strings, conducted by Rudolf Baumgartner).<sup>21</sup> There was also a *Nova Musica*

<sup>18</sup> The broadcast comprised Scarlatti's *Sonata in F major, K.6*, Rachmaninov's *Daisies* (from *6 Lieder, Op.38*), and Debussy's *Ondine* – all from Royss Music CD 4 – plus the originally-broadcast Bach chorale, now on Royss Music CD 1 but from Cowan's own CD transfer of the LP source complete with applause!

<sup>19</sup> The Compact collection. Rob Cowan's Christmas-CD countdown no 3: piano, in *The Independent*, 22 December 2003

<sup>20</sup> E-mail by Rob Jones to Heidi and Hubert Harry, 1 October 2003

<sup>21</sup> Cited in Halbreich, H. *Martinů: Werkverzeichnis, Dokumentation und Biographie*. Zurich, 1968, pp.209–210. The Trio soloists are not named, but their details are contained in the Harry Archive. The concert was performed in the presence of Martinů's widow, Charlotte. The Harrys met her together with Madeleine Lipatti

Helvetica LP from May 1967 of music by his distinguished Lucerne Conservatoire colleague and composer Caspar Diethelm which included a piano sonata and a *Fantasia for flute and piano*. There are also many concerto appearances (from Bach to Brahms and Rachmaninov). It was as soloist indeed that he encountered Karajan in the mid-1950s when he played (repeatedly!) the *Emperor* concerto for a conductor's workshop.

My one brief opportunity to hear Hubert play in person affirmed a particular pianistic voice which can be discerned from the recordings. This is borne out by a recollection given to me at the November event in Lucerne by an ex-pupil, now a Swiss Government diplomat. Some years ago he had been walking past a Swiss monastery. From an upper window he heard piano-playing which was exactly like the "Hubert Harry sound". Why was Hubert Harry playing in a monastery? Consumed with curiosity, he knocked on the door and was taken to the upper room. The performer was a recent monastic arrival who had been a fellow pupil of Hubert's. That pupil is still there, now in charge of its Gregorian music. It is significant however that the "Hubert Harry sound" was so distinctive as to be recognisable by another ex-pupil even in such unlikely surroundings!

Within the final week of 2003, the Harrys launched a website which at last introduces Hubert (and Heidi) to those who are not residents of Lucerne.<sup>22</sup> Included are details of ten currently available CDs that must serve to represent Hubert's art – the seven CDs newly reissued by Roys Music plus three original Armida recordings. Colleague (and my Somerset neighbour) Roger Firman, Outreach officer, IAML (UK & Irl) has listened to the six discs comprising the Armida box-set (CD H 190/01-06). Roger found a number of variances from his own interpretational preferences, but acknowledged Hubert as "a pianist who has much to say" and his "beauty of tone":

*One cannot fail to be impressed by Hubert Harry's wide range of repertoire captured in live performances over a twenty-year span. Inevitably, there are technical slips that would have been ironed out in a studio environment; however, there is that quality of music making borne of the occasion.*<sup>23</sup>

All except one of the CDs currently available are of live performances (the Brahms Armida CD HH 195-3 is both a studio recording and from 1995 the most recent performances). It is a measure of his perfectionism that Hubert had to be persuaded to re-release the Mussorgsky *Pictures at an exhibition* on the new seventh Roys Music CD. The concerto performances we can hear today may be accompanied by less-than-perfect student or festival orchestras, but Hubert's playing transcends any orchestral shortcomings. Among recordings not currently available is a wonderful performance of the Schumann concerto from 1992 (Gallo, CD-798 *Musik in Luzern*): it is quite electric with tempi faster and sentimentality less than commonly heard, but with a combination of crystal clarity and transparent warmth.

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.hubert-harry.ch>

<sup>23</sup> Review by Roger Firman, August 2003

Such are the rewards from a chance hearing on the Hebrides, via a little elementary research, to blatant curiosity and generosity of response. Hubert Harry was once a name listed amongst the Festival Hall greats. His loss to the international soloists' circuit became Lucerne's gain. His recordings testify to a continuing talent that has benefited many students and local audiences. He deserves continuing acknowledgement in our musical heritage.

#### Acknowledgements

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#### Hubert Harry: Discography

##### Unpublished on CD:

*LP FGSL 30-4701*

Fono [Nova Musica Helvetica].

Caspar Diethelm *Piano sonata No.7* (1956).

*Fantasia for flute and piano, Op.49.* \*

Recorded at Lukaskirche, Luzern, May 1967.

\*Peter Lukas Graf (flute) and Hubert Harry (piano)

*LP PSR 00700*

Pelca.

Bach, *Concerto for 2 pianos and strings in C minor, BWV 1052*.\*

Bach, *Concerto for 3 pianos and strings in D major, BWV 1064: 1<sup>st</sup> movement (Allegro)*.\*\*

Schumann, *Piano concerto in A minor, Op.54*.\*\*\*

\*Concert, Kunsthau, Luzern, 21 September 1977 (celebrating Hubert Harry's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday).

Heidi Harry-Pfenniger and Hubert Harry, pianos. Stadtorchester Winterthur, conducted by Hansruedi Willisegger.

\*\* Concert, Konservatorium Luzern, 1981 (celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Konservatorium – Konservatorium Luzern 40 Jahre, 1942-1982). Heidi Harry-Pfenniger, Eva Serman and Hubert Harry, pianos. Festival Strings. [Performed previously, complete, at an unrecorded concert, Kunsthau, Luzern.]

\*\*\*Concert, Kunsthau, Luzern, 21 September 1977 (celebrating Hubert Harry's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday). Hubert Harry, piano. Stadtorchester Winterthur, conducted by Hansruedi Willisegger.

**Published on CD:**

CD H 190/01-06 Hubert Harry Klavier Live – Aufnahmen aus den Jahren 1968-1988

Armida.

[6-CD box set, subsequently re-released by Royss Music as CD 1 – CD 6.]

CD H 192-01/02 Hubert Harry Klavier Live Mitschnitt 3 November 1992

Armida, [1993].

Disc 1

Scarlattini Sonatas

*E major*, K. 495/L. 426.

*A major*, K. 301/L. 493.

*B minor*, K. 87/L. 33.

*D major*, K. 336/L. 337.

Beethoven, *Piano sonata No. 23 in F minor*, Op. 57 (*Appassionata*).

Disc 2

Debussy, *Images*, Book 1.

Chopin *Ballade in F major*, Op. 38.

*Mazurka in A minor*, Op. 59 No. 1.

*Mazurka in A flat major*, Op. 59 No. 2.

*Barcarolle in F sharp major*, Op. 60.

*Étude in A flat major*, Op. 25 No. 1.

Ravel, *Jeux d'eau*.

Poulenc, *Pastourelle*.

Bach, "Ertödt uns durch dein' Güte" from *Cantata No. 22* (arranged Harriet Cohen).

Recital at Kunsthaus, Luzern, 3 November 1992.

CD HH 194-5 W.A. Mozart

Armida, 1994.

Mozart *Divertimento in F major*, K. 138 (K. 125c). \*

*Piano concerto No. 13 in C major*, K. 415. \*\*

*Piano concerto No. 14 in E flat major*, K. 449. \*\*

Bach, "Ertödt uns durch dein' Güte" from *Cantata No. 22* (arranged Harriet Cohen).

\*\*\*

Mozart, *Divertimento in B flat major*, K. 137 (K. 125b). \*

Shostakovich, *Prelude in C major*, arranged Rudolf Baumgartner for strings. \*

Concert, Kirche Ettiswill, 15 May 1994.

\* Festival Strings Lucerne, conducted by Rudolf Baumgartner.

\*\* Hubert Harry, piano. Festival Strings Lucerne, conducted by Rudolf Baumgartner.

\*\*\* Hubert Harry, piano.

CD-798 Musik in Luzern

Gallo, 1994.

[Benefit CD in aid of the Culture and Congress Centre at the Lake, Luzern.]

Schumann, *Piano concerto in A minor*, Op. 54. \*

Tchaikovsky, *Symphony No. 5 in E minor*, Op. 64. \*\*

\* Concert at Kunsthaus, Luzern, 31 May 1992. Junge Philharmonie Zentralschweiz, conducted by Thüring Bräm.

\*\* Concert at Kunsthaus, Luzern, 6 June 1993. Junge Philharmonie Zentralschweiz, conducted by Thüring Bräm.

CD HH 195-3 Johannes Brahms: Hubert Harry, Klavier

Armida, 1995.

Brahms

*Capriccios*, Op. 76 Nos. 1, 2,

*Capriccio*, Op. 116 No. 1.

*Intermezzo*, Op. 116 No. 2.

*Capriccio*, Op. 116 No. 3.

*Intermezzi*, Op. 116 Nos. 4–6.

*Capriccio*, Op. 116 No. 7.

*Intermezzi*, Op. 117 Nos. 1–3.

*Intermezzi*, Op. 118 Nos. 1, 2, 6.

*Intermezzi*, Op. 119 Nos. 1–3.

*Rhapsodie*, Op. 119 No. 4.

Studio recording, 31 March–1 April 1995.

CD 1 Piano Live Hubert Harry 1

Royss Music, 2003.

Beethoven, *Piano sonata No. 32 in C minor*, Op. 111. [1]

Liszt *Piano sonata in B minor*. [2]

*Valse oubliée No. 1*. [2]

Poulenc, *Pastourelle* (1927). [2]

Bach, "Ertödt uns durch dein' Güte" from *Cantata No. 22* (arranged Harriet Cohen).

[2]

Recital at Kunsthaus, Luzern, 7 November 1968.

[1] Published originally as: Armida LP HH 101

[2] Published originally as: Armida LP HH 102

CD 2 Piano Live Hubert Harry 2

Royss Music, 2003.

Haydn, *Piano sonata in E flat major*, Hob. XVI: 52. \* [1]

Mozart, *Piano sonata in D major*, K. 284/205b. \*\* [2]

Chopin, *Piano sonata No. 3 in B minor*, Op. 58. \*\*

\* Recital at Kunsthaus, Luzern, 7 November 1968.

\*\* Recital at Kunsthaus, Luzern, 5 November 1970.

[1] Published originally as: Armida LP HH 101

[2] Published originally as: Armida LP HH 111

CD 3 Piano Live Hubert Harry 3

Royss Music, 2003.

Grieg, *Piano concerto in A minor*, Op. 16. \*

Franck, *Prélude, choral et fugue* (1884). \*\* [1]

Poulenc, *Trois mouvements perpétuels: No. 1* (1918). \*\*\* [2]

Debussy, *Estampes (1903): Pagodes*. \*\*\*

Bach, "Ertödt uns durch Dein' Güte" from *Cantata No.22 (arranged Harriet Cohen)*.

\*\*\* [2]

\* Concert at Kunsthhaus, Luzern, 5 June 1988. Junge Philharmonie Zentralschweiz, conducted by Thüning Bräm.

\*\* Recital at Kunsthhaus, Luzern, 6 November 1973.

\*\*\* Recital at Kunsthhaus, Luzern, 5 November 1970.

[1] Published originally as: Armida LP HH 141

[2] Published originally as: Armida LP HH 112

CD 4 Piano Live Hubert Harry 4

Royss Music, 2003.

Scarlatti *Sonatas* [1]

*A major, K. 101/L. 494*.\*

*F major, K. 6/L. 479*. \*

*C major, K. 398/L. 218*.\*\*

*A minor, K. 54/L. 241*.\*\*

*D major, K.278/L. S15*. \*\*

Debussy *Préludes* [2]

*La cathédral engloutie [Book 1 No.10]*.

*La puerta del vino [Book 2 No.3]*.

*Les fées sont d'exquises danseuses [Book 2 No.4]*.

*Général Lavigne – eccentric [Book 2 No.6]*.

*Ondine [Book 2 No.8]*. \*\*

Rachmaninov *Préludes* [1]

*F sharp minor, Op.23 No.1*.

*E flat major, Op.23 No.6*.

*C minor, Op.23 No.7*.

*G major, Op.32 No.5*.

*B minor, Op.32 No.10*.

*G flat major, Op.23 No.10*.

*F minor, Op.32 No.6*.

*G sharp minor, Op.32 No.12*.

*B flat major, Op.23 No.2*. \*\*

Rachmaninov, "Daisies" from *6 Lieder, Op.38 (1916), arranged Rachmaninov (1940)*. \*\* [1]

Mompou, "Pour inspirer l'amour" from *Charmes (1920/21)*. \*\* [1]

\* Recital at Kunsthhaus, Luzern, 28 October 1986.

\*\* Recital at Kunsthhaus, Luzern, 6 November 1973.

[1] Published originally as: Armida LP HH 140

[2] Published originally as: Armida LP HH 141

CD 5 Piano Live Hubert Harry 5

Royss Music, 2003.

J.S. Bach, *Keyboard concerto in D minor, BWV 1052*. \* [1]

Mozart, *Piano concerto No.13 in C major, K.415*. \* [1]

Brahms, *Intermezzo, Op.76 No.6*. \*\* [2]

Rachmaninov, *Prelude in G sharp minor, Op.32 No.12*. \*\*

Liszt, *Valse oubliée No.1*. \*\*

Bach, "Ertödt uns durch dein' Güte" from *Cantata No.22 (arranged Harriet Cohen)*.

\*\* [2]

\* Concert at Zentrum Gersag Emmen, 20 April 1975. Festival Strings Lucerne, conducted by Rudolf Baumgartner.

\*\* Recital at Kunsthhaus, Luzern, 28 October 1986.

[1] Published originally as: Armida LP HH 133

[2] Published originally as: Armida LP HH 187

CD 6 Piano Live Hubert Harry 6

Royss Music, 2003.

Ravel, *Miroirs* [1]

Chopin *Nocturne in B major, Op.62 No.1*. [1]

*Scherzo in B minor, Op.20*. [1]

Schumann *Piano sonata No.3 in F minor, Op.14*. [2]

Recital at Kunsthhaus, Luzern, 28 October 1986.

[1] Published originally as: Armida LP HH 186

[2] Published originally as: Armida LP HH 187

CD 7 Piano Live Hubert Harry 7

Royss Music, 2003.

Mussorgsky, *Pictures at an exhibition*. \* [1]

Debussy, *En blanc et noir: trois morceaux pour 2 pianos à 4 mains (1915)*. \*\*

Benjamin, *Allegro ma non troppo, from San Domingo for 2 pianos (1946)*. \*\*

Rachmaninov, *Italian polka (1906), arr. Ada Brant for 2 pianos*. \*\*

Arensky, *Valse, from Suite No.3 for 2 pianos (1893)*. \*\*

\* Hubert Harry, piano. Recital at Kunsthhaus, Luzern, 5 November 1970.

\*\* Heidi Harry-Pfenniger and Hubert Harry, pianos. Recital at Konservatorium Luzern, July 1976.

[1] Published originally as: Armida LP HH 112

Roger Taylor is Librarian: Performing Arts Library,  
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## JOHN OGDON THE COMPOSER

Callum Thomson

In 2003, the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, with the assistance of the Heritage Lottery Fund, opened its archive to the public and set about cataloguing the collection online ([www.rncm-archive.rncm.ac.uk](http://www.rncm-archive.rncm.ac.uk)). The archive contains material associated with the College (and its predecessor, the Royal Manchester College of Music), and individuals who had a close connection to it, including personal papers and correspondence of Adolph Brodsky, Sir Charles Hallé, Thomas Pitfield and Alan Rawsthorne, amongst others. One of the key collections is that of the manuscripts of John Ogdon (1937–1989), who attended the RCM between 1953 and 1957 and was made a fellow of the college in 1986.

John Ogdon is remembered as one of the great pianists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. After a prodigious childhood, Ogdon came to prominence in the late 1950s, making his London debut in 1958 and winning the 1961 Liszt Prize in Budapest. Worldwide celebrity followed his winning first prize at the International Tchaikovsky Piano Competition in 1962 (*ex aequo* with Vladimir Ashkenazy), resulting in a demanding schedule of concert appearances in every continent during the 1960s and early 1970s. Ogdon's reputation as "the foremost British pianist of his generation"<sup>1</sup>, "a virtuoso of the front rank"<sup>2</sup>, has lasted beyond his lifetime, being posthumously described as "a musical titan and an artist of unlimited gifts"<sup>3</sup>.

These gifts were not limited to performance, and his eminence as a pianist has eclipsed another important facet of his career – composition. Like many historical pianist-composers (Chopin, Liszt, Rachmaninov, etc.), Ogdon's work in the two fields cross-fertilised each other: he used his unparalleled performing knowledge to inform his composition whilst enriching his playing with the outlook of a composer:

*The thing that makes John different from most pianists is that he is a composer. This . . . brings very special insights into a performance . . . it comes out when he plays as something which is more structured, more balanced, and there is always a sense of exploration of the composer's mind.*<sup>4</sup>

John Ogdon's mental illness has received almost as much attention as his abilities as a musician, following his wife's revealing biography<sup>5</sup> written in

<sup>1</sup> Church, Michael. The troubled tiger of the platform in *The Independent*, 9 February 2001

<sup>2</sup> Loppert, Max. Ogdon plays Ogdon [review] in *Financial Times*, 21 January 1974, p.3

<sup>3</sup> Morrison, Bryce. Testament booklet note, [www.testament.co.uk/Notes/Ogdonnote.html](http://www.testament.co.uk/Notes/Ogdonnote.html), accessed 24 March 2003

<sup>4</sup> Peter Maxwell Davies, in *The South Bank Show*, London Weekend Television, 19 March 1989

<sup>5</sup> Ogdon, Brenda Lucas and Michael Kerr, *Virtuoso*, London: Hamish Hamilton, 1981

1981 with screenwriter Michael Kerr. Although a firm diagnosis of Ogdon's condition was never reached, both schizophrenia – possibly inherited from his father – and manic depression were suspected. To speculate on the extent to which this condition (and the medication used to control it) affected his musical or compositional skill would require a detailed study of mental illness and its treatment outside the scope of this study. However, it must be remembered that from 1973, when Ogdon experienced the severe mental breakdown that brought his condition to light, the pressures on his time and creativity as a composer came from not only an arduous workload, but also a chaotic personal life. His poor health and its financial consequences meant that between then and 1985, Ogdon moved from his home in London, via periods at mental hospitals and at half-way houses, to teaching at Indiana University and living with sympathetic friends in the UK.

His performing career during this time was subject to extreme peaks and troughs, but by the late 1980s, his reputation as a performer of virtuosity and sensitivity was re-established, and his compositional ability was beginning to become recognised again. In his fiftieth birthday year, 1987, some early works were performed at the Royal Festival Hall and the Queen Elizabeth Hall in London, and new music theatre works were premiered. In 1989, a *South Bank Show* documentary showed him performing and composing his own works, and improvising a film score for the final scene of John Huston's *Moby Dick*. The same year, aged fifty-two, John Ogdon died suddenly from a coma caused by undiagnosed diabetes.

Ogdon was surprisingly prolific as a composer, given his demanding performance schedule. He wrote approximately 165 works, some of these single pieces, others small groups of pieces forming a single work. A vast percentage of Ogdon's compositions were for his own instrument, although he also wrote a string quartet, sonatas for flute, violin, 'cello and brass quintet, a piano concerto and two orchestral works, alongside a half-completed opera and an unfinished oratorio.

At the peak of his celebrity in the late 1960s, five of Ogdon's solo piano works as well as his piano concerto, violin sonata and the orchestral *Dance Chain* were published. Miscellaneous short pieces have appeared elsewhere, and the extent of Ogdon's published output is detailed overleaf (fig.1):

The remainder of Ogdon's compositions are still in manuscript form. All titles registered with the Performing Right Society and all available manuscripts were catalogued after Ogdon's death<sup>6</sup>, and in 1991, the RNCM library purchased the manuscripts in the possession of Brenda Lucas Ogdon.

There are very few commercial recordings of Ogdon's music. Although Ogdon wrote a substantial number of pieces for piano, he performed relatively few of them, and recorded only eight. Fig.2 shows the recordings made by both Ogdon and Brenda Lucas (the only other artist to commercially record his music), who recorded four of his solo piano works in 1991. Only one of these releases (*In memoriam John Ogdon*) is still available.

Although no-one but the composer and his widow has made recordings of Ogdon's music, some other artists have performed it, particularly since

<sup>6</sup> Atman, Skye. *Catalogue of John Ogdon Compositions*. London: [unpublished], 1990



fig. 1 Published music of John Ogdon (for piano solo unless otherwise stated)

Title	Date	Publication details
3 Valses	1950	in Wood, Marjory E., <i>The Young John Ogdon</i> , Kearney: Morris Publishing, 2000
3 Piano Pieces	1951	ibid.
Sonata in $\sharp$ minor	1952	ibid.
Five Preludes	pre-1959	London (Ascherberg, Hopwood & Crew), 1965
Sonatina	1965 ?	London (Ascherberg, Hopwood & Crew), 1965
Sonata for unaccompanied violin	1966	London (International Music Co.), 1969
Theme and Variations	1966 ?	London (Ascherberg, Hopwood & Crew), 1966
Canon for Piano	1967	in <i>Tempo lxxxii</i> (Summer 1967)
Dance Suite	1967	London (Ascherberg, Hopwood & Crew), 1967
Piano Concerto No. 1 for piano and orchestra	1966-8	London (International Music Co.), 1969
Dance Chain for orchestra	?	London (Chappel), ?
Varlaam's Song from Mussorgsky's "Boris Godunov"	1971 ?	London (International Music Co.), 1971
A Garland for J.S. LeFanu opera [INCOMPLETE]	1985 ?	Ramsgate (Ganymede Music), 1985
Song without Words, 'The rising moon'	1987	in <i>Pianoforte Examination Pieces, Grade VI, 1988</i> , London: Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, 1987

fig. 2 Commercial recordings of John Ogdon's music

Recording details	Artist(s)	Featured works	Recording date
EMI ASD2321/2	JO	<i>Theme and Variations for Piano</i>	24.08.1966
EMI ASD2709	JO <sup>7</sup>	<i>Piano Concerto No. 1</i>	21-22.12.1970
EMI SLS 868 ( <i>Pianistic Philosophies</i> )	JO	<i>Piano Sonata No. 1</i> <sup>8</sup>	21.07.1972
Recherché 1004 (Indiana University Recital) [UNRELEASED]	JO	<i>Dance Suite, Piano Sonatas Nos. 2<sup>8</sup> &amp; 3, Theme and Variations for Piano, Variations and Fugue, Varlaam's Song</i>	15.04.1979
Altarus AIR-CD9028 ( <i>In memoriam John Ogdon</i> )	JO	<i>Dance Suite</i>	10-15.03.1986
Gamut GAM CD528 ( <i>The Piano Music of John Ogdon</i> )	Brenda Lucas	<i>Sonatina, Five Preludes, Piano Sonata No. 4 ('An American Sonata'), Twenty-Five Preludes – for John Paul Getty</i>	8-9.04.1991

his death. Pianists Mark Swartzentruber and Ian Pace have included Ogdon's music in recitals given at the Purcell Room and Wigmore Hall, whilst many of the pieces' dedicatees such as flautist Rachel Brown and cellist Raphael Sommer have performed the works written for them.

There are several possible reasons for the comparative neglect of John Ogdon as a composer. Unlike some of the historical pianist-composers mentioned above, with whom he was compared when conquering the world piano circuit, Ogdon's commitment to composition was variable, and was usually linked to the number of playing engagements he had. In the mid-1980s, for example, when his concerts were sporadic, Ogdon composed very prolifically, often staying awake until the early hours writing music – between December 1984 and January 1985, he composed over twenty works for solo piano. However, only two years later, his attitude to composition had become indifferent:

*I do enjoy composing, especially for the piano – I look on composing as a hobby that I enjoy. I devote myself more to playing and treat composition as a spare-time thing.*<sup>9</sup>

The patchiness with which Ogdon applied himself to composition, partly due to his heavy performing schedule and complicated by his illness, has resulted in a disorganised body of work. Unlike Ogdon's pianist-composer predecessors, there are no complete sets of dances (e.g. mazurkas, polonaises, etc.) or studies. There are five complete sets of preludes, arranged in the same order as Chopin's Op.28, but these were all composed in the mid-1980s, and do not show a development in the use of the form. The most prevalent of musical forms in Ogdon's output is the "sonata", of which he composed almost thirty, yet many of these works are not sonatas in the conventional sense. Most of them are fantasia-like single-movement works, which are non-developmental and not written in classical sonata form – the majority of these were also written in Ogdon's late period of intense activity. The apparent lack of a structured output adds to the belief that Ogdon's "spare-time thing" was not a serious part of his life, and may contribute to his obscurity as a composer.

Another possible reason for the neglect of Ogdon's piano works is their technical difficulty. Although all of Ogdon's published works for the instrument could be learnt using standard professional technique, only the top-rank pianists could play much of the composer's unpublished material. Like generations of previous composer/performers, Ogdon wrote with his own virtuosic technique in mind, including, for example, the most complex contrapuntal part writing (*Variations and fugue*, 1956–63), the contrast of mellifluous lyrical phrases with nimble percussive passages in successive layered chords (*Piano Concerto No. 1*, 1968) and astoundingly fast fingerwork in unusual intervals such as parallel 2nds. One critic recalls wondering of the concerto:

*whether the problems which he had created therein, to be surmounted by his own gifts, might operate against its survival. I have not heard it since and would like to.*<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup> JO with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, conductor Lawrence Foster

<sup>8</sup> These are the same piece – the 3-movement Sonata dedicated to Stephen Bishop (1961, rev. 1971)

<sup>9</sup> cited in Clarke, Keith. Business as usual in *Classical Music*, 17 January 1987

<sup>10</sup> Kenneth Loveland in *The Cardiff Festival of music – Twenty years*, ed. Robin Stowell, Cardiff: Cardiff Festival of Music, 1986

Nevertheless, such practical concerns have been levelled at pianist-composers from Hummel to Rakhmaninov, and the usual response is a corresponding rise in standard technical aptitude to meet the demands of new music. However, the variable and inconsistent musical rewards to be earned from Ogdon's output may not always be worthwhile.

*The music is always unpredictable, always fascinating, and a little disturbing. It is also unimaginably difficult.*<sup>11</sup>

The Ogdon style is hard to define, as the range of influences which the composer absorbed was as broad as his repertoire. There are a few consistent traits that are discernible from Ogdon's juvenilia to his late works: the use of chromatic, rather than cadential harmony to produce tension; the recurrent use of themes, and their Lisztian transformation. On top of these are the more superficially apparent influences from other composers, which are unpredictable in their variety. Amongst this illustrious company, it can become difficult to find Ogdon's own input:

*At its worst . . . the musical thought allowed a totting-up of all the half-digested influences (a touch of Liszt here, Prokofiev there, Beethoven, Busoni, Skryabin, Rakhmaninov – identification of the passing parade became something of a game), but little sense of an individual voice speaking its own thoughts in its own special way.*<sup>12</sup>

This apparently retrospective outlook in his own composition belies Ogdon's passionate commitment to performing new music. Unusually for an international concert pianist, his receptiveness to contemporary works was demonstrated throughout his career (often at the expense of commerciality) by his extraordinarily broad discography. The speed at which Ogdon could interpret new scores, as a result of his unparalleled sight-reading ability, meant that from his days as a member of the Manchester School, he was a respected figure in contemporary musical performance. He had an acute understanding of the music he played, giving lecture-recitals on Messiaen, Boulez and Goehr, whilst in his last year, he produced extensive liner notes to his recording of Sorabji's epic *Opus clavicembelisticum*.

However, despite his enthusiasm for modern music, Ogdon's compositional style moved away from the more radical influences of the 1960s throughout his life towards a more traditional, diatonic and popular style. Ogdon identified with this more conservative stance, as he stated in 1971:

*My own earlier works were much more avant-garde but my outlook gradually changed – I found it wasn't really me.*<sup>13</sup>

Nevertheless, Ogdon's self-imposed parameters (which can often make a composer's job more challenging than having unbounded creative freedom) did not prevent a sense of constant experimentation, dabbling with techniques from the complete musical spectrum. Some of these were learnt, but many more were absorbed through Ogdon's constant exposure to a wide variety of styles. Although Ogdon was not a groundbreaking composer, his understanding of music, his instrument and the process of composition is constantly evident throughout this neglected composer's work.

*The above is reproduced with permission from John Ogdon the Composer: an introduction to his works and style published by the John Ogdon Foundation ([www.johnlant.co.uk/ogdon](http://www.johnlant.co.uk/ogdon))*

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<sup>11</sup> unnamed "local critic" in Indiana, cited in Ogdon, Brenda Lucas and Michael Kerr, *Virtuoso*, London: Hamish Hamilton, 1981

<sup>12</sup> Loppert, Max. *op.cit.*

<sup>13</sup> cited in Regan, Susan, John Ogdon: Pianist off the Beaten Track in *The Gramophone*, xlix (July 1971), p.165

## THE JACK HYLTON ARCHIVE AT LANCASTER UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Elizabeth Fawcett

Jack Hylton may be a familiar name to some of you and completely unknown to others. Who exactly was he, why should he appear in a music library journal and why should he have his own archive? I hope this will become clear as you read this article.

### Jack Hylton

He was born in Great Lever, Bolton in 1892. His father was an amateur singer and Jack would accompany him on the piano. Jack also had an act as "The singing mill-boy". He first worked as a pianist in the orchestra of a Pierrot company and also worked in orchestras for touring pantomimes and as a cinema organist. He progressed to being a relief pianist for various orchestras and dance bands.

Jack branched into publishing by writing songs in the style of the day and running off a batch of a thousand and selling copies on the Blackpool prom. He went on to be a song-plugger for a publishing firm in London and at the same time worked as a pianist for the Queen's Dance Orchestra. The wife of the dance hall owner brought back a record from America of Paul Whiteman's band, which was very influential in America at this time. Hylton and the owner thought their own band should use this style, so the former took the record home and wrote down the music and adapted it for the instruments in the band, later reworking all the Paul Whiteman numbers that were shipped to him.

This period was the early 1920s and HMV at this time were looking for bands based in popular dance halls to make records. The Queen's Dance Orchestra did make recordings, but Hylton was unhappy about being paid only as a band member and not getting anything extra for transcribing and arranging the music. This was resolved by allowing the words "Directed by Jack Hylton" to appear on each record, thereby gaining great publicity for Hylton, who was then more in demand as a bandleader than was the orchestra itself. Consequently he left the Queen's Dance Orchestra and took this as an opportunity to set up his own band under his name. He started recording under "Jack Hylton and his Orchestra" in 1923 on the Zonophone record label and gained respect as a bandleader. The Queen's Dance Hall asked Hylton to take his new band back to the Queen's Roof Dance Hall with increased income and status. By now he was in great demand and had to provide bands simultaneously in various locations.

During this time he added cabaret acts to the show, which proved useful when he later branched out into the career of theatre impresario. He officially started theatrical agency work in 1925. His band performed in dances, on record, and also on the variety and music hall stage. Owing to the demand for his services Hylton hired a ten-piece band under the name "Jack Hylton's Kit-Kat Band" which was resident at the Kit-Kat club under the direction of the clarinettist Al Starita. One of the well-known members of the Kit-Kat band was Ted Heath who went on to form his own band.

In 1926 Jack Hylton and his Orchestra played their first Royal Command Performance at the Royal Albert Hall and thereafter Hylton stopped playing the piano as well as leading and restricted himself to conducting only. Meanwhile his orchestra expanded to fifteen members. In January 1927, Jack was promised an arrangement by Horatio Nicholls (a pseudonym for Lawrence Wright), who was in America at the time. The piece was sent over the phone via the Transatlantic Telephone Service and the music - *The shepherd of the hills* - was copied down in the UK and arranged for performance that night. This is supposedly the first song that was transmitted over the Atlantic by radio, in 1931.

The band toured Europe in the Christmas season, when theatres were booked for pantomimes, and also at several other times in 1928, and made highly successful foreign visits to places such as Paris and Berlin. 1929 was a tough, busy year for the band. They had peak slots on the radio, performed 700 performances, travelled 63,000 miles and sold a record every 7 minutes (a total of 3,180,000 just in that year.) In May they were booked to perform at the Roxy and Paramount Pictures in New York. However, American musicians sensed a potential loss of work and threatened to strike, so the band's visit was postponed.

In 1931 Hylton's HMV contract came up for renewal but he signed with the then new record label Decca and later went on to become one of their directors. In the same year Jack Hylton and his band met Igor Stravinsky who asked them to play an arrangement of an excerpt from his comic opera *Mavra*. Unfortunately this was not a success! With Stravinsky in the audience, the band embarrassingly lost their place in the opera at one point.

In 1932 they made two continental tours and Jack Hylton was honoured by the French Government with the Légion d'Honneur. In 1933 Hylton successfully brought Duke Ellington's Orchestra to Europe for a six-week tour of Britain, with Hylton's band touring Europe with them. Jack Hylton's Orchestra opened a revue featuring the band with vocalists and, in 1935, made their own film *She shall have music*. Hylton - without the band, owing to a musician's strike - travelled to America and brought back the American big band and jazz sound. In 1937 the band made another European tour performing for Goering and Goebbels and made their final European tour in 1938.

At this stage Jack was spending a lot of time as a theatre impresario, touring with the radio show *Bandwagon*, which was made into a feature film starring Arthur Askey who by 1940 was appearing on the radio show *ITMA*. The band was disbanded in 1940 as many of its members were being called

up for war service. The London Philharmonic Orchestra had been in financial straits, so Hylton took over management of the orchestra in 1940, suggesting different repertoire, sending them out to theatres and music halls around the country and bringing in new audiences. A tour with Sir Malcolm Sargent and Basil Cameron, for example, was a success.

Hylton went on to present productions of light operas and musicals such as *The merry widow*, *Paint your wagon*, *Kismet*, *Kiss me Kate*, *Camelot* as well as many pantomimes and plays. He was instrumental in discovering stars including Morecambe and Wise, Shirley Bassey, Noele Gordon, Arthur Askey and George Formby and had many famous stars on his books and in his productions. His many links with the world of entertainment meant he was appointed Light Entertainment Advisor by Associated-Rediffusion for the new ITV channel in the 1950s. At the same time he continued to work as an impresario, employing many entertainers and controlling a number of London theatres.

#### Why did Lancaster University gain this Archive?

Jack Hylton was a Lancashire lad. When he died in 1965, Lancaster University was under construction, and the decision was taken by his celebrity friends to perform an all-star concert in his memory the following year. His family decided that the proceeds from this concert would go towards the cost of building the rooms for the music department at Lancaster University, which were named *The Jack Hylton Music Rooms*. In 1997 an extension to the University Library was built, within which was a purpose-built Rare Book Archive and to which the Jack Hylton Archive was then transferred.

#### What work has been done on the Archive?

The archive arrived in boxes with contents lists, but these were by no means comprehensive. Many items were dusty or dirty and some of the folders were crumbling. The first thing to be tackled was the sorting of the band parts. These were re-housed in new envelopes, as the originals were dirty and in bad condition, and labelled with the details of their contents. The title of the piece was then added to an alphabetical list and the envelopes shelved in alphabetical order. These band arrangements vary in instrumentation from a seven-piece band up to a full big band and can be anything from individual titles to medleys to scores for whole theatrical productions. Only titles were listed together with any notable details. This meant that only titles could be looked up, so that if people wished to use the arrangements then we would need to check the instrumentation ourselves. The list was transferred into a searchable document on the Archive web page. So far about 2,000 band parts have been sorted, representing about half the arrangements, with a further 2,000 band parts remaining unsorted.

There are 43 boxes of theatre programmes, totalling over 3,500, from various productions which Jack Hylton attended or presented or which were associated with him. These are gradually being listed and will eventually be transferred to a database. This is slow work and will take quite some time to complete. Some of the scripts used by or sent to Jack Hylton have been

sorted and listed and a database created so that enquiries can more readily be answered. There are only about 200 scripts so this was quite a straightforward database to start off with. These are not intended to be lent out but are being preserved purely as part of the Archive. We are continuing to accession items in the collection and have recently listed every band member that recorded in the Jack Hylton Orchestra, which will make searching names easier when answering enquiries.

Eventually it is hoped that an overall collection description will be present on our Library catalogue and that more detailed descriptions will be available on the database. The programmes, once the listing is complete, will be transferred to the database and it will thus be easier to pinpoint enquiries on individual performers and which productions they were in. At the moment enquiries in this area are quite problematic.

We received money from RSLP to promote the Archive and put it in order. With part of this money we have created a web page for the Archive, which allows people to browse the list of band parts. (<http://libweb.lancs.ac.uk/hylton>). Work has also been done in raising the profile of the Archive, including staging exhibitions at the Library, getting band arrangements performed and ensuring that links to the website are widely accessible.

Unfortunately the record collection had been sold off before we received the Archive so we only had original reel-to-reel recordings which were deteriorating. Some of these have been copied onto CD. We have gradually bought back some of the record collection (currently we have approximately 200 78rpm records) and have listed the contents of the records and the CDs on a database to provide easier searching for enquiry purposes. This has already proved useful in speeding up responses to questions regarding the Hylton recordings which we hold. We are constantly looking for Jack Hylton records to fill in the gaps in our collection so please do not hesitate to contact us if you know of any available.

#### Other contents of the Jack Hylton Archive

The Archive consists of about 5,000 loose photographs of productions, stars, stage sets and so forth as well as about forty volumes of photos. Some have already been identified, although identifying and grouping these photos into some sort of order is a major task. There are also 120 volumes of press cuttings. Their coverage ranges from Hylton's early career as bandleader in the early 1920s right up to his obituaries in 1965. They relate to various stars whom he managed, productions, tours – generally anything with a Jack Hylton connection. We have several large posters and flyers but the quantities of these are as yet unknown. Some of the large posters are suffering from acidification making them impossible to handle.

Appointment diaries have been preserved from Jack Hylton's career along with some administrative letters, accounts and theatre licences for his productions, and there are numerous miscellaneous memorabilia such as a bronze cast of his hand, his conductor's baton, various journals and administrative records.

### Where do we go from here?

As in many institutions, our Archive receives no direct money from the Library or University, so that we need to investigate funding to ensure that the work on this Archive might continue. We wish to raise the profile of the Archive and increase its use by researchers. We have liaised with the University Big Band Society who performed two Jack Hylton arrangements in their concert on 23 February 2003 and more Jack Hylton arrangements at the dinner for the SCONUL conference on 3 April 2003. This was a great success, creating much interest from those who attended and leading to a recording of the event. The Big Band Society is very interested in Jack Hylton and we have formed good links and hope to get Jack Hylton's arrangements played more frequently by them. We are creating a searchable database to aid the enquiries we have concerning the Archive, while continuing to work on cleaning, sorting, cataloguing and storing its contents as appropriate.

### How can you help?

Please point any of your users who might have an interest in this era in our direction, as we would like this Archive to be known about and used as much as possible. We are also available to deal with any enquiries should any people have questions concerning it – bearing in mind that some areas of the archive are easier to search and research in than others.

### How to contact us

The archive is housed at Lancaster University Library and you can contact either Helen Clish or myself here for further enquiries.

Helen Clish [h.clish@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:h.clish@lancaster.ac.uk) phone: 01524 592544

Subject Librarian (Music) with responsibility for the Rare Book Archive

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Senior Library Assistant – Rare Book Archives

<http://libweb.lancs.ac.uk/hylton>

<http://libweb.lancs.ac.uk/rba.htm>

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## THE MUSIC OF JAMES SCOTT SKINNER: A NEW WEB RESOURCE

Pat Ballantyne

### Introduction

The University of Aberdeen, in partnership with Aberdeen Central Library, Angus Council and Aberdeenshire Libraries and Museums, and supported by the New Opportunities Fund, has recently launched a multimedia web site devoted to the music and dance of the Scottish fiddle composer, James Scott Skinner (1843–1927). *The Music of James Scott Skinner* is a learning and research resource suitable for anyone with an interest in Skinner, Scottish dance, Scottish fiddle and traditional music, or in the local history of North East Scotland.

The site is based around a comprehensive database which charts Skinner's life and music as well as the music of composers and compilers earlier than and contemporary with him. There is also biographical material in the form of letters from Skinner to various correspondents, images, concert programmes, and reviews and audio and video materials.

The original basis for the web resource was a manuscript copy in the University's holdings of Skinner's *Harp and claymore collection*, first published in 1904.<sup>1</sup> These manuscripts are fascinating, being full of directions for performance, anecdotes about the composers and the provenance of many of the old melodies he collected. The development of his own compositions can also be traced, for not only is there often more than one version in this collection, but his editor's copy and some of the printer's proofs are also held in the University's collection.<sup>2</sup>

The site content includes musical examples from Skinner's entire opus, and, to place his music in context, we also have examples from collections of traditional music made in North East Scotland, many of which date back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century and show how dance music and its collection, developed in the area. To enhance the site further, we have digitised eighty examples of Skinner playing his own music. However, the novel aspect of the resource is the inclusion of video clips of dances interpreted as closely as possible to his own instructions. It is as a fiddler and composer that Skinner is remembered, but it was as a dancing master that he made his reputation in the first place. He was dancing master to Queen Victoria's tenantry at her Scottish Balmoral Estate from 1868. As dance has changed in Scotland since Skinner was

<sup>1</sup> The University of Aberdeen, MS2726

<sup>2</sup> The University of Aberdeen, MS3088

teaching, and often quite dramatically, the site provided an ideal opportunity to trace these changes.

### James Scott Skinner

Who was James Scott Skinner, and why should his musical legacy be considered important enough to make it the subject of a website? Dancer, excellent fiddler, composer, teacher, one of the first Scottish recording artistes, and general “character”, his life reads almost like a 19<sup>th</sup> century novel. Although he became successful and well known, he was declared bankrupt on more than one occasion. His first wife ended her days in an asylum as a result of his first bankruptcy, his second left him, and he ended his days, in his eighties, sharing a flat in the only house he ever owned with a lady half his age.

Born in Banchory, Aberdeenshire, in North East Scotland, James Skinner learnt to play fiddle and ‘cello by ear. In 1855 he joined *Dr Mark’s Little Men*, a travelling orchestra of “destitute” boys that was based in Manchester. James’s big break came when he was sent back to Manchester from a tour the *Little Men* were undertaking, as a punishment for fighting. Whilst the *Little Men* continued their tour, James was given violin lessons by Charles Rougier, a violinist with the fledgling Hallé orchestra. Rougier was shocked at James’s inability to read music (Dr Mark taught the boys by rote), and decided to rectify this. His teaching of both violin and theory was so good, that in later years, James credited Rougier for his own success as a composer and performer.

In 1861, shortly before his apprenticeship was due to end, James left *Dr Mark’s Little Men*. Following a period touring with *The New Orleans Theatre Company*, a blackface minstrel show, he returned to Aberdeen and decided to follow in the family tradition and become a dancing master like his father and elder brother, Sandy. He arranged for a course of lessons with “Professor” William Scott of Stoneywood, near Aberdeen. James adopted “Scott” as part of his professional name, calling himself “J. Scott Skinner” from 1862.

He started work as a dancing master and by 1868 was teaching tenants on Queen Victoria’s Balmoral estate. This made his reputation, and he became an extremely successful dancing master. His wife Jean, and later on, his daughter Jeannie, helped him. In his autobiography he mentions how he was “making about £750 a year, and was able to drive to and from the residences of my pupils in my own private trap, drawn by a beautiful pony.”<sup>3</sup>

James and his wife Jean combined forces with James’s elder brother, Sandy and his wife in order to cope with the popularity of their classes. Between 1872 and 1885, they held regular classes throughout North and North East Scotland, often attracting more than one hundred pupils at a time.

In 1893, he went on tour to Canada with the champion Highland dancer, Willie McLennan. Unfortunately, McLennan died of meningitis just three weeks into the tour. The tour members were left stranded and completely destitute. Skinner contacted various Scots exiles and managed to raise enough money to get home. On his return, he vowed that from then on, he would perform only Scottish music, and only in Highland dress. He also vowed to give up teaching dance in order to concentrate on performance and composition.

From then on, he focused on building up his career as a performer, and later, as a recording artiste. He even took part in the London Palladium’s opening concert in 1911. He continued composing and appearing in public until 1926, but by this time, aged 83, he was worn out and in constant ill health. He died in 1927, some months after a trip to the United States to take part in a competition. His funeral procession brought the streets of Aberdeen to a standstill.

### The Web Site

The *Music of James Scott Skinner* resource is based around a database containing nearly 1000 entries. In order to manage access to the information, the database itself has been divided into four main areas: *Background*, *Biography*, *Music* and *Dance*. Each of these has then been subdivided more specifically.

### Background

This section of the web site, comprising database entries JSS0497 – JSS0576, traces the development of dance music from some of the earliest examples of the genre in the university’s collection, to Skinner’s own compositions. It includes examples from collections made by Aberdeenshire composers, such as William Christie (c.1778–1849), and by local collectors and instrumentalists such as the Aberdeen Dancing Master and founder member of Aberdeen Musical Society, Francis Peacock (1723–1807), as well as many others. It also includes an example by the Italian composer, Urbani, who published a series of volumes of Scottish music, arranged for violin and cello.

There are examples from Dr. Keith Norman Macdonald’s *Gesto collection* (1895), which inspired Skinner in his own collection of music, and an example of piobaireachd, the classical music of the highland bagpipe, collected by David Glen. David Glen’s *Collection of ancient piobaireachd* (1880) was an important influence on Skinner. He developed his own method of writing tunes for the fiddle in the bagpipe idiom, adjusting the ornamentation used by the pipes to suit the idiom of fiddle music. That his compositions were successful, we are in no doubt, for many of them are still played today, not only as fiddle music, but also as bagpipe *ceòl beag* – the “light” as opposed to “classical” music of the bagpipe.

Skinner also continued the development of the strathspey, a peculiarly Scottish genre. The strathspey is a form of dance music which takes its name from a glen in Speyside where Highland malt whisky is produced. In the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, the title “strathspey” was interchangeable with reels and jigs, there being examples in existence of “strathspey reels” and “strathspey

<sup>3</sup> James Scott Skinner, *My life and adventures*, Aberdeen 1994, (p28). Originally serialised in twelve instalments in *The People’s Journal*, between 3<sup>rd</sup> February and 21<sup>st</sup> April 1923

jigs". It came to develop its own character, featuring the instantly recognisable "Scotch Snap"<sup>4</sup>. The strathspey had been a fast and lively dance form, but Skinner composed many slow strathspeys, intended purely as concert pieces. William C. Honeyman's description of the strathspey has been included as an example of what some of Skinner's contemporaries thought of the genre. Indeed, Honeyman believed that the strathspey broke all the rules of harmony. There is also an example from Daniel Dow's *Thirty seven new reels and strathspeys* (c.1776), this being one of the earliest uses of the word "strathspey" in a title.

### Music

This section has been subdivided into five areas. The first of these, *The collection's music entries* allows the viewer to access the database via thumbnail images. It also gives a title for each entry along with a description. Clicking on any of these images will take the viewer directly to the full database entry.

### The Harp and claymore collection

*The Harp and claymore introduction* introduces Skinner's 1904 magnum opus (JSS0001–JSS0227). *The Harp & claymore collection* followed in the tradition of Skinner's previous collections, being made up of dance music, airs and songs, all with a decidedly "Scottish" slant. James Scott Skinner was immensely patriotic, at a time when the nationalist movement was popular throughout Europe. In an age when academics and trained folklorists were interested in recording and preserving European folk culture, Skinner was writing down tunes that he had picked up through the playing of others, often handed down through the generations.

Skinner credited other composers wherever possible, often including on his manuscripts, little anecdotes about either the tune or the composer. These give an insight into his own influences: which tunes, players or composers interested him, and why. For example, on the reverse of the melody *J.O. Forbes of Corse*, (JSS0031), composed by Skinner's great friend, Peter Milne, we find:

*The Founder of the present style of Strathspey playing. The best all round player & composer of his day. His left hand was as accurate as a machine. Composer of "The Pride a' the Dee" Valse, "The Dean Brig" was revised by him, but it is not his composition. It was composed by Archie Allan, & named "Mrs Gray of Carse" – The Rev. Mr Tough, Kinnord got hold of a copy & gave it to Davie, Aberdeen who published it as "The Dean Brig" & gave the Minister a present o' the tune! A. Middleton, Keith then gave it in his books as Peter Milne's, unintentionally no doubt – but the Minister's & Peter's names were ultimately withdrawn.*

Skinner also wrote virtuoso variations for popular Scottish tunes, such as those he added to Nathaniel Gow's *Largo's fairy dance* and these variations have become just as well known as the melodies themselves.

<sup>4</sup> A dotted, and sometimes even double dotted semiquaver followed by a quaver, which gives the strathspey its characteristic rhythmic impetus

The manuscripts are often only partially complete. Not all of Skinner's arrangements were used in the final selection – many of them, whether composed by Skinner or by someone else, were simplified or improved, before final publication. He used a number of different arrangers, ranging from local arrangers such as his editor, Gavin Greig, or his friend and fellow composer, George Riddell, to the international. Herr Adolph Roloff, a German, who taught at Tooting College of Music, London was one such, and another German, Herr F Erkmann, also appears on the list of arrangers. It may be that Roloff and Erkmann had a connection with Dr Mark, from whom Skinner had learnt his craft.

In 1893, Skinner had put his ideas for the *Harp and claymore* project to Gavin Greig (1856–1914), a schoolmaster living in North Aberdeenshire. Greig was also an essayist, lecturer, playwright and organist, and together with Rev. James Duncan, collected thousands of local examples of folk-song at a time when it was believed that the genre had died out in Aberdeenshire.<sup>5</sup> Greig agreed to edit the *Harp and claymore* for Skinner. Not only did he edit it; he also arranged a large part of the material, and as JSS0001 testifies, remained unpaid for his many years' labour. Greig's neat handwriting contrasts admirably with Skinner's hurried scrawl. Greig copied out all Skinner's manuscripts again, in their publication-ready versions, sometimes with very different accompaniments (JSS0577–JSS0651), and the printer's proofs allow further comparisons to be made.

### Other collections

Of course, *The Harp and claymore* was not Skinner's only collection of music. The *Highland polka*, published when he was 17, was the first of more than 600 compositions. Many of the early compositions were connected with his work as a dancing-master, composed to suit the popular ballroom dances he taught in his classes. Although the *Election galop* (JSS0765–JSS0769) is a delightful composition, it is more reminiscent of the Viennese ballroom and compositions by the Strauss family. By comparison, the *Ettrick Vale quadrilles* (JSS0666–SS0674), also for the ballroom, sound decidedly Scottish. The ballroom compositions were published originally as sheet music, then in 1884, collected together under the title, *Beauties of the ballroom*.

James Scott Skinner produced no less than five collections of music, *The Miller o' Hirn*, published in 1881 (JSS00717 – JSS0742), being the first of these. It was followed in 1884 by *The Elgin collection* (JSS0743 – JSS0753), planned in four parts although only the first was ever published. A very popular collection, it was reprinted more than once. Skinner included a number of songs in *The Logie collection* of 1888 (JSS0779–JSS0821). He admired certain Aberdeenshire poets, many of whom wrote in the vernacular, including his friend Gramin (George Gordon Ingram), and La Teste (William Tester). He invited them to set their poems to his music. The music was always written first – Skinner did not believe in setting words to

<sup>5</sup> *The Greig-Duncan folk-song collection*, volumes 1 to 8, published by the University of Aberdeen in association with the School of Scottish Studies, University of Edinburgh. Volume 8, the final volume in the series, appeared in 2002

music, and asked his friends to write lyrics to suit his music. In 1900, *The Scottish violinist* appeared. Skinner described this as a “compilation album”, meaning that there were no new compositions in it. Unlike the other collections, which were all arranged for piano, it was arranged for unaccompanied solo violin.

The collections are fascinating for their variety. Skinner produced some wonderful melodies, yet in common with many other prolific composers, he also produced many mediocre pieces. Some of the reels, for example, are rather formulaic. He even said that he did not play many of his tunes at concerts, as he considered them to be mere “pot-boilers” and not worthy of his attention!

### The audio examples

As the site includes eighty short examples of original Skinner recordings, it is possible to read the music and listen to the maestro playing at the same time. Skinner was one of the very first commercial recording artistes in Scotland, being present at the first recording session, which took place in Glasgow, in 1899. For someone who had never been any good at managing money, finding himself completely without any on at least three occasions, his recording career was his salvation. It allowed him to purchase his first and only permanent residence in 1921 at the age of 77 after twelve years spent living in various hotels. In 1922, Columbia Records paid him £100 for recording sixty-five melodies onto 24 discs.<sup>6</sup>

The audio examples have been digitised, without any modifications, from 78rpm shellac discs made in 1910 and in 1922. The later recordings have a stronger, more “realistic” quality; for even in those early days of the recording industry, technology was continually improving. Virtually every audio example has a printed or manuscript equivalent, and can be accessed from hotlinks in *Audio examples*, and again from links in *Multimedia* area of the site. The recordings can also be reached directly from hotlinks in individual database entries for the relevant musical examples.

To complement the audio clips, we have also included a simplified discography of Skinner’s known recordings. This links to a more detailed study made by the researcher Bill Dean-Myatt.<sup>7</sup>

### “Dancie” Skinner

It is as a virtuoso Scottish fiddler and composer that Scott Skinner is best remembered. This is partly due to his legacy of recordings, his compositions and also because there are still people alive who remember seeing him perform. However, it was as a dancing master that he forged his early career and made his name. Skinner’s father had been a dancing master, as was his elder brother, Sandy; indeed, it was Sandy who gave him his first lessons on

<sup>6</sup> Letter to David Waterson, December 11 1922. See database entry JSS0276. The original letter is in Angus Archives, Montrose, Scotland, MS501/9 (5)

<sup>7</sup> J. Scott Skinner, a draft discography by Bill Dean-Myatt, as part of *The Beltana project* (contact [bill@beltanaproject.co.uk](mailto:bill@beltanaproject.co.uk)). The *Beltana project* aims to compile a database of all 78rpm recordings of Scottish Music of any genre

fiddle and ‘cello and who taught him his first dance steps. In all, Skinner spent thirty years as a dancing master.

Dancing masters or “dancies” as they were known in Scotland, were itinerant teachers of dance. They travelled round certain areas, holding a series of dance classes, suitable for all ages, stages and social classes, in each area. Lessons were usually conducted in a series of twelve. Skinner and his wife were so popular, that they sometimes had to condense twelve lessons into four or five weeks. Their student base stretched, literally, from John o’ Groats in the far North East corner of Scotland, down to Central Scotland, although they were largely based for a number of years in Elgin, some forty miles due east of Inverness, the capital of the Highlands.

The Skinners taught all sorts of dance, from quadrilles and waltzes to many other popular European dances of the ballroom such as *La Varsoviana* and *La Gornitza*. They also taught country dances and solo Highland or “novelty” dances. In 1884, James Scott Skinner was advertising Indian Rod and Expander exercises as part of his teaching repertoire. A fair amount of information about his classes still exists. As an excellent self-publicist, he made sure that he always included promotional material in his music publications. In the early days, he invariably styled himself “Professor of Dance” on his sheet music. In his collections of music, he includes reviews of concerts and assemblies. Assemblies, or “Closing assemblies” as they were properly referred to, were a combination of concert and dance, which took place at the end of a series of dance lessons. Assemblies had a two-fold purpose: they allowed pupils, regardless of age, to show the locality how well they had learnt to dance, and they served as an excellent advertisement for the teacher, to ensure that there would be a large supply of pupils for the next term. By including reviews of his assemblies in his publications, he allowed his renown to spread still further. These reviews usually have the date, location and the name of the newspaper attached to them, and many of them list the dances performed at the assemblies.

Two notebooks, unsigned, and filled with handwritten instructions for dances were amongst the collection that contains Gavin Greig’s manuscript copy of *The Harp and claymore*. Looking carefully at them, I realised that Skinner and his own dance teacher, William Scott, had compiled them: in the footnotes were adverts for forthcoming Skinner publications. In the notebooks was a description of *Long live the Queen* country dance (JSS0476), which Skinner had devised for the tenantry at Balmoral. This was a dance that I knew existed, but for which I had never found instructions. Looking at yet another advert for Skinner’s compositions, I realised that Professors Skinner and Scott had published these notebooks in the 1880s as *A guide to fashionable dancing*.<sup>8</sup>

The notebooks were digitised for the web site, as was the booklet Skinner brought out in 1905: *The people’s ball-room guide* (JSS0900–JSS0949).<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> William Scott and James Scott Skinner, *A guide to fashionable dancing*, Charles Middleton, Keith, c. 1884. Unfortunately, I have not been able to trace a copy

<sup>9</sup> James Scott Skinner, *The people’s ball-room guide and manual of dancing*, John Leng & Co. Ltd, Dundee & London, 1905



To compare and contextualise these, there are also excerpts from Francis Peacock's *Sketches* (JSS0404–JSS0425),<sup>10</sup> and a tiny pocket manual, printed in Aberdeen in the 1870s, which would have been used as an aide-memoir for the dancer (JSS0428–JSS0459).<sup>11</sup> An interesting aspect of each of these manuals is that they all insist that they do not take the place of a dancing-master, but reinforce what could be learnt from a teacher. All the instructions use French dance terms which a prospective dancer would not be able to understand without the benefit of lessons. A fascinating aspect of these manuals is that they all include a section on dance-floor etiquette, and at least one points out that there is no suitable excuse for a lady to refuse to dance when requested to do so. A Highland Dancing manual published in 1911, illustrates how dramatically these solo dances have changed in less than a century (JSS0357–JSS0403).<sup>12</sup> In 1911, they were still being performed in a manner much closer to the way Skinner had learnt them.

### The video clips

An exciting part of the project was to put together a video of dances. Rather than illustrate Scottish Country and Highland dances as they are performed today, it seemed more pertinent to recreate the dances as closely as possible to the way in which Skinner would have taught them. I therefore decided to attempt to interpret the dances in *The people's ball-room guide*. Attempting to recreate dances that have changed in interpretation, or are perhaps no longer performed, using only a manual, is not an easy task. One reason that dancers were instructed to use manuals as an aide rather than a substitute to lessons is that much remains unsaid, and at times, this posed particular difficulties. Each era has particular fashions or methods of dancing that are taken for granted and therefore left undescribed. Teachers like Skinner did not normally specify exact footwork or directions for performing certain types of figures or movements, and many of these are interpreted differently today. After numerous discussions with Mats Melin, an expert on Scottish dance and its history, the group dances were ready for practising.

To interpret the solo dances, which include a Highland fling taught to Skinner by his brother Sandy, and which certainly dates back to the 1840s if not before, I used D.R. Mackenzie's *Illustrated guide* which even provides metronome speeds. I also used my knowledge of an older form of Scottish dance, known as "step" or "percussive" dance. What was surprising was the speed of the dances. One hundred years ago, they were at least twice as fast than they are performed today.

I decided as far as possible to use Skinner's own music for the dances unless he specified otherwise in his instructions. This helped to divide the dances: an ad-hoc collection of instruments was used for the group dances: mandolin, guitar, fiddle and piano accordion as Skinner tended to arrange

music for available instruments. Pipes were used for the Highland dances, and a string quintet for the formal dances.

Owing to potential problems with compressing the video for web delivery, a single video camera was mounted on scaffolding to look down on the dancers. It was important to keep the camera in one position as movement adds hugely to the size of the file. I would have liked to have had differently angled shots of the dances, and had originally envisaged specific zoom shots. As it happens, the simplicity of the single viewpoint enhances the effect of the dancing. When it is considered that the video clips are delivered at three different speeds, too high a file size would cause too many problems in downloading the clips for viewing.

Each dance then, can be accessed through the *Dance* area of the site, directly from the introduction to Skinner's *People's ball-room guide*. Dances can also be accessed through *Multimedia*, and through a hotlink from the relevant database entry. The audio clips of Skinner playing can also be accessed from *Multimedia*. Both video and audio examples have introductory text.

### Conclusion

*The music of James Scott Skinner* has been an extremely rewarding project. James Scott Skinner was a fascinating character who had an exciting, if turbulent, existence. His varied musical training imbued him with a highly developed aural ability. This, combined with the technical, if basic, theoretical skills he learnt from Charles Rougier, allowed him to develop the Scottish fiddle repertoire to a new height and has inspired Scottish fiddlers ever since. Interpreting dance in the way he taught it has allowed new light to be shed on a largely neglected area of Scottish culture.

The site is already receiving interest from visitors in all corners of the earth. I hope very much that it will enable the music of James Scott Skinner to continue to inspire new and appreciative audiences, world-wide.

*Pat Ballantyne is Assistant Curator, Special Libraries and Archives at the University of Aberdeen.*

<sup>10</sup> Francis Peacock, *Sketches relative to the history and theory, but more especially to the practice of dancing*, Aberdeen 1805

<sup>11</sup> Anon, *The ball-room guide or dancing taught without a master*, Aberdeen 1879

<sup>12</sup> D.R. Mackenzie, *Illustrated guide to the national dances of Scotland*, Stirling, 1911

## WHITTAKER LIVE! (A LIVELY BLOG)

Karen E McAulay

About 18 months ago, RSAMD's Head of Information Services suggested that we might consider setting up a performing arts blog<sup>1</sup> to alert staff and students to interesting music and drama websites. It was he who subscribed to the Weblogger<sup>2</sup> service and set up the Whittaker live! page<sup>3</sup>. (The name derives from the fact that the RSAMD Library is correctly known as the Whittaker Library after William Gillies Whittaker, an early Principal of the Scottish Academy of Music.) We subject librarians were given carte blanche to fill it as we saw fit. This article focuses on the music side of the site, which it would be fair to say is the dominant subject in terms of the quantity of postings.

The idea was that we should populate the site with a few useful contributions before the students came back in Autumn 2002, so that we could publicise it as a service that was already up and running. With fluctuating enthusiasm (another task, but something new and innovative), this was done. Early contributions focused on introducing subscription databases, indexes of various kinds, or highlighting big events that would be taking place in the next few weeks.

It was so easy to do! The trouble was that it wasn't all that easy to keep coming up with new and interesting websites that would grab students' interest just by a headline. Worthy does not equal cool. Getting students to *look* at Whittaker live! was an uphill struggle at times. Our students are first and foremost performers, so websites connected with music history assignments are probably perceived more as a necessary evil than a delightful diversion!

Although the service has a facility for users to register and take part in discussions, this option has hardly ever been taken up – the interest simply isn't there. Having said that, one of the most recent contributions must have really hit the mark. I had included links to sound clips of particular Purcell stage-works, and the tutor leading that course responded highlighting the clips that students would find most relevant to his lecture. That's true library-faculty cooperation, folks! On odd occasions members of staff have

<sup>1</sup> A blog (weB LOG) is an easily editable website to which one or more people can contribute, often functioning as a group current awareness service or alternatively as one individual's online diary. It's entered in plain English, and does not require the use of HTML or any other programming language. Another well-known one in traditional music circles is the Farne (Folk Archive Resource North East) weblogger. A person who blogs is known as a blogger

<sup>2</sup> The subscription is modest – not a big outlay

<sup>3</sup> <http://rsamd.weblogger.com>

asked me to post items about particular areas of interest – such as highlighting RSAMD's HOTBED project<sup>4</sup>.

Within the website, we are able to monitor how many times particular contributions have been accessed. We also have an Extreme Tracking counter registering hits on the site. Intriguingly, they never agree except to show that access is consistently higher than it was a year ago, and the number of hits certainly justifies the service. There must be a number of regular visitors, because a week's silence on my part is instantly reflected by a drop in the number of visitors. Quite how that works is a mystery to me!

One does eventually settle into a rough pattern so far as the subject matter of contributions is concerned. During term-time, I put together weekly contributions for first, second and third year music history lectures, so that students will find websites giving a quick survey of the subject matter, potted biographies of composers mentioned, analyses or historical background to featured music, and (if I can find them) audio-clips to match.

Another strand, of course, is to plunder the events programme, highlighting artistes and major works to be performed. Student recitals – or indeed external concerts featuring staff or students – always provoke interest. So, too, do the reviews that follow. I normally look for reviews of RSAMD performances in *The Herald* online, first thing each morning. It only takes seconds.

Regarding Whittaker live! as a current awareness service, I feel I can also justify providing links to hot political issues where they affect the arts locally. For example, I've recently highlighted HE funding in England and the possible impact on Scotland, and have willingly featured a campaign to save a local arts and outdoor education centre from being sold off – many of our students have benefited enormously from vacation music courses there, so there's huge interest in the whole issue.

Big local arts events, e.g. the Glasgow-wide concert series that makes up Celtic Connections, are always worth a mention. After all, our staff and students contribute to their success. Seasonal events have also been profiled – Hogmanay or Burns Night, for a start. Goodness knows how many of our students are guest artistes for the latter!

On a more intermittent basis, it is useful to be able to highlight significant library acquisitions, such as a batch of new Scottish recordings, or a big new reference work. A link to an online review, or even the publisher's blurb, and the deed is done.

Lastly, but by no means least, come the contributions about simply being a student. I've posted useful links about study and practice techniques, essay writing, stress, exam preparation, job-seeking and interview techniques, and summer/gap-year jobs. I've posted information from the Musicians' Union website about changes in performing rights. For technical students' benefit, it is also occasionally interesting to look at health and safety issues.

In this second year, I have been glad of the fact that I have systematically saved copies of my text in Word. Although Weblogger allows you to see well over one hundred subject headlines on the "Discuss" page, contributions do

<sup>4</sup> Handing On Tradition By Electronic Dissemination

eventually drop off the bottom of the list into oblivion. When a student asked for all the contributions relating to her music history studies for 2002–3, I was more than relieved that I still had them on record! Not only that – prescribed scores do sometimes recur in the history syllabus, and it has been great to be able to update and then post contributions again a year later, to a new audience.

I'm conscious that my style has altered since starting Whittaker live!, and I've devised my own policies based on experience:-

- I deliberately adopt a chatty, informative tone, but now make much more use of bullet points, fewer full sentences, and generally more “white space” on the page. Cutting the verbiage leads the reader to the heart of the matter, and takes up less of their time.
- If I'm recommending a link, I hope that the recommendation itself is an endorsement – the onus is on me to make sure of that.
- Links offering a humorous “aside” must be recognisable as such.
- I sometimes include a disclaimer for links to websites which external agencies ask me to highlight, such as a second-hand book website aimed at students.
- As a courtesy, websites are always attributed to their author or institution; if the author is/was a student at another HE institution, this is also noted. It's all part of educating students about “web awareness” and helping them assess how authoritative a website might be.
- Websites that prompt too many pop-ups are a distinct turn-off; their content has to be good to justify their presence on Whittaker live!

It's still impossible to know how many of the “hits” are by our own staff and students – who are, after all, the prime audience. Nonetheless, by sending current awareness emails to targeted year groups, and asking staff to recommend the website to their students, I'm reasonably confident that anyone who wants to use the site, is well aware of it. I include the website after my signature on all emails, and display a different A4 notice in the library each week. One does have to strike a balance between maximising publicity and becoming a pest! As far as ease of access is concerned, there's a link from the library's web-catalogue, and another from the RSAMD intranet home page. (We're also regularly picked up by Google.)

In conclusion, it will have become clear that what began as an experiment has become something worthy of keeping. Future plans might entail the service being transferred at some stage from Weblogger to our own library web pages (which we didn't have at the time Whittaker live! was born). However, although course-related postings are now also on the library web pages, there's no clear timescale for leaving the Weblogger site at the time of writing.

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## J. GUGGENHEIM AS MUSIC PUBLISHER: TALLIS AND BYRD RESTORED

*Richard Turbet*

Byrd's *Second Preces* are among his neglected compositions. Preces are part of the essential nuts and bolts of the Anglican liturgy, and Byrd composed three surviving sets.<sup>1</sup> All three have appeared on commercial recordings.<sup>2</sup> The *Preces and Responses*, the last to be composed, are in the repertoires of most Anglican choirs that sing fully choral Evensong and Matins. The *First Preces*, probably composed second, are also in some recent or current repertoires.<sup>3</sup> It does not appear that the *Second Preces*, thought to be the earliest set of the three, are in any current repertoires.

It was not always so. Byrd composed his *Second Preces* while at Lincoln<sup>4</sup> during his appointment as cathedral organist (1563-72). Surviving sources point to the set being subsequently in the repertoires of the Chapel Royal, to which he was appointed after Lincoln, and either Westminster Abbey or Lambeth Palace.<sup>5</sup> The set was also included by Barnard in his collection of church music,<sup>6</sup> and this suggests a wider dissemination. It is therefore not surprising that, in 1661, Edward Lowe selected the *Second Preces* for *A short direction for the performance of cathedrall service. Published for the information of such persons, as are ignorant of it, and shall be call'd to officiate in cathedrall, or collegiate churches, where it hath formerly been in use.* By E. L. (Oxford: Printed by William Hall for Richard Davis). They were originally in five parts, but Lowe adapted them for four (pages 33-37), under the title *Extraordinary Responsalls upon Festivalls to Foure Parts*, to assist inexperienced clergy and choirs in the conduct of choral Mattins and Evensong during the early years of the Restoration, in the immediate aftermath of the Commonwealth.<sup>7</sup> In *The Byrd edition*, Craig Monson does not refer to their presence in *A short direction* because of their post-Restoration provenance. However, in her

<sup>1</sup> William Byrd, *The English Services*, ed. Craig Monson. London: Stainer & Bell, 1980. (The Byrd edition, 10a.)

<sup>2</sup> Michael Greenhalgh. A Byrd discography in *Byrd studies*, ed. Alan Brown and Richard Turbet. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, p.202-64, esp. p.226-28

<sup>3</sup> King's College, Cambridge, and Westminster Abbey heard by the author

<sup>4</sup> Craig Monson, *The Preces, Psalms and Litanies of Byrd and Tallis: another 'virtuous contention in love' in Music review 40 (1979) p.257-71*

<sup>5</sup> Byrd, *op. cit.*, p.168

<sup>6</sup> John Barnard, *The first book, of selected church musick* (London: Griffin, 1641)

<sup>7</sup> Ian Spink, *Restoration cathedral music, 1660-1714*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1995. (Oxford studies in British church music)

history of Anglican chant, Ruth Wilson<sup>8</sup> provides an illustrated description of how Lowe incorporated and arranged Byrd's *Second Preces* (*sic*: not "Second Preces and Responses" as given by Dr. Wilson on page 49) along with the famous and indestructable *Litany* and *Responses* by Tallis, within Divine Service.<sup>9</sup>

It is surprising that such an esoteric volume should have been reproduced in facsimile during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The original title page is reproduced, including five small additions. One is a small circular Bodleian Library stamp, discussed below. Three are handwritten: "W.ii8", "Jan.1.1660.", and underlining of the author's initials. The other is an imprint in faint minute capitals under the bottom left end of the plain border enclosing the original text. The imprint reads "J. GUGGENHEIM, PHOTO LITHO, OXFORD." The British Library catalogue<sup>10</sup> gives the date of publication as "[1890?]". So, who was J. Guggenheim, and why (furthermore, specifically when) did he publish a facsimile of Lowe's volume?

Photolithography as it relates to music is well covered by H. Edmund Poole in a recent handbook.<sup>11</sup> Guggenheim himself proved elusive via music, publishing, printing, photography and commercial records. Eventually he came to light on the website [www.oxfordhigh.co.uk](http://www.oxfordhigh.co.uk).<sup>12</sup> He occupied 56, High Street, Oxford, between 1866 and 1883, trading as a "photographer and dealer in old china, prints, &c." According to an accompanying note, "The 1881 census reveals that the photographer J. W. Guggenheim (born in Germany) was living over the shop".

In fact, Jules Nicholas François Guggenheim was born in Pest in Hungary. His British certificate of naturalisation was issued to him on 2 October 1866, when he was 45, having been resident in England for 17 years. This suggests he was born in 1821 or late 1820. The family continued to live in Oxford after 1883, when perhaps Jules retired, at 34 Stanley Road. His death, apparently intestate, occurred on 9 December 1889 in the Radcliffe Infirmary, at the age of 69. This suggests he was born in 1820 or late 1819. Taken with the information supplied on his certificate of naturalization, this points to his having been born in 1820, after 19 September at the earliest, this being the date on the presentation of his memorial to the Home Secretary seeking naturalisation, in the course of which he states his age.

Besides identifying Guggenheim, and confirming his profession as photographer and his interest in old prints, this information disposes of a year as late as 1890 being the date of publication. According to a file of

applications for facsimile reproductions in the Bodleian Library Records, Guggenheim sought permission, on his own account, on 29 August 1882, and this was granted. The Library did not receive a copy at the time. Its copy (Mus. 57 e. 79) belonged to Falconer Madan, who was a Sub-Librarian there at that date. It was donated in 1921, and bears the pencilled date "[1882]" in Madan's hand.

The original copy of the text from which Guggenheim made his copy had been in the possession of the 17<sup>th</sup> century antiquary Anthony Wood, and has the Bodleian shelfmark Wood 118, which explains one of the handwritten additions to the title page mentioned above. Like many musical facsimiles, it is not a reliable reproduction. For instance, on page eight, the heading at the top right which should read "in 4.parts" loses its final letter even though it does not overlap into the adjacent inner margin in the original.

Guggenheim seems, for some reason, to have gone to some trouble to substitute one of the Library's stamps for another. He removed, from the title page, the original stamp in use at that time for books, and replaced it with a small one then used for manuscripts. Presumably he first reproduced a copy with the larger original stamp, then erased that stamp, replaced it with the smaller stamp, and re-copied the relevant page for publication. Perhaps Guggenheim wished, or was required, to confirm the facsimile's credentials for the purpose of publication, but did not want his title pages dominated by the larger stamp.

Between November 1881 and October 1882 Guggenheim successfully applied to reproduce five other items, none of them musical. Of the five, he published two: MS Bodley 13, John Bereblock's views of the college and public buildings of the University, which was entitled *Collegiorum scholarumque publicarum Academiae Oxoniensis topographica delineatio* (Oxonii: Jul. Guggenheim, 1882), and *The Bloody Court; or the Fatall Tribunall* (Oxford: J. N. Guggenheim, 1882), a photolithographic facsimile of the 1649 edition. The smaller stamp, mentioned above, also appears in the absence of the larger one on the former of these two facsimiles. The other three seem not to have been published by him. The unique first quarto of Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* is held by the Bodleian, as is Josias Howe's sermon *Thou hast put gladness in my heart*. Finally, there is more than one early copy of Francesco Colonna's *Hypnerotomachia* in the Bodleian, and it may be that Guggenheim learnt that W. Griggs was also preparing a photolithographic reproduction of the 1499 edition, though this was not published until 1888.

While it is gratifying to be able to add to the list of music publishers, no great claims can be made for Guggenheim's significance, other than that he was an early publisher of a musical facsimile, and that he selected a surprising original. It would be interesting to know the size of his print-run and how much he charged for his Lowe facsimile. He can be credited with preserving an aspect of Restoration performance practice, which is what may have been of interest in contemporary Anglican circles in Oxford. His facsimile is certainly of significance, not only in the long and durable performing history of Tallis's famous *Litany* and *Responses*, but even more so in the case of Byrd's now neglected and obscure *Second Preces*.

<sup>8</sup> Ruth M. Wilson, *Anglican chant and chanting in England, Scotland, and America 1660 to 1820*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1996. (Oxford studies in British church music)

<sup>9</sup> Thomas Tallis, *English sacred music: II Service music*, ed. Leonard Ellinwood, rev. Paul Doe. London: Stainer and Bell, 1971 rev. 1974. (Early English church music, 13.) Lowe selected and simplified the *First Responses* of Tallis, except for the Lesser Litany (between the Salutation and the Lord's Prayer) where he uses the relevant excerpt from Tallis's *Second Responses*, a quirk overlooked by Ruth Wilson

<sup>10</sup> Accessed via [www.copac.ac.uk](http://www.copac.ac.uk)

<sup>11</sup> *Music printing and publishing*, ed. D. W. Krummel and Stanley Sadie. Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Music Division, 1990 (The new Grove handbooks in music) p.55-65, esp. p.61

<sup>12</sup> [www.oxfordbusiness.info/high/tour/north/056.htm](http://www.oxfordbusiness.info/high/tour/north/056.htm)

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I am very grateful to Peter Ward Jones, Music Librarian at the Bodleian Library, for his substantial and detailed contribution to this article. I am also grateful to Martin Maw, archivist at Oxford University Press, for an early breakthrough. I am glad to acknowledge the assistance of the National Archives, the General Register Office and John Harley.

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### REVIEWS

*Edited by Marian Hogg*

Turbet, Richard (ed.). *Music Librarianship in the United Kingdom: fifty years of the United Kingdom Branch of the International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003. xix, 252 pp. ISBN 0 7546 05272 8 £45.

It is indeed a special occasion when a national branch of IAML celebrates its golden anniversary. Accustomed as I am to hearing annual accounts of the manifold activities of IAML (UK & Irl), it was therefore not a huge surprise to see that such an occasion had been commemorated by a Festschrift.

The volume consists of articles on the history of the Branch itself, its library, its journal *Brio*, training for music librarianship, music information skills, a history of the provision of music in public libraries, information-technology, cooperation, outreach, some of the Branch's more important projects, music thesauri, provision of performance materials, two historical bibliographic essays on George Thomson and his collection of national airs, and on the first edition of Byrd's *Gradualia*, and a thoughtful conclusion, surmising a vision of the future. There are, of course, various issues which are not covered, but as no Festschrift, however inclusive, could ever encompass everything, one has to select the brightest stars from the galaxy. Quality always outshines quantity.

There is a huge wealth of information to be found in this volume; you dive in at the start and emerge at the finish with your knowledge of music librarianship in the UK greatly enhanced.

It is a wonderful bibliographic ambassador for music librarianship in general, and for the United Kingdom in particular, illustrating as it does what is involved in the profession by highlighting and documenting certain salient aspects of it, such as the education of both librarians and patrons, the power of working together, and the value and need of and for outreach. It illustrates the vagaries of indexing for music, provides meticulous documentation of the slow march of the provision of music materials in public libraries, historical aspects of the branch, provision of certain types of material, and the development of information technology. The two bibliographic essays serve as an example of the *raison d'être* of music librarians and librarians. Because they obtain, hold, and preserve such sources, scholars are subsequently able to do research, and to produce scholarly endeavours, thus disseminating the knowledge acquired.

The standard of writing is uniformly high, the topics clearly well researched and footnoted when appropriate; there is a good variety and

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contrast of topics covered, in terms of historical, practical, technical, and so on. This is not only a case of a branch saying "We did good", as the saying goes, which may be interesting, but not necessarily useful, but also a case of saying "How we did good", which may very well prove to be very useful, and provide possible examples to follow.

Overall, one also emerges with a huge amount of admiration and respect for a IAML national branch that has managed to accumulate and sustain such a depth and breadth of knowledge, and degree of dedication to the profession. This branch seems positively to thrive on adversity, and will not take setbacks lying down. Show it a challenge or a problem, and before you can say "Cecilia" they'll have a committee struck, a survey done, a report written, a fund funded, courses set up, and meetings arranged with all the high profile people they can lay hands on who might be involved. It may not end up as a problem solved, but it will be a problem recognised and tackled, which is at least further forward than a problem ignored, or overlooked. What really comes out of this volume is what music libraries are really used for, what music librarians do, what service they provide to the community, and what can be achieved when a group of motivated like-minded individuals decide to take action and work together.

This book should be read by all music librarians, so that they will be sure to know what their profession is about; all librarians, so that they will recognise the importance, significance and complexity of music libraries; by anyone contemplating entering the profession, so that they will be aware of the challenges that will face them, and by anyone having dealings with music libraries and librarians, so that they will be cognisant of their importance, and the determination of their staff. If you are none of the above, read it anyway! It's a Great Read!

Alison Hall

Craggs, Stewart R. *Peter Maxwell Davies: a source book*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002. xiv + 318 pp. ISBN 1 85928 042 0, £49.50

When Colin Bayliss published his chronological catalogue of *The Music of Sir Peter Maxwell Davies* (Beverly, 1991), he numbered each work with the prefix "J", a reference both to Judy Arnold, Davies's manager since 1975, and of course to another composer whose works use a proximate letter. As with Köchel, there were problems with some of the chronological ordering, and numbers were assigned not only to individual compositions but also to folders of miscellaneous sketches, many of which have subsequently been identified. Some renumbering therefore became necessary when a new version of the catalogue was mounted on the composer's impressive website, www.MaxOpus.com. With the publication of Stewart Craggs's catalogue, numerous juvenile compositions have been rediscovered and added, with the result that none of the "J" numbers in the present book corresponds

with any previous version. Those librarians who have diligently added "J" numbers to their catalogue records will therefore presumably have no choice but to amend them. (A concordance list of old and new "J" numbers is available on the MaxOpus website.)

Peter Maxwell Davies has been well served over the years in terms of bibliographical aids. Judy Arnold herself produced a catalogue of his published works in 1981, Carolyn J. Smith published a "bio-bibliography" in the Greenwood Press series in 1995, and most of the monographs devoted to the composer include annotated work-lists. Craggs has done considerably more than merely to conflate and update these sources, but it remains peculiar that another Maxwell Davies catalogue should appear when such composers as Birtwistle, Goehr and even Boulez still await their first such publication.

A problem which never arose in Craggs's previous *source books* for Walton, Ireland, Elgar, Bliss and Lennox Berkeley is that his subject is still tremendously active as a composer. Even while the book was in press, the number of compositions extended beyond the 408 here described, and where an online catalogue can be (and indeed has been) updated as soon as a new work is completed, we are left here with a catalogue which is already out of date. There are other respects in which it is a shame that the publication is not online: the vast majority of entries include a reference to the MaxOpus website, either for the composer's programme note or for an article on the work. From the worklist posted on the website one can link directly to these pages, as well as to pictures of productions, sound-clips, and in the latest innovative update, to the commercial wing of the site, where one may download recordings of the piece for a fee. MaxOpus thus remains a more convenient source of many categories of information.

These provisos aside, the value of this new *Source book* is considerable. A brief chronological survey of important events in the composer's life is followed by the catalogue of works, a ten-page bibliography, classified and alphabetical indexes of works, and a general index. The entries for works are generally thorough, giving such details as full lists of movements, names of performers at premières and references to press reviews and recordings (though only to CDs issued in the UK: it would be useful to know whether recordings of the piano music broadcast on *Children's hour* in the early 1950s survive). Full publication details are given, though slightly unusually Craggs gives the copyright date rather than the publication date: though usually the same, there are several cases where the piece was first published a few years later (and the second *Little quartet*, J210 is ©1989 not 1982). In its comprehensive coverage the catalogue is admirable, and sure to achieve lasting use among scholars, listeners and performers.

The book is well laid out and easy to use; a small improvement would have been the incorporation of the year into the running title of the catalogue section. In other respects, though, Craggs has not been well served by his copy-editor. Several words are consistently misprinted, among them "Thomas Tompkins", "Baseler Sinfonietta" and "Sophia [Bulgaria]"; "De assumptione" is one of many Latin peculiarities; Davies's portrait is by John Bellamy not Bellamy, and *Time and the raven* was inspired by one of his

paintings, not a play; Büchner's *Leonce und Lena* is printed as *Leone*; and the method of capitalising German looks very curious. One feels that a second pair of eyes might have removed some of these errors.

Other problematic aspects, though, are less easily discernible. The date of composition is given in every case, but in some cases it is unclear how a precise date could be arrived at: examples are J124 and J200, where there is apparently no documentation other than the manuscripts themselves, which are undated. When precise dates are written into the manuscripts, Craggs cites them in quotation marks, though the quotation is sometimes taken not from the manuscript itself but from the British Library catalogue. The comment "dated 'December and November 1955'" for J45 thus paraphrases the BL manuscript description, which reads "dated Dec. and Nov. 1955 respectively (ff. 31, 35v)".

Details of manuscript sources are supplied wherever possible, and in most cases these are housed in the British Library. This is a very useful aspect of the catalogue, since the Library's own listing is quite complicated to use: Davies often sketches a new work on the back of some scrap paper which had previously been used for the draft of another score, so that material relating to one composition may be spread across several different volumes. It is a shame that folio references are never given: in many cases the catalogue will lead one as far as a large volume of miscellaneous sketches, but then gives no clue as to where in the volume one might find sketches for the piece under discussion, so it must be used in parallel with the British Library's *Catalogue of additions to the manuscripts*. In some cases, though, Craggs lists only some of the manuscript materials available. Libretti and drafts of programme notes are always excluded, but elsewhere there are other omissions: J85 includes a short score; J88 also has sketches, drafts and a further three full scores; further materials for J91 are in Add. 71439, for J117 in Add. 71442, and sketches and drafts for J247 and J253 in BL MS Mus. 286; J95, J144, J168 have additional full scores; for J114 the BL materials are not facsimiles but original drafts, while for J198 it would be worth mentioning that the ink full score is an incomplete copyist's score. A second ink score of J82 was sold at Sotheby's on 26 May 2000 to a private collector. J228 is in Add. 71415, not 71416. Finally, Add. 71445, ff. 5-6 may be sketches for the *Hoquetus David*, J149.

These points aside, Craggs has done an invaluable service in assimilating such a mass of information relating to this formidably prolific composer. We can only hope that no more early material shows up, calling for another wholesale renumbering of his works, and that this version of the "J" number sequence may become the standard one.

Nicolas Bell

Milsom, David. *Theory and practice in late nineteenth-century violin performance: an examination of style in performance, 1850-1900*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003. 287p. ISBN 0 7546 0756 9, £40.

In this book, David Milsom presents a study which is well-researched and understood, and in doing so fills an important, if surprising, *lacuna* in our understanding of violin performance practice. A sentiment expressed on the dust jacket (and reiterated in the introduction) makes clear the author's belief that "in order to convey late 19<sup>th</sup>-century musical style appropriately, the performer needs to have a grasp of the philosophical orientation of musical thinking at that time. In effect, one must "unlearn" the value systems of the present, in order to assimilate those of the late nineteenth century". Milsom's evidence includes contemporary treatises by the principal protagonists of the period (Bériot, Flesch, Lussy, Spohr, Joachim and Moser) and recordings from the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century of performers active in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> (Joachim, Sarasate, Auer, Rosé). A good selection of extracts from these recordings is on the CD which accompanies the book. Each chapter deals with a different aspect of performance – phrasing, portamento, vibrato, tempo and rhythm – and does so by discussing the written evidence first before turning to the recordings to see the extent to which practice reflected the theory. The volume includes a useful opening chapter on genealogies of violin playing, and also comes equipped with transcriptions of many of the recordings under discussion, a discography and bibliography.

Throughout the book Milsom is always acutely aware of the problematic nature of his evidence. As he says, "one either grapples with the difficulties of primitive recording processes, unrepresentative repertoire, aged and unusual performers, and the general inability to compare performances directly; or one abandons this type of study completely. Stylistic "traits and trends" can be discerned, but the word "proof" would be misleading here." (p.207) Of greater contention, however, is Milsom's decision to include comparisons with vocal and spoken performances. He justifies this by pointing to the continued comparisons which contemporary theorists made to vocal or rhetorical devices in their discussions of violin performance, something which he demonstrates admirably throughout the book. It is in Milsom's sensitive, close analysis and comparison of the sources (written and recorded) and description of these "traits and trends" where the true value of this study lies, however.

The organisation of material according to performance technique (phrasing, portamento, vibrato, tempo and rhythm) is at times problematic, given the extent to which these relate so closely to each other, and it can at times make for difficult reading. Milsom, however, seems to be aware of this, and it is difficult to see how he could have arranged his material in any other way to bypass this problem. For the most part, however, Milsom presents his arguments clearly, although there is sometimes a tendency towards an over-elaborate prose style. Perhaps the most distracting element is the over-abundance of endnotes (presented at the end of each chapter). Every time a

recording is mentioned in the text which is either on the accompanying CD or listed in the book's discography there is an endnote reading "Discography item 18 (CD track 12)", for example. Whether one is reading the text on its own in a first reading, or reading it with the CD to hand, it would have been much more helpful to have this information in abbreviated form in the text in place of the endnotes eg. (CD8) to refer to a CD track or (D12) to refer to an item in the discography. Having to consult an intermediate tool (the endnotes) which then refer the reader to the CD or the discography is cumbersome. Adopting such a technique would have halved the number of endnotes in the book. In any case, it is questionable whether every mention of a recording in the text proper which is listed in the discography but is not on the CD needs an endnote at all. Another distracting feature of the book is the use in the bibliography of the full form of the title of the various editions of *Grove* every time an article is cited, rather than using abbreviations such as *NG I*, *NG II* or *Grove 5* (for example). This seems to be a feature of Ashgate's monographs, however.

It remains to be seen whether Milsom will be successful in convincing present-day violinists to "unlearn" the value systems of the present, in order to assimilate those of the late nineteenth century". There is no doubt, however, that this book deals in considerable detail with an important subject and that it fills a gap in the literature. It will be of interest to university and conservatoire libraries especially, and is essential to those offering modules in performance practice.

James Clements

*Russians on Russian music, 1880-1917: an anthology*, edited and translated by Stuart Campbell, Cambridge University Press, 2003. ISBN: 0 521 59097 3 (hardback). Price: £45 (US \$65)

Russian music is a specialist area which suffers from a paucity of empirical source research and publications in the English language, mostly as a result of limited access to sources for most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Even though there has been a flourish of publications on Russian music since the dismantling of the Soviet Union, few are books of source reading. Stuart Campbell's anthology, of which this is the second volume, is therefore immensely welcome. Dealing with a wide range of issues, the thoughtfully selected articles reveal the views of contemporary Russian critics and chroniclers on concert life, publications, censorship, patronage, musical societies and groups, as well as providing a fascinating glimpse on the Russian perception of western composers and western music as a whole. Furthermore, most of the articles provide a detailed analysis of important musical works.

In the first volume of his anthology (1830-1880), Campbell covered the period of Russian nationalism, starting with Glinka and the group of enthusiastic composers who called themselves "the young Russian school (p.168)",

and who are known today as *The five* or *The mighty handful*. And indeed it is the fire of youth which came out compellingly in the first volume: the composers discussed there were young, and so were most of the critics selected by Campbell, with the exception of Prince Odoyevsky and Vladimir Stasov. Fiery and opinionated arguments reflected a society in the making, going through radical political, social and cultural changes. The composers had an acute sense of history and responsibility and so did the critics whose art was fairly young. This second volume is no less exciting even though the art of musical criticism has now matured and some of the composers not so young any more. Organised chronologically, it covers the late works of Tchaikovsky and other composers of the young Russian school, the "Belyayev generation" (Arensky, Glazunov and Lyadov), Moscow-based composers (Taneyev, Rachmaninov and Medtner), concluding with the exciting new directions opened up by Skryabin, Stravinsky and the young Prokofiev.

An anthology is as good as the choice made by its editor and here I can only pay tribute to Stuart Campbell who applied thoughtful and inquisitive thinking in his selection, even though his great expertise on Laroche, (a student friend of Tchaikovsky at the newly opened St Petersburg Conservatoire, who became the most ardent advocate of this composer) made him include perhaps too many lengthy reviews by this critic. But then, Laroche stands out among his contemporaries for his wide culture and sophisticated style. Laroche's reviews are mostly a discussion of broad issues on music and musical form, within which he then discusses a specific work. See for example his review of Tchaikovsky's opera *Mazeppa*, preceded by a most informed discussion of musical drama as a whole. In contrast, most other critics on Tchaikovsky in this anthology are merely, and often disappointingly, descriptive. One wonders if this reflects the tendency of musical criticism at the time, or if Campbell's choice was too influenced by his familiarity with, and respect for, Laroche.

Most interesting are the views on composers who have been little acknowledged in Western literature. How were they perceived in their times and should we refine our view of them? Karatigin for example places Lyadov within a group of composers whose responsibility was to "bring order to the areas devastated by the musical battles" which had taken place during the *Kuchkist* [The five] era. And although he sees Lyadov as an artist to whom "the gloomy is just as alien as the profound", he acknowledges him as an extremely original artist of "superficial depth", similar to the "Impressionists in France" (p.164-66). Yuly Engel writing in 1907, who bemoans the "few substantial articles about Glazunov [then 42 years old] in our music criticism" (p.143), provides a thorough and balanced account of the composer's symphonies and orchestral works.

What strikes the reader is the eminence of the critics, in particular Laroche, Karatigin, Engel and Glebov (Asafyev), all composers themselves. Interested in the works, rather than in their performance, they made a point to study the scores thoroughly ahead of their reviews, as expressed by Engel in 1917. "Before you can say anything more definite about such distinctive music as Prokofiev's, you need not just to listen to it but to study it for



yourself. For the majority of the works performed, I have not managed to do this (not through any fault of mine!), which of course cannot help but be reflected in the lines which follow." (p.221). While some critics are clearly opinionated, others demonstrate extraordinary discernment, such as Engel's review of Prokofiev's music in 1917 (see above), in which he captures all the characteristics of the young composer's conflicting language. Prokofiev's harmonic "aural assaults" are contained within "the most simple time signatures [...] whatever rhythm he ignites using them!" Engel remarkably captures the nature of this "mustang left to forage for himself" whose "sparkling art lies not in lyricism or moods of contemplation, but in impulse and making an impact."

Campbell's translation is masterful and retains much of the colourful, if at times pompous, Russian approach to critical writing. On a purely editorial angle, the second volume is better organised than the first. The page of contents, for example, lists each critic and the work or topic discussed whereas its equivalent in the first volume provided only titles of chapters. This greatly facilitates the reader's selection. This is a book recommended to all who are interested in the extremely lively cultural world of fin-de-siècle Russia, and a wonderful resource to teachers and students alike.

Noëlle Mann

Broadbent, Marguerite & Terry, *Leginska: forgotten genius of music*, North West Player Piano Association, 2003. ISBN 0952510146, £15.99.

This book is the fruit of more than twenty years' research by husband and wife team Terry and Marguerite Broadbent, members of the North West Player Piano Association. Terry Broadbent describes the pianist Ethel Leginska as "a remarkable, charismatic pioneer of her time". Initially sceptical about the validity of such a claim, after reading it, I found myself wondering how a woman who had achieved so much during her lifetime could have been so completely forgotten less than a century later.

Born in Hull in 1886, Ethel Liggins was a child prodigy giving her first concert at the age of 6 and making her debut in the Queen's Hall when still only 10. Aged 13, she studied at the Frankfurt Conservatoire, later studying with the virtuoso pianist Theodor Leschetizky in Vienna. Adopting the Russian-sounding name Leginska in the belief that this would further her career, Liggins based herself in the United States and, seemingly taking the public and critics by storm in an indefatigable round of concert tours and appearances, established herself as the foremost woman pianist from the 1900's through to the 1930s (she was dubbed the "Paderewski" of women pianists). In the 1920s, Leginska, as she became known, branched out into both composition and conducting, appearing as both soloist and conductor with orchestra. Both solo and orchestral programmes included many of her

compositions and all three of her operas were performed in her lifetime. Her later career was devoted almost exclusively to teaching.

If the name Ethel Liggins conjures up images of a doughty amateur pianist in turn of the century Britain, this book succeeds in dispelling any such notion. The book leaves us in no doubt as to the formidability of Leginska's pianistic skills (she performed concert programmes which would make most present day pianists wilt) and the inclusion of reviews, concert programmes and interviews bear ample testimony to her powers as a concert artist.

The book also paints a portrait of Leginska as trailblazer and early feminist in an era where professional women musicians were few and far between. Clearly unfazed by the negative reaction of male orchestral players, as a conductor she made guest appearances with international orchestras, frequently appearing as conductor and pianist-conductor in the same programme, and she later appeared in leading opera houses. Using her own funds, she established a number of orchestras in Boston, including her own women's orchestra, and promoted several concert series in which her orchestras performed. Again, reviews, concert programmes and letters bear testimony to the success of these ventures.

A chapter is devoted to Leginska's career as a recording artist, in which the various recording processes available in the 1920s are described in considerable detail. Leginska's activities as a composer are also described.

The later chapters deal with Leginska's career as a teacher in Los Angeles, from 1939 until her death in 1970. Ever the perfectionist, she took on only those students destined to become true performers (she insisted on 4-6 hours practice a day and complained to a 7 year old student that it was already "too late") and her teaching followed the Leschetizky method, with several hours a day dedicated to technical study. Continuing to notch up "firsts" as she had done throughout her career, she promoted concerts of her students, often featuring the entire output of one particular composer as performed by her students (in one such concert, as many as thirty-seven of her students performed works by Bach and Beethoven).

Written in more or less chronological order, the book divides into a number of sections, with different chapters relating to Leginska's diverse activities: her early musical studies, her success and fame as a concert artist, her recording career, her subsequent career as conductor and (to a lesser extent) composer and, finally, her career as a teacher. Though clearly partisan towards their "discovery", the authors nevertheless allow Leginska's talents and achievements to speak for themselves through the wealth of painstaking research and by the generous, if sometimes overlong, inclusion of concert programmes, reviews and testimonies from former students. Leginska's private life is also charted in considerable detail, giving context to her musical achievements as well as providing background to the times in which she lived. Above all, a vivid human portrait emerges, in particular from the testimonies of former students, of a small, intense woman endowed with huge personal magnetism (she was described by one of her former students as being "like a tidal wave") and seemingly inexhaustible energy; a

dominating, and at times domineering, woman (her students, whose lives she strove to control, were described as having a "love-hate" relationship with her) who was nevertheless generous to a fault with students she considered especially gifted and over whom it seems she exerted a lifelong influence. By the end of the book, the claims of the title did not seem in the least extravagant.

The book is attractively presented with the inclusion of many photographs, letters, ample footnotes and addenda. It will undoubtedly appeal to professional pianists, students and amateur enthusiasts alike and, given the wealth of research undertaken, it is priced fairly. In my view, the inclusion of a compilation CD of Leginska's recordings would have made this book an even more complete presentation.

Nicola Meecham

Dutilleux, Henri. *Music: mystery and memory: conversations with Claude Glayman*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003. 166 p. ISBN 0-7546-0899-9. £39.95

In its translated form, this book, which was originally published in French in 1997 under the title *Mystère et mémoire des sons*, is an important addition to the small corpus of English-language material on Henri Dutilleux (b.1916). Roger Nichols had already considerably helped Dutilleux's cause in England even before making this translation, having written about the composer in a couple of *Musical Times* articles and been involved with two radio series, "Dutilleux at 75" (transmitted on BBC Radio 3 in 1991/92) and a "Composer of the Week" slot, also on Radio 3, broadcast early in 2001 in celebration of its subject's eighty-fifth birthday. The new book comprises edited transcripts of interviews given by Dutilleux to Claude Glayman in 1992 and 1996. The 1992 conversations, by far the longer, take a largely chronological approach to their discussion of Dutilleux's life and works, while those from 1996 devote themselves rather to issues around Dutilleux's compositional style, ending, appropriately in view of the book's title, with a section entitled *On mystery*. Dutilleux himself is regarded as something of a mystery due to his reputation for being tight-lipped about the creative act, and it is unlikely that he is ever going to be more open about his methods and compositional beliefs than he is here. Thus p.103: "For myself, in all humility I will say that one of the principal aims in writing music is to search for a certain coherence, an equilibrium that does not deny fantasy, a kind of pleasure which could also be that of game-playing, of a taste for risks, which is also very important". We learn, too, of the importance of resonance in his music: as a child he recalls having listened to church bells, and unlike most children, who would probably attempt to reproduce the scales and peals in single notes on a keyboard, he sought rather to reproduce the timbre and all the harmonics of what he was hearing, marking out a very individual ear. Unsurprising, then, that on p.72 he declares that resonance is "a constant that can be heard in most of my music". Even so, on more than one occasion Glayman seems to get too close for his subject's liking, and succeeds only in

obtaining shallow, almost "flip" responses, as when he asks Dutilleux about the success of the *Trois strophes* for cello (p. 82): [Glayman]: "How do you explain the enthusiasm of the younger generation for this work?" [Dutilleux]: "The cello repertoire has not been very large until now. They're on the lookout for something new, that's all".

There is much new, valuable material here that sheds light on Dutilleux's views on life and art. Thus his opinion of Shostakovich from the 1950s: "Quite frankly, at that time I thought his music was perfectly monstrous". Or on Prokofiev: "He was [a] very imaginative, highly original composer". Boulez, not Dutilleux's favourite musician, appears only fleetingly, the Catholic Messiaen much more. There are several references to religion, but these have to be sought out by combing through the text, as the book's index is of names only. In the 1996 interview Dutilleux speaks admiringly of the voices of Janet Baker and the blues singer Sarah Vaughan, and of his fondness for the chanson. A certain modesty comes through whenever Glayman probes him — which he does, frequently — about his reputation in France and abroad, which culminates in Dutilleux telling an amusing story about being mistaken for a well-known film star, regrettably unnamed.

The translated narrative holds together well, and is engaging throughout. While the index has its shortcomings, the provision of a chronological worklist, a discography and a bibliography all add value to the book, which should be in academic music libraries and in the larger public library collections as an accompaniment to Caroline Potter's *Henri Dutilleux: his life and works*, published by Ashgate in 1997. As a final observation I shall note only that, since the new book lists in its bibliography several other interviews given by Dutilleux, it would have been good for these to have been included with Glayman's interviews in this book, if copyright problems could have been overcome.

John Wagstaff

Cooper, Victoria L. *The house of Novello: practice and policy of a Victorian music publisher, 1829-1866*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003. ix, 210 pp. ISBN 0-7546-0088-2. £45.00.

For a music publisher working in the early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, an economy such as that of Novello's in the 19<sup>th</sup>, driven solely by sales of sheet music, is almost unthinkable. The raft of exclusive rights now granted under copyright law coupled with our current technologies, enables music publishers to tap income streams undreamed of by their counterparts of two, even one, hundred years ago. Exploitation of music today in film, advertising, broadcasting, Internet, sound recording, and mobile technology has generally demoted the music folio as the prime income source for music publishers, and in some industry sectors has long replaced it altogether. Even the folio itself has had to be reborn as "print on demand" or "download only" in situations where otherwise to warehouse bulk copies would be commercially untenable. Two hundred years ago the case was very different, and the

trading of printed music to the mass market was the main and often only concern of all music publishers.

The history of music publishing is indeed the history of technology harnessed in the service of intellectual property management. Victoria Cooper's account of the best-known British Victorian publisher, Novello & Co., drops in to that story at the crucial point where recognition of "intellectual property" as a concept had become something more than embryonic, and when significant technology meant newly mechanised printing presses, and a burgeoning railway system which enabled the music scores pouring from those presses to be purchased (with the new "disposable income") by the baritone farmer in Devon or the piano-playing mill-hand in Lancashire just days after the ink was wet in London. Comparisons with a similar expansion in the contemporaneous newspaper and book trades are, of course, inescapable, and it is hardly surprising that a significant theme in the Novello success story is the establishment of a "house journal", the *Musical Times*, which became almost as important a component in the company's fabric as the music itself.

On the day that I received my review copy of *The house of Novello*, I also caught up with a couple of current issues of *The Bookseller*. In one was an article warning of ominous developments in "Brussels" over VAT and printed product; in the other, a piece on pirated editions of *Harry Potter* in China and India. Little connection, perhaps, with the "practice and policy of a Victorian music publisher", but as I dipped into Cooper's fascinating and detailed study I began to realise that almost all the publishing issues facing Vincent and Alfred Novello are intrinsically no different from those exercising the modern day music publisher (or, by extension, any concern dealing with the legal exploitation of intellectual property). As I turned the pages of the Novello story, it all seemed so familiar: the rights and wrongs of editorial policy; appropriate origination and printing techniques for each type of publication; the factors determining format and print run; copyright protection and piracy; taxes and duties on printed material (for Novello, the "Tax on Knowledge"); relationships (good and bad) between publishers and "their" composers; and, most importantly, the position of a brand or firm in the market-place. Even the slightly smug feeling of those in the industry today that electronic media and methods, particularly in music origination and warehouse controls, enable us to deliver something of a superior operation all round is only an echo of similar sentiments doubtless experienced by Alfred Novello as he leafed through his detailed Stockbooks (to which Cooper devotes a whole chapter) or when, in mid-century, he took a moment to stand and admire his range of state-of-the-art printing presses: a Crown Broadside Imperial, a Folio Albion, a Platen Gallery Proving Press, and a Columbian Press.

"Music publishing, by its very nature, involves a relationship with the social, economic, and artistic fabric of musical life." Thus Cooper opens, steering straight for the heart of the matter: the rise of the Oxford Movement and its commitment to the ideal of cathedral worship and ceremony, even at village level, coupled with the symbiosis of increased disposable

income/leisure time and the growth of choral festivals and societies in Victorian Britain. These, together with the position of the pianoforte as the *de rigeur* Victorian domestic musical instrument (and from this, the piano/solo voice combination), were factors directly opening the market in Britain (and its Empire) for mass consumption of church music and anthems, oratorios, piano music, and solo songs. "It is not surprising, then, that through his observation of the social and economic climate of his day, Alfred Novello would lead the firm from its beginning as a family enterprise to become one of the leading English music publishers at mid-century. While Novello's glees, songs, and Mozart edition (to name but a sample) answered the demand for domestic performance in the growing amount of leisure time, the arrangements of oratorios offered a large and financially accessible repertoire to the choral movement."

"The firm" (and Cooper uses both *Novello* and *Novello's* as the name – making for interesting use of the possessive apostrophe; I opt for *Novello* throughout this review) was founded as a personal endeavour by Vincent Novello in 1811, but Cooper's book takes up the story in 1829/30, when Vincent's son (Joseph) Alfred assumed directorship. Alfred handed over to Henry Littleton in 1856 (the year before Elgar's birth – Littleton's son Alfred Henry was much later to become an important figure in the relationship between Novello and Elgar<sup>1</sup>. Alfred Novello sold out to Littleton entirely in 1866, and it is at this point that Cooper's study ends. We have, thus, a microcosmic view of just 37 years from the firm's total history (including its current status as part of Music Sales) of almost 200 – yet this was the crucial period in which Novello's whole character, list, and even distinctive visual style, were determined. It is probably true to say that, even 100 years after Alfred sold out to Littleton, Novello remained unassailable as the leading producer of accessible and affordable choral music editions for the mass market in Britain, if not the world.

House editorial matters, at both "macro" and "micro" levels, remain an issue that concerns all but the sloppiest publisher involved in issuing printed music; they were certainly thoroughly dealt with in the house of Novello. The "macro" may involve (in Cooper's phrase) "the 'philosophy' behind the editing of music, the acceptance, use, and methodology of editions", while micro-detail may concern policy on slurs, syllabification of textual underlay, the placing of phrase markings, and other matters of articulation. Cooper provides examples of and insight into both macro and micro.

In some cases, the broader policies led to a raft of trend-setting decisions on smaller matters. For example, Vincent's decision to produce orchestral material for the *Collected masses of Joseph Haydn* in 1828 resulted in: cueing of the string parts with prominent wind passages, "inserted in a smaller character, wherever the rests formerly occurred...in case those Instruments should be deficient" (in other words, producing practical instrumental reductions

<sup>1</sup> Alfred Henry Littleton eventually became Chairman of Novello and was a staunch and businesslike supporter of Elgar. He died in 1914. In his last years he was ably supported by his younger brother Augustus James Littleton and his own son Alfred Joseph Brooke Littleton. Elgar's correspondence with Alfred Henry Littleton sheds light on later developments in the publishing issues covered by Cooper. See Northrop Moore, *J. Elgar and his publishers: letters of a creative life*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987.

for occasions where only a modest band was available); specially cued keyboard reductions, performing the same service for groups finding themselves in even more straitened circumstances; a customised Leader's part, "so that he may be aware of what performers are wanted, and whether they are ready at their desks"; and specially designed parts in which "the greatest care has been taken to contrive convenient *turnings*, so that in no case will the Performers have to turn over, except at the occurrence of a Pause, or when there are several Bars rest (for their own Instrument) or at the conclusion of a Movement" (this particular innovation is now an absolute given in orchestral parts). As Cooper observes, the creation of well-designed editions, suitable for musicians and their requirements, was to become a hallmark of Novello publications. In the case of the Haydn masses, it was doubtless with considerable relish that Vincent was able to grace his edition with the imprimatur of "His Serene Highness The Prince Esterhazy", and anticipate "the gratification of being able to add to this Edition several other M.S. Masses written by HAYDN while Maestro di Capella to the ESTERHAZY Family – and which have never before been published."

The practical considerations that shaped the format of the Haydn orchestral parts also informed the Novello choral editions themselves. Cooper compares Novello's vocal score (from their parallel Mozart masses edition) of one of the Victorian repertoire's most popular sacred works, Mozart's *Twelfth mass* (not by Mozart – Köchel believed it to be written by the Mainz music teacher Carl Zulehner) with the score issued by a rival, Robert Cocks & Co. Novello published their edition in 1820, it remaining in print for decades; Cocks followed with a suite of Library, People's, Student, and Festival editions in 1852-5, based on their Centenary Edition of 1841. While the Cocks edition offered the original Latin text, together with an English singing "paraphrase" in the guise of a prayer, Novello gave Latin with a direct English translation. Cocks rejected organ in favour of piano as the most suitable accompanying instrument, while Novello (with a wily eye to the commercial) was prepared for either organ or piano – with appropriate organ stops noted at strategic points. While the original "Mozartean" florid orchestral line is faithfully reduced in Cocks, in Novello it is dispensed with, and replaced by melodic outline and simplified rhythmic and harmonic support – playable by parish organists or accompanists of even below-average standard. Although Cooper does not state that Novello may have gone a step too far in this "simplification policy", she does concede that "some amateur musicians may have found the Cocks edition more challenging and perhaps more musically interesting and the Novello version . . . somewhat limited."

Cooper's examination of the Novello Stockbooks<sup>2</sup> provides a snapshot (and a host of valuable statistics) of the staggeringly impressive core output of the firm, at the height of mid-century choral fervour. These commercial records detail quantities and dates of printings, and quantities of copies disposed of (sold or moved to a warehouse). Cooper's discussion also highlights

<sup>2</sup> A partial transcription of the Stockbook for 1858-1869 is given as Appendix 4

other fundamentals: for example, that Novello's typically Victorian attempt to embrace the ethos of self-education through the establishment of its *Library for the Diffusion of Musical Knowledge* (announced in 1852) was commercially less robust than the choral editions, simply because printed choral music depends and thrives on bulk sales, whereas the monograph does not. A leading title in the series was an English translation of Berlioz's orchestration treatise.

Cooper subjects the statistics on Novello's output of vocal scores of classic choral repertoire to close socio-economic scrutiny. In 1859, the year of the Crystal Palace Handel Centennial Festival (for which Novello was appointed official publisher), Novello printed 17,000 octavo vocal scores of *Messiah* alone (plus another 7,500 copies in a pocket edition). *Samson* scored 3,000, and *Saul and Solomon* 1000 each (in that same year, the "Mozart" *Twelfth mass* had total printings of 7,000 copies). Even in non-festival years the figures are impressive: 4,000 *Twelfth masses* in 1863, 6,000 octavo *Messiahs* in 1860, and another 6,000 the following year (plus an additional 5,000 *Messiahs* in other formats in those same years); 11,500 *Creations* were printed between November 1858 and August 1860. The church and cathedral market was catered for in equally abundant manner. *Dr Monk's Anglican Chants* was printed in 1000 copies in October 1860, and these were exhausted by March 1862. An August 1862 reprint of the same quantity was exhausted by November 1863. Three thousand copies of *Westminster Chants* printed between August 1860 and April 1863 were completely depleted by October 1863. The appetite for Novello's output was insatiable. Cooper investigates the reasons for peaks and troughs in demand and output, how Novello's print runs were determined by social factors impacting, and how their origination and printing technology coped with such heavy demand.

As often in Victorian enterprise, detail was a personal accountability at the highest level: Alfred Novello personally designed two fonts (Pearl Nonpareil and Gem Gregorian), and opened Novello's own printing (as opposed to publishing) house. It was he who often made the decision whether to print from engraved plates or the more robust "Moveable Music Types" which were to become so associated with the "look" of his firm's products<sup>3</sup>. It was Alfred, claims Cooper, that recognised the two vital elements of publishing: context and timing. The composition itself, its published format, and the size of the print run balanced against a prediction of the market, not only in a given year but in a given month in a year were all

<sup>3</sup> Moveable music type (*Notentypendruck*) was developed in Leipzig by Breitkopf & Härtel and Bureau de Musique (later C F Peters); see Lawford-Hinrichsen, I. *Music publishing and patronage – C F Peters: 1800 to the Holocaust*, London: Edition Press, 2000, p. xxii. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the founding editor of the Oxford University Press Music Department, Hubert Foss, was generally to condemn moveable type for music, calling it "palpably makeshift". In an unpublished paper (c.1935, OUP Archive), Foss expounds upon the beauties of "special" fonts available in moveable type, such as the Walpergen face revived for the *Yattendon Hymnal* at the University Printing House, Oxford in 1899, and a similar type used by OUP for the Tudor Church Music volumes (1923-29), published on behalf of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust. But the workaday faces used by Novello and Curwen (both requiring 16 pieces of type for 3 joined quavers), Foss condemns as "not worth the labour".

co-dependent factors. "Such decisions, then, affected both publisher and composition, and yoked them, merchant and article, together financially."

The chapter *Issues of a Victorian Music Publisher* explores the commercial, artistic, and legal context of the Novello operation. Tax and printing duties were one issue. Another was Alfred's incipient ideas on "performance promotion", which provide interesting contrast with the efficient and well-oiled machinery of modern publishers' promotion departments. He urged Mendelssohn to supply a copy of *St. Paul* in order that Novello could publish the English edition in time for a planned performance at the Gloucester Festival in 1838. Sigismund Neukomm's works entered the list in the 1830s and 1840s, and promotion of performances of his music became part of the strategy to sell copies. It is probably, however, in the area of copyright and piracy that any retrospective comparisons become the most illuminating. Cooper immediately identifies that "abuses of ambiguous copyright law" lay at the heart of many of Novello's problems in this area. Victorian copyright laws and the requirements stemming from them were embryonic, and provided only the haziest recognition, for example, of what we now call the Performing Right (upon which modern publishers depend); collecting societies for performing fees did not exist. Thus, the performance promotion mentioned above was solely for the benefit of realising sales potential, and not for the stimulation of performance income. And, therefore, all the legal actions entered into by Novello over copyright were simply to protect their musical properties against physical reproduction by others in the printed medium. Cooper gives account of the measures taken by Novello to make their editions typographically unique, anticipating by many years the legal recognition of a "graphic copyright" running in parallel with the copyright embedded in the musical and textual matter itself. These measures included special typeface design, "words" in proportionate size to "music", and easy-to-handle formats. File-swapping in 1850 meant copying out published editions by hand: by fine-tuning their editions, Novello hoped to produce music that simply made this practice unattractive and uneconomic for the perpetrator.

*The house of Novello* is a model study of its kind, in that through a thorough examination and interpretation of detail, a clear picture of the position of music publishing in the wider contexts of social, cultural, and economic history emerges, showing how a successful publisher will remain finely attuned and responsive to these contexts, ultimately paying back into society by shaping and influencing tastes. "Like any other business", concludes Cooper, "[Novello] survived by producing an attractive product and selling it successfully." Cooper's book demonstrates exactly how Novello's "attractive product" gained added value from its educational and artistic content and how, through careful editorial policies, up-to-date printing techniques, judicious pricing, and focussed promotion, the house became Victorian Britain's pre-eminent publisher of serious music. It was a pre-eminence which was to remain well beyond the end-date of Victoria Cooper's book.

Simon Wright

## **Brio Editor – Vacancy**

The position of *Brio* Editor is due to become vacant in April 2005 and expressions of interest are sought from potential replacements.

*Brio* is the journal of IAML (UK & Irl) and has a wide international as well as national readership and its editor, as an officer of the branch, is a member of its Executive Committee. The Editorship involves the commissioning and editing of articles for publication, contributing material where necessary, overseeing the printing of each issue, and liaising with the printers as well as the Reviews Editor and Advertising Editor. The post is normally held for five years.

Enquiries can be sent to the current Editor at [geoff.thomason@rncm.ac.uk](mailto:geoff.thomason@rncm.ac.uk), Tel. 0161 907 5245.

Formal expressions of interest should be addressed to Kathy Adamson, President-Elect, at [k.adamson@ram.ac.uk](mailto:k.adamson@ram.ac.uk), Tel. 020 7873 7323.

## **IAML (UK & Irl) – Advertising Editor**

The present Advertising Editor for *Brio* has expressed a wish to step down from the post and the branch Executive Committee has agreed that the remit of a potential successor should be widened to include advertising in all relevant branch publications, chiefly *Brio* itself and the *Newsletter*. The post involves commissioning and invoicing for advertisements, and liaising with advertisers and with the branch Treasurer as well as editors of relevant branch publications.

Enquiries should initially be made to the current Advertising Editor, Mrs. Alex Garden [alex.garden@dial.pipex.com](mailto:alex.garden@dial.pipex.com), Tel. 01704 821303.

## **Publications Officer – Vacancy**

The current Publications Officer finishes her term of office in April 2005 so a new officer is required.

The post is very varied and includes sending out renewals for our journal, *Brio*; banking monies received and keeping the database up-to-date. The post holder also receives and processes orders for publications of IAML(UK & Irl) such as *Access to music* and *Concert programmes*. Some time commitment is required and the work involved depends on the time of year – autumn being the busiest.

If anyone is interested in taking over please contact Margaret Roll by email: [mroll@buckscc.gov.uk](mailto:mroll@buckscc.gov.uk) or [Margaret@terina.co.uk](mailto:Margaret@terina.co.uk) or phone 01296 382266 (work).

## SOME RECENT ARTICLES ON MUSIC LIBRARIANSHIP

John Wagstaff

All the articles listed here are available in the IAML (UK & Irl) Library. Requests to borrow material are invited. The following abbreviations have been used:

FAM = *Fontes artis musicae*

Notes = *Notes: Quarterly Journal of the Music Library Association*

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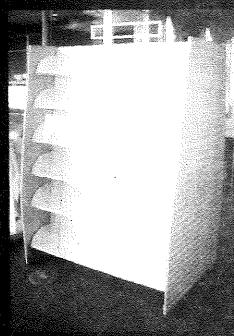
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