

RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS SOCIETY JOURNAL

WIDENING THE KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATION OF THE MUSIC OF RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

ISSUE NO 57 JUNE 2013



www.rvwsociety.com

From the Editor

The competition introduced on this page in the last issue of the *Journal* was not exactly an innovation – the “Vaughan Williams Crossword” was a feature for many years – but was, rather, a way of bringing a lighter touch back to these pages. I presented you with three short texts on the subject of Vaughan Williams and asked you who was responsible for them. I can now reveal the results, and here they are:

“He was indubitably a great – and good – man, a composer of powerful personality and a major voice in our musical culture. But his *art*, I think, though it made history, was also defeated by it, and will, if I have to hazard a guess, prove to be minor.”

This comes from a talk by Donald Mitchell, broadcast on the BBC Third Programme in April 1965 and published in his book *Cradles of the New: Writings on Music, 1951-1991* (Faber, 1995).

“Yesterday a great moment – like a caress from a sunnier world. Heard the symphony that Vaughan Williams has dedicated to me...Civilized and humane! Am deeply grateful.”

An easy one, this. Jean Sibelius, in his diary.

“Young conductors please note: Vaughan Williams is a fine example of how a conductor should approach an orchestra. Calm and collected, he wastes no time but gets on good terms with the orchestra in about three words. Granted, this is easy for him because of the profound admiration the orchestra has for him both as man and musician.”

This is taken from that admirable book *The Orchestra Speaks* (1938) – multiple copies available in second-hand bookshops – by Bernard Shore, once the principal violist of the BBC Symphony Orchestra.

I wish I could also reveal the name of the lucky winner, but sadly this will not be possible, because no-one answered all three correctly. To be more precise, only one person sent in an entry. (He got two out of the three right.) Reader enthusiasm wasn't wild, then, so I'm not bothering with another competition this time, but if any members have ideas for this kind of thing that might garner a little more support I'd be pleased to hear from them.

If the idea of a quiz didn't appeal, the number of submissions the *Journal* is currently receiving is certainly encouraging. Even with another forty page issue I am obliged, once again, to apologise to those contributors whose work will have to wait until next time. I should like to point out, though, that the back page of each *Journal* carries a date limit for submissions. Much, perhaps even most, of what I receive arrives after this date. Please continue to send in your contributions, but try, wherever possible, to respect this deadline. Doing so will result in more time (and less stress) while I am putting the *Journal* together, which will in turn allow it to appear earlier in the month than it currently can.

Members will remember Penelope Thwaites's review of Victoria Rogers's book *The Music of Peggy Glanville-Hicks* that appeared in the October 2011 *Journal*. Glanville-Hicks was one of Vaughan Williams's pupils at the Royal College of Music, and reading the review of the recent CDs of her opera *Sappho* elsewhere in this issue reveals that she was a talented composer, and one whose relative neglect is to be regretted. The recording is issued on the independent Toccata Classics label, which members would do well to support, as it specialises in little known composers, many of whom could easily feature on our Music You Might Like pages.

William Hedley

Ralph Vaughan Williams and literature in English

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!
Here will we sit and let the sounds of music
Creep in our ears: soft stillness and the night
Become the touches of sweet harmony.
Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold:
There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins;
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

William Shakespeare
(from *The Merchant of Venice*, Act V, Scene I)

Some Notes on the Reception of Vaughan Williams: Three Quantitative Measures

Allan W. Atlas

In recent years, “reception history” has become quite fashionable in musicology. Briefly, such history seeks to answer the question of how composers and their music have been received (we may even say “consumed”): that is, understood, interpreted, and valued, whether in one place at one time or along axes that can run both chronologically and geographically. Moreover, reception history tries to uncover why the music has been so received and attempts to place both the how and the why into a broad sociological, economic, and political context (see the “Recommended Reading” at the end of the essay for three entry points into the literature).

What follows considers three aspects of the reception of Vaughan Williams’s music, though it does so without reference to the above-mentioned wide-context questions. To some extent, then, it runs the risk of being considered *uncritical*, or, at the very least, less than contextually rich. For rather than following the customary route of tracing Vaughan Williams receptions – and I use the plural advisedly – as they are reflected in the judgments of “critics” (whether reputation-making/breaking journalists, who often express their opinions after hearing a piece just once and with a deadline looming, or scholars/historians/academics, who, presumably, have the luxury of being able to reflect and mull things over, though that is no guarantee of wisdom), I have taken a different approach, one that is data-driven, number-crunching, and entirely quantitative in nature (in other words, unfashionably positivist).

More specifically, I begin by looking at Vaughan Williams’s representation on currently available CDs, continue by examining his performance history at the New York Philharmonic (my hometown orchestra), and conclude by considering the scope of his coverage in a small number of musicological reference works, journals, and comprehensive histories. In all three categories, I compare the tallies for Vaughan Williams with those for a roughly contemporary group of composers (I also include one non-contemporary, Beethoven, as a “reality check” of sorts), while the first two categories also break down the numbers within Vaughan Williams’s output, that is, at the level of genres and individual works. Finally, as much as possible, I let the numbers speak for themselves.

Part I. CDs currently in print

I have drawn the data for Part I from ArkivMusic, an online data base at www.arkivmusic.com that I accessed for the final time during the period 24 - 27 January 2013, at which time it was up-to-date enough to include listings for two Vaughan Williams CDs that had been issued on 8 January 2013 (Dutton Epoch 7295, with the *Suite for Viola and Small Orchestra*, and Reference Records 129, with *The Wasps* and the *Fantasia on “Greensleeves”*). I offer

the data with two caveats: (1) Though ArkivMusic is generally quite reliable, it is not error-free; thus the “Greensleeves” on the recording *Early One Morning: Folksongs and Spirituals* (which is listed under orchestral music) is not the orchestral *Fantasia* but, as the CD’s subtitle would suggest, a setting of the tune for unaccompanied voices (Apex Records 4675459, Edward Higginbottom, Choir of New College Oxford [2011]). Could there be errors that I missed? It’s possible. Yet even if a few other miscues escaped my notice, thus causing the tallies to be ever so slightly off, the data that appears below is certainly accurate enough to paint the intended picture (and with something finer than a broad brush stroke). (2) Because ArkivMusic is up-to-date, the numbers can change constantly as new CDs appear (and some are possibly withdrawn); thus the data that follows reflects the state of things during the four-day period in which I last accessed the website (one has to say “finished” at some point).

1. Vaughan Williams

- (a) **total number of recordings** = 958 (with those devoted entirely to Vaughan Williams generally having more than one work)
- (b) **the three most-recorded works:**
 - Fantasia on “Greensleeves”* (1934) = 150
(arr. by Ralph Greaves from the opera *Sir John in Love*)
 - Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis* (1910) = 103
 - The Lark Ascending* (1914) = 95

After this the number of recordings of any individual work falls off drastically, with the *Symphony No. 5* in fourth place with thirty-nine recordings.

Clearly, the three most recorded works share stylistic features, and reflect the pastoral, folk-like, modal, Elizabethan-inspired, and even quasi-mystical side of Vaughan Williams. As such, they represent the Vaughan Williams who is often packaged on “easy-listening” anthologies with such titles as *Zen Classics* (Virgin Classics 34865, 2008), *Meditation: Classics for Relaxation* (Deutsche Grammophon 4777525, 2008), and even *Best Wedding 100 [!]* (EMI Classics 64262, 2009), all of which include the *Fantasia on “Greensleeves”*. And that these are the most frequently recorded of Vaughan Williams’s works should not surprise us, for when, in 2007, 2008, and 2009, the British classical music station Classic FM invited listeners to vote for their favorite piece, it was *The Lark* that came in first in each of those years, while *Tallis* also polled well: 10th in 2007, 3rd in 2008. Nor does there seem to be any let up in the production of CDs with these pieces, which, as a comparison with their numbers in 2009 shows, keeps growing: *Greensleeves* – 132 in 2009/150 in 2013 (+ 18); *Tallis* – 78 in 2009/103 in 2013 (+ 25); *The Lark* – 73 in 2009/95 in 2013 (+ 22). (I reported the 2009 figures in “Where *The Lark* Does Not Ascend,” this *Journal*, no. 45 [June 2009], p. 8.)

It is interesting to look at specific genres within Vaughan Williams's output. I have chosen the complete set of symphonies along with selections from other orchestral works, choral music, and song cycles.

(c) the nine symphonies = total 218

No. 5 (1943) = 39	No. 1 (1910) = 22
No. 2 (1913) = 29	No. 7 (1952) = 17
No. 4 (1934) = 27	No. 9 (1957) = 17
No. 6 (1947) = 26	No. 3 (1921) = 16
No. 8 (1955) = 25	

Perhaps the big surprise here – at least in view of the three most-recorded of Vaughan Williams's pieces – is the last-place finish (even if by a tad) of No. 3, *A Pastoral Symphony*; could it be that there is just a bit too much of the “pastoral” – in terms of length and the disjunction with one's expectations from the genre – for conductors, audiences, and, therefore, record companies to bear? And does the pastoral camouflage still cause the work to be misunderstood?

The specific works in the next three categories were chosen at random (before knowing what the tallies would be):

(d) three orchestral pieces

<i>Norfolk Rhapsody No. 1 in E minor</i> (1906)	= 23
<i>Job: A Masque for Dancing</i> (1930)	= 13
<i>Concerto Grosso for String Orchestra</i> (1950)	= 10

(e) five choral works

<i>Mass in G minor</i> (1922)	= 22
<i>Dona nobis pacem</i> (1936)	= 10
<i>Five Tudor Portraits</i> (1935)	= 6
<i>Sancta civitas</i> (1925)	= 5
<i>A Vision of Aeroplanes</i> (1956)	= 2
(with accompaniment for organ)	

(f) three song cycles

<i>On Wenlock Edge</i> (1909)	= 31
(voice, piano, and string quartet)	
<i>Songs of Travel</i> (1904)	= 15 (voice and piano)
<i>Ten Blake Songs</i> (1958)	= 5 (voice and oboe)
(As an addendum to the tallies for the song cycles, we might note that the single most-recorded individual song, whether part of a cycle or not, is <i>Linden Lea</i> of 1901, for which there are thirty-eight CDs currently available.)	

What seems clear is that the pervading character of the leading works in sections *c*, *d*, *e*, and *f* – the neo-Renaissance, *a cappella* Mass; the sometimes mystical-sounding *Dona* (I have in mind the first and third movements in particular); the Symphony No. 5, which ends with what I can only describe as an ascent to heaven; the folksong-filled *Norfolk*; and the French-impressionist-influenced *Wenlock* – echoes that of the overall leaders: *Greensleeves*, *Tallis*, and *The Lark*. In short, CD buyers have made it clear just which Vaughan Williams it is that sells.

2. Some near contemporaries: Part I/2 sheds light on how Vaughan Williams's representation on currently in-print CDs stacks up against that of nine near contemporaries, the oldest of whom was born in 1860 (Mahler), the youngest in 1883 (Webern). I give the total number of CDs on which they are represented and then try to further contextualize those numbers by

singling out what I think is a meaningful comparison with Vaughan Williams's representation in terms of either a genre as a whole and/or individual compositions.

(SEE FIGURE 1)

There are a number of surprises (at least I was surprised): (1) there are more than twice as many CDs with music by Ravel (2,163) than there are with music by Vaughan Williams (958), with the number of CDs that include Ravel's three run-away hits (829) being nearly equal to Vaughan Williams's representation in its entirety; (2) Vaughan Williams does not lag very far behind either Stravinsky or Sibelius; and (3) recordings of the Mahler symphonies (714) outnumber those of Vaughan Williams (218) by almost three-and-a-half to one! In all, though, Vaughan Williams is well represented on CDs and, with the exception of Ravel, holds his own against most of his distinguished near contemporaries while easily surpassing the very influential, but still hard-to-sell, Schoenberg and Webern.

3. Other British composers: Vaughan Williams is very near the top of the pack in terms of his representation as compared with that of other British composers with whose careers his own overlapped: only Elgar and Britten have more recordings to their credit (though not very many); Birtwistle, of course, is two generations removed and speaks a very different musical language.

(SEE FIGURE 2)

The relatively poor representation of Delius, Bridge, and Bax is striking.

4. Two other composers: Finally, we might put all of the above into a wider perspective:

(SEE FIGURE 3)

There are, then, more recordings of any one of Puccini's “big three” than there are for any two (and in some cases three or more) of Vaughan Williams's symphonies combined. And as a postscript: my favorite fifteenth-century composer, Guillaume Dufay (1398-1474), has 138 CDs to his credit (ArkivMusic, 20 April 2013).

Part II. Vaughan Williams at the New York Philharmonic

If Part I presented something of a snapshot-like view of Vaughan Williams reception – that is, how matters stood in one area during the narrow time frame in which I accessed the ArkivMusic website (and the numbers can, as I noted, change every day) – Part II offers a somewhat more long-range view (though one limited geographically almost entirely to the island of Manhattan), as it charts the reception of Vaughan Williams and a select group of other composers and specific compositions in terms of their programming by the New York Philharmonic from 1920 (when, on 30 December, the New York Symphony [see below] gave its first performance of a piece by Vaughan Williams, *A London Symphony*) to the end of 2012. And though I include the performances of Vaughan Williams during the

Composer	Total CDs	Genre	Individual Works
Mahler (1860-1911)	1,442	symphonies = 728 (not including the incomplete No. 10)	No. 1 = 178 No. 5 = 144 No. 2 = 137 No. 4 = 132 <i>Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen</i> = 106 <i>Kindertotenlieder</i> = 87
Sibelius (1865-1957)	1,016	symphonies = 483	No. 2 = 100 No. 5 = 90 No. 1 = 65 <i>Finlandia</i> = 169 Concerto in D minor for Violin = 143 <i>Valse triste</i> = 142
Holst (1874-1934) (Note: the ballet music for <i>The Perfect Fool</i> comes in a distant second with 21 recordings.)	544		<i>The Planets</i> = 103
Ravel (1874-1937) The tally for the <i>Pavane</i> includes the original version for piano and the later orchestral version.	2,163		<i>Pavane pour une infante défunte</i> = 352 <i>Boléro</i> = 249 <i>La Valse</i> = 228
Schoenberg (1874-1951) The tally for <i>Verklärte Nacht</i> includes the original version for string sextet and the later version for string orchestra.	485		<i>Verklärte Nacht</i> = 84 <i>Pierrot Lunaire</i> = 27
Respighi (1879-1936)	435		<i>Pines of Rome</i> = 84 <i>Fountains of Rome</i> = 62
Bartók (1881-1945)	914		Concerto for Orchestra = 96 <i>Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta</i> = 57
Stravinsky (1882-1971)	1,227		<i>Le Sacre du printemps</i> = 199 <i>Petrouchka</i> = 114 <i>Firebird Suite</i> = 96
Webern (1883-1945) (Webern's entire output consists of just 61 works; these can fit onto as few as six CDs.)	170		<i>Six Bagatelles for String Quartet</i> , Op. 9 = 20

Figure 1

Composer	Total CDs	Individual Works
Vaughan Williams	958	see Part I/1
Elgar (1857-1934)	1,176	<i>Salut d'amour</i> = 159 <i>Enigma Variations</i> , Op. 36 = 123 <i>Pomp and Circumstance March</i> , Op. 39/1 = 117
Britten (1913-1976)	1,040	<i>Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra</i> , Op. 34 = 75 <i>Serenade for Tenor, Horn, and Strings</i> , Op. 31 = 37 <i>War Requiem</i> , Op. 66 = 26
Holst (1874-1934)	544	see Part I/2
Delius (1862-1934)	270	<i>On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring</i> = 57
Bridge (1879-1941)	203	<i>Sir Roger de Coverley</i> , H 155 = 17
Bax (1883-1953)	170	<i>Tintagel</i> = 25
Birtwistle (b. 1934) The relatively poor representation of Delius, Bridge, and Bax is striking.	42	<i>Endless Parade</i> = 3

Figure 2

Composer	Total CDs	Genre	Individual Works
Beethoven (1770-1827)	6,027	symphonies = 1,088	No. 5 = 320 No. 9 = 306 No. 3 = 291
Puccini (1858-1924)	2,356	complete operas = 443	<i>Tosca</i> = 121 <i>La bohème</i> = 100 <i>Madama Butterfly</i> = 73

The tally under Total CDs includes collections of individual arias and duets, of which there are 1,570 and 460, respectively.

Figure 3

1920s under the banner of the New York Philharmonic, those up to 1928 were in fact by a different orchestra: the New York Symphony (founded 1878), which merged with the New York Philharmonic (founded 1842) in 1928 to form The Philharmonic-Symphony Society of New York (see Howard Shanet., *Philharmonic: A History of New York's Orchestra* [New York: Doubleday, 1975]). I have drawn the data from the Philharmonic's remarkable website www.nyphil.org/carlos (accessed 29 January – 4 February 2013), which was launched during the summer of 2009 and permits one to search through all New York Philharmonic programs by composer, title of composition, conductor, and (for concertos) soloist. (I must pause here in order to thank both Richard Wandel and Gabryel Smith, former and current Associate Archivist at the New York Philharmonic, respectively, for their generous help in connection with the website. The “carlos” in the website's URL is a well-deserved tribute to Carlos Moseley [1914-2012], who, during the period 1955-1985, served variously as the orchestra's Managing Director, President, and Chairman of the Board.)

1. Vaughan Williams: For each of Vaughan Williams's works that has been performed by the New York Philharmonic I cite the number of *programs* (these generally consist of more than one performance) on which it has appeared, together with its date of publication and date(s) of first, last, and/or only program (these referring either to the “opening night” of a multi-performance program or a one-shot performance only). Years that begin with a “0” are obviously post-2000.

(SEE FIGURE 4)

Thus the New York Philharmonic has performed a respectable twenty-seven pieces by Vaughan Williams over the course of an equally impressive 111 programs, numbers that call for comment.

Perhaps the most striking – and, for readers of our *Journal*, disheartening – aspect of the data concerns the drastic decline in the programming of Vaughan Williams's music after his death. For instance, of the twenty-eight programs on which the popular *Tallis Fantasia* appeared, only eight have come after Vaughan Williams died. The numbers are even more dismaying for the symphonies: *A London Symphony* – only four programs out of nineteen after 1958; Symphony No. 4 – four out of eighteen; Symphony No. 5 – two out of four; *A Pastoral Symphony* – none out of five; while *A Sea Symphony* enjoyed its only performance in 1922. Further, of the nine works that have been programmed only once (I exclude the three works on the Chamber Music series), only three postdate Vaughan Williams's death, with the performance of the Symphony No. 8 on 1 January 1959 having obviously been scheduled prior to his death (on 26 August 1958).

Still another point has to do with the occasional nature of the programming, as some of Vaughan Williams's works have been relegated to various non-subscription (less prestigious) concerts. Thus three of the four programs for the *Fantasia on “Greensleeves”*, all three programs for the *English Folk Song Suite*, and both programs for the Tuba Concerto appear on Young People's Concerts (which, however, would no doubt have pleased Vaughan Williams), a pension-fund concert, and a private concert at the high-scale Plaza Hotel. Even the popular *Lark*, which, with only two appearances, has been anything but that at the Philharmonic, has never appeared on a regular subscription concert, its two programs consisting of a promenade concert in 1965 and a special concert at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in 2009. Finally, the Tuba Concerto has been represented only by its second and third movements, while even Walter Damrosch, who played a major role in establishing Vaughan Williams's reputation in New York, was not above mangling *A London Symphony* (first and second movements only) on three occasions in 1928.

2. Some near contemporaries: We can widen the context by comparing Vaughan Williams's representation at the Philharmonic with that of four of the nine near contemporaries already cited in Part I/2. For the sake of convenience, I repeat both the figures for Vaughan Williams and the date of death for all the composers.

(SEE FIGURE 5)

Clearly, none of these four near contemporaries has suffered as drastic a post-mortem decline as has Vaughan Williams, either in terms of actual programs or in the proportion of the total number of programs that followed his death. On the other hand, barring a fall into complete obscurity, those composers who have been deceased the longest will obviously receive the highest proportion of posthumous programs (Ravel is the best example), while the high proportion of posthumous Schoenberg programs is testimony to the slow (but steady) acceptance of his music.

3. Other British composers: Vaughan Williams holds a favorable position in comparison with other British composers.

(SEE FIGURE 6)

4. Tallis and five contemporary works: The *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis* does very well in comparison with five other well-known works that were published in 1920-1921 and that I chose at random without knowing what the tally would be.

(SEE FIGURE 7)

Number of Programs and Title	Date of Publication	First Program	Most Recent Program	Only Program
(Note: date of publication does not necessarily coincide with that of composition; thus five works were performed prior to publication.)				
28 programs <i>Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis</i>	1921	9 Mar '22	3 Apr '98	
19 programs Symphony No. 2 in G "A London Symphony"	1920	30 Dec '20	24 Feb '94	
18 programs Symphony No. 4 in F minor	1935	6 Feb '36	3 Apr '08	
5 programs Symphony No. 3 "A Pastoral Symphony"	1924	24 Nov '22	25 Feb '43	
4 programs <i>Fantasia on "Greensleeves"</i> Symphony No. 5 in D major	1934 1946	9 Apr '49 30 Nov '44	15 Dec '07 17 Dec '94	
3 programs Overture to <i>The Wasps</i> <i>English Folk Song Suite</i> Arr. by Gordon Jacobs from the original version for military band, 1923. Symphony No. 6 in E minor	1914 1924 1948	4 Jan '36 3 Apr '50 27 Jan '49	13 July '49 3 Mar '54 25 Sept '87	
2 programs <i>Fantasia on Christmas Carols</i> <i>The Lark Ascending</i> <i>Job: A Masque for Dancing</i> <i>Serenade to Music</i> <i>Five Variants on "Dives and Lazarus"</i> The performance on 10 June 1939 was for a special concert in conjunction with the World's Fair. Concerto in F minor for Tuba	1924 1926 1934 1938 1940 1955	24 Dec '33 15 June '65 26 Nov '36 23 Sept '62 10 Jun '39 15 Mar '75	22 Dec '38 25 May '09 9 Jan '96 6 June '64 11 Mar '42 3 Sept '88	
1 program <i>Four Hymns</i> Symphony No. 1 "A Sea Symphony" <i>Norfolk Rhapsody No. 1 in E minor</i> Concerto in D minor for Violin: <i>Concerto</i> <i>Accademico</i> <i>The Turtle Dove</i> The orchestral version of a 1919 arrangement of a folk tune <i>Five Tudor Portraits</i> Concerto in A minor for Oboe Symphony No. 8 in D minor Concerto in C for Two Pianos	1920 1924 1925 1927 1934 1935 1947 1956 1973			6 Apr '97 5 Apr '22 16 Jan '36 5 Sept '46 19 Mar '52 19 Mar '52 20 Dec '95 1 Jan '59 16 Feb '52
Chamber Music Series <i>On Wenlock Edge</i> New York Philharmonic Chamber Music at the 92 nd Street "Y" Quintet in D for clarinet, horn, violin, cello and piano Philharmonic Ensembles at Merkin Hall String Quartet in C minor Philharmonic Ensembles at Merkin Hall	1910 2002 2002			10 Apr '05 3 Dec '06 8 June '08

Figure 4

Composer	Number of Programs	Number of Pieces	Number of Times Programmed since Death
Vaughan Williams (1958) <i>Tallis Fantasia</i> = 28 programs, of which just eight postdate Vaughan Williams's death	111	27	32
Ravel (1937) • Ravel's popularity is driven by four works in particular: <i>Daphnis et Chloé Suite No. 2</i> = 95 (<i>Suite No. 1</i> = 11), <i>La Valse</i> = 77, <i>Boléro</i> = 45, <i>Ma Mere l'oye</i> = 44	497	40	437
Respighi (1936) • The two famous <i>Roma</i> pieces constitute precisely half the number: <i>Fontane di Roma</i> = 19, <i>Pini di Roma</i> = 32	102	28	60
Schoenberg (1951) By far the most frequently programmed of his works is <i>Verklärte Nacht</i> = 22	80	33	64
Sibelius (1957) • Taken together, the seven symphonies appear on 102 programs, with No. 2 in D, Op. 43, being the most popular with 34 appearances; the Violin Concerto in D minor, Op. 47, a favorite with virtuoso violinists = 40; <i>Tuonelen joutsen/The Swan of Tuonela</i> (No. 2 in the <i>Lemminkäinen Suite</i>), Op. 22 = 32.	270	49	139

Figure 5

Composer	Number of Programs	Number of Pieces	Number of Times Programmed since Death
Elgar (d. 1934)	172	32	111
Britten (d. 1976)	94	35	60
Delius (d. 1934)	74	21	51
Bridge (d. 1941)	0	0	0
Bax (d. 1953)	0	0	0

Figure 6

Composer	Work	Number of programs	First Program	Last Program	Only Program
Vaughan Williams	<i>Tallis Fantasia</i> (1921)	28	1922	1998	
Bartók	<i>Four Orchestral Pieces</i> (1921)	1			1977
Holst	<i>The Planets</i> (1921)	15	1921	2004	
Honegger	<i>Le Roi David</i> (1921)	2	1937	1964	
With its need for a choir, this work is clearly at a disadvantage in terms of being programmed.					
Nielsen	Symphony No. 5 (1920)	5	1925	2007	
Stravinsky	<i>Pulcinella Suite</i> (1920)	15	1925	2011	

Figure 7

Yet lest we raise the *Tallis* banner prematurely, the following should sober us up. As noted above, the Philharmonic (in fact, the New York Symphony – see above about my use of nomenclature) performed its first Vaughan Williams composition, *A London Symphony*, on 30 December 1920, and has subsequently performed it eighteen times since then. A few weeks after that premiere, on 27 January 1921, Josef Stransky led a performance of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, which has since appeared on 199 Philharmonic programs. (For the record: the "Fifth" received its first Philharmonic performance under Ureli Corelli Hill [New York, 1802 – Paterson, NJ, 1878] on 7 December 1842, at what was the orchestra's inaugural program; Hill's brother, an actor by profession, was also named after a Baroque composer: George Handel Hill.)

Part III. Vaughan Williams in the musicological literature: reference works, dissertations, journals, and large-scale histories

Our third and final category compares the quantitative treatment of Vaughan Williams and all nineteen of the other composers cited in Parts I and II in five different types of musicological works: two

encyclopedias/dictionaries, an important bibliographical tool for keeping tabs on the literature, doctoral dissertations, four journals, and two influential and comprehensive histories of western music. And since these sources are unlikely to constitute the everyday reading of many of our Society's members, I shall take the opportunity to introduce them.

1. Reference works:

(a) *NG/2 – The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., edited by Stanley Sadie and John Tyrell (London: Macmillan, 2001): in 29 volumes, this is certainly the most influential English-language music encyclopedia; though cosmopolitan in its coverage and with contributions by an international cast of musicologists, it is not above an occasional display of pride in things British (and why not?); it is available online (by subscription) at www.oxfordmusiconline.com; in the table that follows, the tallies refer to the length of the article as counted in page numbers and rounded off to the nearest half page.

(b) *MGG/2 – Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* [Music in History and the Present], 2nd ed., edited by Ludwig Finscher (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1994-2008); issued serially in two parts: a

10-volume “Sachteil” (subject part) and a 17-volume “Personenteil” (biographical part); in terms of its authority, it is the German-language equivalent of *NG/2*; again, I give the tally in terms of number of pages, rounded off to the nearest half page (note that *MGG/2* numbers each column of each two-column page); for both *NG/2* and *MGG/2* the number of pages includes the main text, the work list (which can vary in comprehensiveness from one composer to another), and the bibliography.

2. A bibliographical tool:

RILM – *RILM Abstracts of Music Literature* is an ongoing bibliographic tool that indexes and abstracts the world of musicological literature; founded in 1967, it is published by *Répertoire International de Littérature Musicale* (the international headquarters of which are located at The Graduate Center of The City University of New York) and is currently available only online (by subscription) at www.rilm.org; the tally reflects the number of “citations”, including reviews of books; note that not every citation refers to an item in which the composer in question is necessarily the main focus of the work; rather the citations may include items in which the author (or RILM abstractor if the author him or herself has not provided the abstract) thought that the composer played a large enough role in the study to be listed under the rubric “Key Words” on the preliminary RILM form that authors submit (accessed on 9-10 February 2013).

3. Dissertations: Here I have drawn upon “Dissertations in Musicology”, which can be accessed through the website of the American Musicological Society at www.ams-net.org/ddm/basicR (accessed on 8-9 February 2013, and thus up-to-date as of that time); international in its scope, the database contains almost 15,500 records; the tally records the number of dissertations devoted to the composer in question; as with the tallies under *RILM*, there are instances in which the composer in question is not the main subject of the dissertation, but is listed by the author under “Key Words”.

4. Journals: I have limited the data to that drawn from four journals as surveyed across three periods of six years each: 1966-1971, 1986-1991, and 2006-2011; the tally refers to the number of articles about each composer (who now must be the main focus of the article), with the three tallies for each intersection of journal-composer corresponding to the three time periods cited above; thus the entry 3-1-1 means that there were three articles in the period 1966-1971 and one each in 1986-1991 and 2006-2011, while 0-1-0 indicates no articles in either of the outer periods, but one article in 1986-1991; the lack of any tally means that there are no articles about the composer in that journal during any of three periods (eighteen volumes) considered; the number directly beneath the siglum for each journal indicates the total number of articles published in the periods under consideration. The four journals are:

(a) **PRMA/JRMA:** *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association* (1944/45-1984/85) – itself preceded by the *Proceedings of the Musical Association* (1878-1943/44) – which morphed into the *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* with volume 112 (1986); two issues per year since 1986 (one per year prior to that).

(b) **JAMS:** *Journal of the American Musicological Society* (three issues per year).

(c) **Acta:** *Acta musicologica* is the official journal of the International Musicological Society (two issues per year).

(d) **M&L:** Launched in 1920, *Music & Letters* has always had at least a slightly British “tinge” in terms of its content, though only

in the 1980s did it begin to balance its coverage of English music from Handel backwards to encompass the Victorians and later music (four issues per year).

5. Two influential histories of music:

(a) **Grout/NAWM:** Donald Jay Grout, Claude V. Palisca, J. Peter Burkholder, *A History of Western Music*, 8th ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 2009); originally published in 1960 by Grout alone, this is by far the most often-used one-volume undergraduate music history textbook in the United States; *Norton Anthology of Western Music*, 6th ed., edited by J. Peter Burkholder and Claude V. Palisca (New York: W.W. Norton, 2009); a 3-volume collection of 205 scores, either complete or excerpts, and often used in conjunction with *Grout*; for most of the composers listed below, the citations to *Grout/NAWM* consist of one, two, or three numbers that refer to (from left to right): number of pieces cited in *Grout*, number of music examples (thus indicating more extensive discussion) included in *Grout*, and number of pieces (or lengthy excerpts, usually an entire movement of a multi-movement work) included in *NAWM* (and thus with even “deeper” analytical commentary in *Grout*); the term “cited” indicates that the composer is mentioned but without reference to any pieces; a blank space means that the composer is not mentioned at all. My thanks to Ms. Corinne Salada, a candidate for the PhD in Musicology at The Graduate Center, The City University of New York, for collecting the data in *Grout/NAWM*.

(b) **Taruskin:** Richard Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Western Music*, 6 volumes (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005): a monumental, award-winning work; volume 3 = 19th century, vol. 4 = the “early” 20th century, vol. 5 = the “late” 20th century; the entire 6-volume work is available online (by subscription): www.oxfordwesternmusic.com; the two tallies refer to the number of works cited and number of music examples (there is no accompanying anthology); “cited” and blank space as in *Grout/NAWM*.

(SEE FIGURE 8)

What do these two hundred (!) entries tell us about the status of Vaughan Williams (and the other composers) in today’s musicological world? With the hope that our “base sources” are not too narrow in number and/or breadth (and I might have trouble arguing with those who say guilty on both counts, especially in connection with the four journals, since: (1) both *JRMA* and *M&L* root for the home team at least to some extent, and (2) none of the journals considered specializes in “theory/analysis”, in which “sub-discipline” twentieth-century and more recent composers have often found their warmest scholarly welcome), it seems clear that among composers with whom Vaughan Williams’s career overlapped and taking all five types of sources into account, scholarly interest at the international level is focused most intensely on Schoenberg and Stravinsky, surely the two composers who represent the two most significant stylistic poles during at least the first half of the twentieth century, while next come Webern (Schoenberg’s influential – some would argue more influential – student) and the often-politicized Mahler.

Among the eight British composers, Britten has a commanding position. As for Vaughan Williams, I am struck by the following: in terms of his representation in the journals, he fares best in the two British journals during the period 2006-2011. And while the geography is not unexpected, perhaps the chronology reflects the overall increase of scholarly interest (though limited to Anglo-

North American circles) in British music that has recently been generated by the North American British Music Studies Association (NABMSA), which, founded in 2003, sponsors a well-attended conference (with participation from both sides of the ocean) on the campus of one or another North American university every other year. Here Vaughan Williams does very well, indeed, as witness his representation at these meetings compared with that of the seven other British composers about whom we have been keeping track (again, the blank spaces indicate that there have not been any papers about the composer in question).

(SEE FIGURE 9)

Note: The authors and titles of the twenty papers on Vaughan Williams are listed in the Appendix, Part II. And once more simply for the record, fifteen other British composers (in one case temporarily by adoption) either from Vaughan Williams’s

are a little surprising. *Grout*, on the other hand, looks at Vaughan Williams’s activities with a wider lens: it mentions the obligatory *Tallis* and all the symphonies except Nos. 8 and 9; but then there are references to *For All the Saints* in connection with Vaughan Williams’s work on the hymnal, *Folk Songs for Four Seasons* to call attention to his settings of traditional tunes, and both *Household Music* and the Concerto Grosso for triple string orchestra in order to underscore the importance that Vaughan Williams gave to amateur music making. *Grout*, then, expects students to be aware of a wide range of Vaughan Williams’s musical activities.

First summing up: We have looked at three quantitative measures of Vaughan Williams reception, each one focusing on the topic from a different angle. In terms of Vaughan Williams’s representation on currently in-print CDs – surely the best measure of where he stands

Composer	NG/2	MGG/2	RILM	Diss	JRMA	JAMS	Acta	M&L	Grout	Taruskin
					(178)	(239)	(265)	(311)		
Vaughan Williams	17½	4	438	26	0-0-2 ^a			1-1-2	12/1	5/2
Bartók	30½	31	3,133	88		1-1-0		1-1-0	17/3/1	11/7
Bax	3½	3	84	13	0-0-1			1-0-0	cited	cited
Beethoven	66	141	8,896	242	3-1-1	6-2-0 ^b	3-2-0	2-1-3	57/9/3	45/16
Birtwistle	7	1½	147	5					3	cited
Bridge	3½	2½	50	5						
Britten	38½	11	1,223	67				0-4-1	6/0/1	20/5
Delius	9	5½	354	11				5-0-0		cited
Elgar	23	8½	657	14	0-0-1			0-1-0	4	10/2
Holst	8	3½	167	12					6	1
Honegger	4½	6½	2	13					3	cited
Mahler	29½	22	3,423	120	0-0-2	0-0-1	0-0-2		11/1/1	10/4
Nielsen	9½	8½	17	17					cited	cited
Puccini	15	5½	1,133	30		0-1-0	0-1-0		5	4/1
Ravel	14	16	1,181	68			0-0-1	1-0-0	22/0/1	9/4
Respighi	6	3	124	4					cited	10
Schoenberg	27	33	5,608	208		2-2-2		0-0-2	28/2/2	24/1
Sibelius	29	6	801	23				0-0-1	11/3	12/1
Stravinsky	39½	25½	3,528	110	0-0-1	0-1-3	0-1-1	2-0-0	25/5/2	26/9
Webern	17	18½	1,868	67					12/1/1	11/8

^a For the list of Vaughan Williams articles in *JRMA* and *M&L*, see the Appendix, Part I.
^b *JAMS*, vol. 23/3 (1970), was devoted mainly to Beethoven in honor of the 200th anniversary of his birth.

Figure 8

generation or the succeeding one were also the subject of papers: Granville Bantock = 1, Arthur Bliss = 1, Alan Bush = 3, Samuel Coleridge Taylor = 1, Percy Grainger = 2, Bernard Herrmann = 1, Constant Lambert = 1, Walter Leigh = 1, Hamish MacCunn = 3, Elizabeth Maconchy = 1, Ethel Smyth = 3, Charles Villiers Stanford = 3, Michael Tippett = 2, William Walton = 2, and Grace Williams = 1.

Finally, it is interesting to note which of Vaughan Williams’s works the two histories cite. *Taruskin* is rather predictable: the *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis* and Symphonies 1, 2, 3, and 4, though perhaps his two music examples, which include three excerpts from Symphony No. 3 and the whole of Vaughan Williams’s harmonization of the famous Tallis tune as it appears in *The English Hymnal*

with the largest group of consumers of classical music (and thus perhaps the most “democratic”) – Vaughan Williams fares relatively well, though more than a few of the CDs that include his music are marketed toward the listening-while-doing-anything-else crowd, something evidenced by the tremendous success of *Greensleeves*, *Tallis*, and *The Lark* (another side of the democratic coin). Vaughan Williams fares less well with respect to his representation at the New York Philharmonic, which, though certainly not oblivious to consumer demand, does not make it its chief criterion. Here the most notable – and, as noted above, disheartening – aspect of Vaughan Williams’s position is the drastic decline in the frequency with which he has been programmed since his death. Finally, what might be called the “hard-core” musicological literature about Vaughan Williams – at least that which goes beyond the anecdotal and/or survey-like life-

Composer	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	Total
Vaughan Williams	3	3	3	6	5	20
Bax						
Birtwistle		1				1
Bridge		1	1			2
Britten		1	2	6	3	12
Delius		1			1	2
Elgar		2	4	1	3	10
Holst	1	1	1			3

Figure 9

and-works type – is still relatively young (can we date it from the mid/late 1980s and the groundbreaking work of Alain Frogley and a small number of other scholars who were not afraid to buck both entrenched and emerging musicological trends?) and is unlikely to challenge that done on, say, Stravinsky or Schoenberg any time soon in terms of the number of researchers involved, the volume of their publications, or the university seminars that they offer.

Second summing up: We can look at the above data another way. Considering all three of our quantitative measures together, we must admit that Vaughan Williams is not a “superstar” in any of them. But neither is he negligible. Rather the continuum (or the three *continua*) between the two poles is (are) long and slippery; and each of us will locate Vaughan Williams in what he or she thinks is (are) the most appropriate spot(s). And finally, as I have just done, we would do best to speak in terms of Vaughan Williams receptions, that is, in the plural. For Vaughan Williams’s (or any other composer’s) presence in musicological journals is one kind of reception, performances by a world-class orchestra another, and sales of CDs still another. And to say that any one of these is more meaningful or authoritative than any other is, to my way of thinking, to be almost “anti-music”. As I see it, Vaughan Williams is a great composer, though more (or less) appreciated in some circles than in others. And with this there is nothing wrong.

Recommended Reading

Two useful entries into the literature on reception history and music are Carl Dahlhaus, *Foundations of Music History*, translated by J.B. Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985 – originally published as *Grundlagen der Musikgeschichte* [Cologne: Hans Gerig, 1977]), particularly chapter 10, “Problems in Reception History”; Leon Botstein, “Music in History: The Perils of Method in Reception History,” *The Musical Quarterly*, 89/1 (2006), 1-16. On the reception of Vaughan Williams: Alain Frogley, “Constructing Englishness in Music: National Character and the Reception of Ralph Vaughan Williams,” in *Vaughan Williams Studies*, ed. Alain Frogley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 1-22.

APPENDIX

Part I. Articles about Vaughan Williams in *JRMA* and *M&L* (1966-1971, 1986-1991, 2006-2011)

Christopher Palmer, “Delius, Vaughan Williams and Debussy,” *M&L* 50/4 (1969), 475-80.
 Alain Frogley, “Vaughan Williams and Thomas Hardy: ‘Tess’ and the Slow Movement of the Ninth Symphony,” *M&L* 68/1 (1987), 42-59.
 Roger Savage, “Alice Shortcake, Jenny Plumpears and the Stratford-on-Avon Connection of Vaughan Williams’s *Sir John in Love*,” *M&L* 89/1 (2008), 18-55.

Oliver Neighbour, “Ralph, Adeline, and Ursula Vaughan Williams: Some Facts and Speculation (with a Note About Tippett),” *M&L* 89/3 (2008), 337-45.
 Eric Saylor, “Dramatic Applications of Folksong in Vaughan Williams’s Operas *Hugh the Drover* and *Sir John in Love*,” *JRMA* 134/1 (2009), 37-83.
 Allan W. Atlas, “On the Structure and Proportions of Vaughan Williams’s *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis*,” *JRMA* 135/1 (2010), 115-44.

Part II. Papers about Vaughan Williams at the meetings of the North American British Music Studies Association

(The papers are preceded by the title of the session during which they were presented.)

2004: Oberlin College, Oberlin OH, 18-19 June

Vaughan Williams

Eric Saylor, “Folk Song and Theatricality in *Hugh the Drover* and *Sir John in Love*”.
 James Brooks Kuykendall, “Vaughan Williams, *The Poisoned Kiss*, and the Legacy of the Savoy Operas”.
 Renée Cherie Clark, “The Middle Years: Vaughan Williams, Art Song Composition, and the Development of Style”.

2006 St. Michael’s College, Colchester VT, 3-5 August

Session: Modernism, British

Alain Frogley, “Dancing in the ‘City of Dreadful Night’: Paris, Vienna and St. Petersburg in the 1914 Scherzo-Nocturne in Vaughan Williams’s *London Symphony*”.
Session: The Impact of Continental Masters
 Julian Onderdonk, “Folksong, Hymnody, and Bach’s Chorales: Ralph Vaughan Williams and the ‘Greatest of all Musicians’”
Session: Harking Back to the Renaissance
 Jennifer Oates, “Eclecticism and Englishness in *Five Tudor Portraits*: A Portrait of Vaughan Williams’s Musical Style”.

2008 York University, Toronto ON, 31 July-3 August

Session: “Art is like Theophany”: The Music of Ralph Vaughan Williams

Stanley C. Pelkey, “From Dante to Ralph Vaughan Williams: Love, Music and Spiritual Transcendence in *Willow-Wood*”.
 Renée Cherie Clark, “Vaughan Williams Reading Shakespeare: Portraits of England in *Three Songs from Shakespeare*”.
 Anthony Barone, “Inventing a British Modernism: Compositional Process in Vaughan Williams’s *Symphony No. 4*”.

2010 Drake University, Des Moines IA, 29 July-1 August

Session: Vaughan Williams Deciphered

Ryan Ross, “‘Trouble in Paradise’: Vaughan Williams’s *Flos campi* Reconsidered”.
 Jacob Sagrans, “Vaughan Williams’s Reflections of War: Detachment in the *Pastoral Symphony* and *Along the Field*”.
 Byron Adams, “A Little French Polish: Vaughan Williams’s Sessions with Ravel”.
 Jenny Doctor, “Vaughan Williams and the BBC: Mapping *Antemortem* Legacy Through Narrative Coding”.
Session: English Opera, English Drama
 Eric Saylor, “Tableau and Tragic Heroes: Dramaturgical Aims in Vaughan Williams’s Stage Works”.
Session: Electrifying the Nation
 Julian Onderdonk, “‘Roll Over Vaughn [sic] Williams’: Richard Thompson and the Predicament of the Folk” (note: “[sic]” appears in the title of the paper).

2012 University of Illinois, Urbana IL, 26-28 July

Session: Vaughan Williams I

Eric Saylor, “Beholding the Sea Itself: The Political and Musical Visions of *A Sea Symphony* and *Songs of the Fleet*”.
 Erica Siegel, “‘I’m Not Making this Up, You Know!’: The Success of Vaughan Williams’s Students in America”.
Session: Vaughan Williams II
 Byron Adams, “Pilgrim in a New Found Land: Vaughan Williams in America”.
 Alain Frogley, “Harmony, Tonality and the Metropolis in Vaughan Williams’s *A London Symphony*”.
Session: Mapping Musical Modernisms
 Jenny Doctor, “Vaughan Williams, Boulton and the BBC”.

Folk Song in the English Folk Song Suite

Adam Harvey

The *English Folk Song Suite* was written in 1923 at the request of Colonel John Somerville for the Band of the Royal Military School of Music and was premiered in July of that year at Kneller Hall. Somerville was attempting to improve the repertoire for military band and, in the early 1920s, had successfully helped to revive Gustav Holst's two suites for military band, both of which had been written a decade or so earlier. [1.] The second of these was "founded on traditional English tunes" [2.] and, emulating his friend and fellow composer, Vaughan Williams too decided to base his suite on English folk song. Folk song was at the forefront of the composer's mind at this time. Preparations for the premiere of his ballad opera *Hugh the Drover* were underway and in 1923 Vaughan Williams had also written the ballet *Old King Cole* for the Cambridge branch of the English Folk Dance Society, which was premiered the month before the *English Folk Song Suite*. In addition, it would seem that the *Suite* had an antecedent in the now lost *Fantasia on English Folk Song* written for a Promenade concert in 1910. The reviewer in *The Times* indicated that the work began with "I'm Seventeen Come Sunday" and, according to Kennedy, "Two of the tunes on which the *Fantasia* was founded were taken from the collections of Lucy Broadwood and Cecil Sharp." (Kennedy *Catalogue* 54) This information corresponds with what we now know is included in the *English Folk Song Suite*, as noted in the 1924 short score published by Boosey and Hawkes:

The tune "My Bonny" is taken from "English County Songs" by kind permission of Miss L. E. Broadwood and J. A. Fuller-Maitland, Esq. and The Leadenhall Press. The tunes of "Folk Songs from Somerset" are introduced by kind permission of Cecil Sharp, Esq.

This note provides only partial information about which tunes are included, accounting for only five of the nine folk songs in the *Suite*, and those credited to Sharp for the final movement are not named. These omissions are significant: with similar credits in other scores, for example, *Hugh the Drover* and *Folk Songs of the Four Seasons*, if the origin of a folk song has not been credited to another collector or publisher, then the tune invariably comes from the composer's own manuscript collection. As we shall see, sourcing the origins for some of the folk songs used by Vaughan Williams in the *Suite* has proved problematic. This is partly due to a number of errors in existing literature and partly due to the fact that, in two cases, Vaughan Williams has created hybrid versions that do not correlate exactly to a specific variant. Below is an overview of the *Suite* with particular reference to the folk songs used, focusing on the tunes, not the text. [3.]

The opening march, "Seventeen Come Sunday," comprises three folk songs in an arch form. After a four-bar introduction the eponymous folk song, in the Dorian mode, is played through twice (Ex. 1).

There are numerous variants of this folk song and it seems that Vaughan Williams has drawn from several sources to create a version suitable for his purposes. The closest matches to be found are one collected by the composer from Mr Guttridge, in Sussex in 1907 (MS III 437/1, Ex. 2), and two collected by Cecil Sharp, one

from Mrs White in Somerset in 1904 (FSS 2/4, Ex. 3) and another from Mrs Williams in Gloucestershire in 1921 (CSCEFS No. 108 B, Ex. 4). Note that the Williams variant was not published until 1974. With there being only a two year gap between its collection and the composition of the *Suite*, it is not known for certain whether Vaughan Williams would have been familiar with it. Furthermore, if the aforementioned *Fantasia on English Folk Song* was indeed a precursor to the *English Folk Song Suite*, and the versions of the tune were the same, then this would predate the collection of the Williams variant. [4.] The examples below have been transposed into the key of the *Suite* for ease of reference.

Ex. 1

"I'm Seventeen Come Sunday" (from the *English Folk Song Suite*)



Ex. 2

"I'm Seventeen Come Sunday" (Mr Guttridge, Sussex, 1907)



Ex. 3

"I'm Seventeen come Sunday" (Mrs White, Somerset, 1904)



Ex. 4

"I'm Seventeen Come Sunday" (Mrs Williams, Gloucestershire, 1921)



There are a few modifications, some made necessary in order to fit the mixed time signatures (common in this folk song) into a strict 2/4 march. In this respect, it is interesting to note how the seven beats in bars 4-7 of the White version are stretched by the composer into eight beats in order to keep a regular rhythm. Another variant of this folk song, "On a May Morning So Early," collected by Baring-Gould (SOTW 150) was used by Holst in his *Songs of the West* (1906-7).

After a brief linking passage the second folk song, "Pretty Caroline," is heard as a contrasting theme in the relative major. This tune corresponds to "Swansea Town" in Holst's *Second*

Suite. The two melodies are stylistically similar and share the same four-note opening. The variant used by Vaughan Williams comes from his own manuscript collection and was sung by Mrs Powell from Herefordshire in 1909 (MS I 290/2, Ex. 5).

Ex. 5
“Pretty Caroline” (Mrs Powell, Herefordshire, 1909)



Mitchell states, “Until Vaughan Williams’s handwriting for Mrs Powell’s 1909 entry in British Library Add MS 59535 can be deciphered, it cannot be determined which version he used.” (Mitchell 31n) However, as one can see from a copy of the MS (Ex. 6), the composer’s handwriting, although characteristically untidy, is certainly legible.



For the middle section of the march, the composer introduces the third folk song, “The Red Barn,” in the bass underneath jig-like triplets. The folk song in question was collected by Vaughan Williams from Mr Whitby in Norfolk in 1905. Mr Whitby sang two versions, noted by the composer as follows (Ex. 7):



When published in the folk song journal (JFSS II 118), Vaughan Williams presented both variants separately (Ex. 8):

Ex. 8
“The Red Barn” (Mr Whitby, Norfolk, 1905), version 1 (Aeolian)



“The Red Barn” (Mr Whitby, Norfolk, 1905), version 2 (Dorian)



In the *Suite*, the composer uses a mixture of the two, primarily from the first variant with a few elements from the second, although much of the tune is the same in both.

The group of folk songs variously called “Maria Martin” or “The Murder in the Red Barn” are parallel versions of “Dives and Lazarus” (see Howes 234-5 and JFSS 119). This relationship can be seen in Vaughan Williams’s *Five Variants of ‘Dives and Lazarus’* (1939) where Mr Whitby’s version of “The Red Barn” appears as the fifth variant. When discussing the first movement of the *English Folk Song Suite*, Dickinson gives the title of the third tune as “Dives and Lazarus” rather than “The Red Barn” (Dickinson 460), an inaccuracy that was duplicated in Michael Kennedy’s *Catalogue* (97). As a result, the true identity of the actual folk song used here by Vaughan Williams has been overlooked (see *Journal* No. 53, 14).

Despite the ascertainable differences between the two melodies, some commentators have supposed that the composer was quoting the well-known “Lazarus” tune found in *English County Songs* (Rapp 31-33 and Mitchell 32-3). Vaughan Williams also included the Whitby variant in the now lost *Norfolk Rhapsody No.3* (see Kennedy, *Catalogue* 35) and another variant named, “The Marigold,” collected by Baring-Gould (SOTW 226) can be found in Holst’s *Songs of the West*.

After a repeat of the middle section, “Pretty Caroline” returns followed by a *da capo* repeat of “I’m Seventeen Come Sunday”. A brief coda then ends the movement in F major.

The second movement, an intermezzo, is subtitled “My Bonny Boy”. [5.] Vaughan Williams collected several versions of this folk song, but chose the one in *English County Songs* for the slow movement and not that collected from Mr Harper in King’s Lynn in 1905, as suggested by Howes (233). In *English County Songs* the title is given as “My Bonnie, Bonnie Boy” and was sung by Mrs Vaisey, Hampshire (ECS 146, Ex. 9). This beautiful Dorian melody, played on solo oboe, evokes a solemn, pastoral tone, which emulates “I Love My Love” in Holst’s *Second Suite* and “The Sheep-Shearing Song” in *A Somerset Rhapsody*.

Ex. 9
“My Bonnie, Bonnie Boy” (Mrs Vaisey, Hampshire)



English County Songs, edited by Lucy Broadwood and J. A Fuller Maitland, was published in 1893 and Vaughan Williams clearly

recognised the importance of this ground-breaking collection of English folk songs. In his “portrait” of Lucy Broadwood in the *Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society* in 1948 he states, “This may be said to be the starting point of the modern folk song movement. For the first time people who had accepted without question the aphorism that ‘All folk tunes are either bad or Irish’ had their eyes opened to the beauty of our English national music ... Surely a volume that contains such gems as ‘Lazarus’ and ‘My Bonny Boy’ deserves a high place in our national treasury.” (JEFDSS IV 136, also Manning 258) A number of other songs from this collection, including “Lazarus,” “In Bethlehem City” and “The Moon Shines Bright” have been used by the composer in other works.

For the contrasting middle section, Vaughan Williams introduces “Green Bushes” one of the most popular and ubiquitous of English folk songs. Versions can be found in numerous collections including the aforementioned *English County Songs* as well as Baring-Gould’s *Songs of the West*, Kidson’s *Traditional Tunes* and Sharp’s *Folk Songs from Somerset*. Vaughan Williams himself collected more versions of this folk song than any other (seven). The tune found in the *Suite* is given below (Ex. 10).

Ex. 10

“Green Bushes” (from the *English Folk Song Suite*)



As for the source there are several versions that come close to the one in the *Suite*. Some commentators have pointed to the variant collected by Sharp from Mrs Hooper and Mrs White in 1903 (Aldrich 83, Rapp 35 and Mitchell 37-8), which is found in *Folk Songs from Somerset* (FSS 2/16, Ex. 11). This variant was used by Percy Grainger in his orchestral work *Green Bushes: Passacaglia on an English Folk Song* (1905-6). Additionally, there are two versions collected by the composer himself, one from Mr Wiltshire in Hertfordshire in 1907 (MS I 100/1, Ex. 12) and another from Mrs Powell (MS I 287/2, Ex. 13) in Herefordshire in 1908, both of which are also very similar. The differences for all three are given in square brackets in the examples below:

Ex. 11

“Green Bushes” (Mrs Hooper and Mrs White, Somerset, 1903)



Ex. 12

“Green Bushes” (Mr Wiltshire, Hertfordshire, 1907)



Ex. 13

“Green Bushes” (Mrs Powell, Herefordshire, 1908)



One must also take into account that “Green Bushes” had been used before by George Butterworth in his idyll *The Banks of Green Willow* (1913). The version used by Butterworth is also hard to identify and does not match exactly any of the six variants he collected himself, the closest being that from Mr Puttock in 1907 (FMJ III 106). Michael Dawney states, “Curiously, Butterworth in his orchestral arrangements did not use the precise versions which he or other collectors found, but composed an idealised version...” (FMJ III 103) The version of “Green Bushes” found in *The Banks of Green Willow* also has close similarities to the tune found in the *English Folk Song Suite*. Indeed, apart from bar 10, which reverses the tune, and the first two beats of bar 11 the rest is almost identical (Ex. 14, again square brackets indicate the differences).

Ex. 14

“Green Bushes” (Butterworth, *The Banks of Green Willow*, 1913)



Vaughan Williams would have been familiar with all of these versions as well as others and it is possible that he too created his own “idealised version”, taking sections from several different variants. Certainly the version in the *Suite* has two elements that do not appear in any of the other variants I have examined, namely the alteration of the quavers in bar eleven – raising the third, fourth and fifth notes – and the descent to the flattened seventh in the penultimate bar.

The third movement, “Folk Songs from Somerset,” is another march and takes its name from Cecil Sharp’s five-volume series published between 1904 and 1909. As with *English County Songs*, this was another landmark collection of English folk songs, one that, according to Vaughan Williams, had “shaken musical England” (NMOE 189). The composer uses four of Sharp’s tunes in this movement and once again there is a connection to Holst, who had also used the same source for his *Somerset Rhapsody*; one of the variants, “High Germany,” appears in both works.

The key now shifts from the Dorian F minor of the first two movements to Bb major (see Mitchell 38). After a four-bar introduction, the first folk song, “Blow Away the Morning Dew,” is heard on solo cornet (clarinet in the orchestral version). This tune as published in *Folk Songs from Somerset* (FSS 1/16, Ex. 15) is actually a conflation of two variants collected by Sharp, one sung by Mrs White and Mrs Hooper and another by Mrs Price (see *Journal*, 54, 8, Comments 2).

Ex. 15

“Blow Away the Morning Dew” (Mrs White and Mrs Hooper, 1903 / Mrs Price, Somerset, 1904)



After an unusual repeat of the refrain, the second folk song, “High Germany,” in the Aeolian mode, follows on seamlessly. This tune, collected from Mrs Lock in 1904 (FSS 1/42, Ex. 16), was not only used by Holst (as mentioned above), but was also arranged by Vaughan Williams for male voices in the same year the *English Folk Song Suite* was written (see also *Journal* 54, 8, Comments 5).

Ex. 16

“High Germany” (Mrs Lock, Somerset, 1904)



“Blow Away the Morning Dew” is then repeated before a brief linking passage leads us to the Trio where Vaughan Williams employs two folk songs. The first of these, “Whistle, Daughter, Whistle,” was collected from Mr Locock in 1906 (FSS 3/20, Ex. 17). As with “High Germany” the tune is in the Aeolian mode, but here further contrast is provided by the compound time signature in a similar fashion to the triplets in the middle section of the first movement.

Ex. 17

“Whistle, Daughter, Whistle” (Mr Locock, Somerset, 1906)



This folk song was also published in CSCEFS (No. 195 A) where Karpeles gives an alternative opening bar which is to be used for all stanzas except the first. In FSS this rhythm only appears in the piano accompaniment, but it is this that Vaughan Williams employs rather than the rhythm given for the opening bar of the tune. In addition, the composer lowers the fourth note in bar 14 by a tone to form a mirror image of the last beat in the previous bar.

Several sources give the name of the folk song here as “The Trees So High,” an error that originates from Howes (233) [6.] and also appears in Kennedy’s *Catalogue* (97). This anomaly has subsequently been duplicated in numerous CD sleeve notes and more recent books (see Rapp 38-9, Mitchell 40-1 and *Journal* 53, 13.

Aldrich (84-5) quotes the correct tune, but gives “The Trees So High” as the title).

The second tune in the Trio is “John Barleycorn” which, like “The Red Barn,” is heard in the bass. The variant used was collected from Mr Pope in 1906 (FSS 3/9, Ex. 18).

Ex. 18

“John Barleycorn” (Mr Pope, Somerset, 1906)



Vaughan Williams used the same tune again in his music for the 1943 film *The People’s Land* and in the autumn section of *Folk Songs of the Four Seasons*. As with the opening march, the movement comes to a rousing end with a *da capo* repeat of the first section.

After the Suite’s premiere, H. E. Colles reviewed the work favourably in *The Musical Times*, emphasising its tunefulness:

“The composer has here, it would seem, declared himself game to write something for the pier, or any place where the development of serried musical argument is not expected. At the same time the thing, from that pen, could not but be perfectly musical. It is a charming success. The gaiety of the dancing tunes is redoubled by lively counterpoints, while there is not a bar that is tuneless. The most casual ear must be beguiled – only the more beguiled in the measure of its musicianship... The good composer has the ordinary monger of ‘light stuff’ so hopelessly beaten.” [7.]

When commenting on the *Suite*, Ursula Vaughan Williams remarked, “This had been one of the works he had been particularly happy to undertake, as he enjoyed working in a medium new to him. A military band was a change from an orchestra, and in his not-so-far-off army days he had heard enough of the ‘ordinary monger’s light stuff’ to feel that a chance to play real tunes would be an agreeable and salutary experience for bandsmen.” (RVW 152)

The tunes are set into simple ternary forms in what has been described as a “quodlibet” or “potpourri” (see Howes 232-3); that is, an arrangement of melodies that are simply juxtaposed with no particular relationship between them.

The following tables summarise the folk songs used within the structure of the *Suite*:

Section	Folk Song	Key
A	Introduction / I’m Seventeen Come Sunday (repeated)	F Minor (Dorian)
B	Pretty Caroline	Ab Major
C	The Red Barn (repeated)	F Minor (Aeolian)
B	Pretty Caroline	Ab Major
A	Introduction / I’m Seventeen Come Sunday (repeated)	F Minor (Dorian)
	Coda	

Section	Folk Song	Key
A	My Bonnie, Bonnie Boy (repeated)	F Minor (Dorian)
B	Green Bushes (repeated)	F (Mixolydian)
A	My Bonnie, Bonnie Boy	F Minor (Dorian)

Section	Folk Song	Key
A	Introduction / Blow Away the Morning Dew	Bb Major
B	High Germany	G Minor (Aeolian)
A	Blow Away the Morning Dew	Bb Major
C	Whistle, Daughter, Whistle John Barleycorn (repeated)	C Minor (Aeolian) Eb Major
A	Introduction / Blow Away the Morning Dew	Bb Major
B	High Germany	G Minor (Aeolian)
A	Blow Away the Morning Dew	Bb Major

The incorporation of folk song into classical forms has long been a problem for the composer. Constant Lambert quipped, “To put it vulgarly, the whole trouble with a folk song is that once you have played it through there is nothing much you can do except play it over again and play it rather louder.” (Lambert 146) The major problem faced by composers when using folk songs is how to develop a tune, which, unlike a motif, is complete in itself. Vaughan Williams, like several composers before him, has successfully used folk song within musical forms such as “variations” or the “rhapsody” which, because of their freer structure, are perhaps better suited to the inclusion of pre-existent melodies. With the *English Folk Song Suite*, however, Vaughan Williams was content to allow the tunes to speak for themselves. As Kennedy aptly puts it, “The Suite of *English Folk Songs* makes no attempt to develop the tunes or rhapsodize upon them; it is merely a series of good tunes, strung together with art and artifice.” (Kennedy *Works* 178) The composer further contends that playing a folk song over again is in itself not necessarily detrimental: “A tune which is only eight bars long, and which is repeated as often as twenty times to accompany a ballad or a dance, must have certain peculiar qualities if it is not to become wearisome; and we find that the best folk tunes only show their true quality after several repetitions.” (Manning 230)

The English folk song revival saved thousands of tunes that would have otherwise been lost to posterity. The collectors have preserved a heritage that can still be enjoyed today, but one must not forget the important role played by the composers who incorporated some of these tunes into their work. For in doing so they have further disseminated these melodies, exposing them to a far wider audience than they would otherwise have had. The folk song works of Vaughan Williams, Holst, Butterworth and others are a testament to the melodic beauty that can be found within English folk song, and it is this quality that maintains the popularity of the *English Folk Song Suite* to this day.

NOTES

1. The First Suite in E flat was written in 1909 and the Second Suite in F in 1911. Although neither was written explicitly for the Royal Military School of Music, their respective performances in 1920 and 1922 gave both a new lease of life which subsequently led to publication.
2. Holst, Imogen, *A Thematic Catalogue of Gustav Holst's Music*. London: Faber Music Limited, 1974, 99. The tunes in question are the Morris dance, “Glorishears” (SMDT 5/12), “The Dargason” (Playford 1/1-8 and Chappell 65) and “Greensleeves” (Chappell 230). The suite also includes four folk songs collected by George Gardiner: “Swansea Town,” “Claudy Banks,” “I Love My Love” and “The Blacksmith”.

3. According to Palmer, Vaughan Williams had a “preoccupation with fine tunes” (Palmer xxii) and “was more interested in the song than the singer, in the melody than the message.” (Palmer xi) The words to the original folk songs chosen by Vaughan Williams in the *English Folk Song Suite* are unrelated and bear no relevance.
4. This version is given by Rapp (30) who confuses CSCEFS with Sharp’s earlier two-volume Selected Edition published by Novello in 1920, the year before the Williams variant was collected.
5. The original suite performed in 1923 contained four movements, with the march *Sea Songs*, placed second. However, upon publication in 1924, *Sea Songs* was removed and published as a separate work (see Mitchell 44-5 for the possible reasons why). The *Sea Songs* march contains three tunes, all with some nautical connection. As with Holst’s *Second Suite* the first tune is a Morris dance taken from Sharp’s collection, in this case “The Princess Royal,” a handkerchief dance from Abingdon (SMDT 6/24). The second tune is “Admiral Benbow” (Chappell 678) and the third the well-known “Portsmouth” (Playford 1/11-18 and Chappell 605). *Sea Songs* successfully stands on its own as an individual composition and its omission improves the balance of the *English Folk Song Suite*, which benefits from a more straightforward fast-slow-fast structure.
6. It should be noted that this is a rare error and that Frank Howes (with the help of Anne Gilchrist) should be commended for being the first author on Vaughan Williams to attempt to identify the names of the folk songs found in the composer’s works.
7. *The Musical Times*, 1 August 1923, Vol. 64, No. 966, 573.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC ABBREVIATIONS

- Aldrich:** Aldrich, Mark, *A Catalog of Folk Song Settings for Wind Band*. Galesville: Meredith Music Publications, 2004.
- Chappell:** Chappell, William, *Popular Music of the Olden Time* (2 volumes). London: Cramer, Beale and Chappell, 1859.
- CSCEFS:** Karpeles, Maud. (ed.), *Cecil Sharp's Collection of English Folk Songs* (2 volumes). London: Oxford University Press, 1974.
- Dickinson:** Dickinson, A. E. F., *Vaughan Williams*. London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1963.
- ECS:** Broadwood, Lucy E. and Fuller Maitland, J.A., *English County Songs*. London: Leadenhall Press; J. B. Cramer; Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent, 1893.
- FMJ:** *Folk Music Journal* (1965 -).
- FSS:** Sharp, Cecil J., and Charles L. Marson (eds.), *Folk Songs from Somerset* (five series). London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent; London: Simpkin; Schott; Taunton: Barnicott and Pearce, 1904-09. [Marson was co-editor on the first three series only.]
- Howes:** Howes, Frank. *The Music of Ralph Vaughan Williams*. London: Oxford University Press, 1954.
- JFDSS:** *Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society*, 1931-1964.
- JFSS:** *Journal of the Folk Song Society*, 1899-1931.
- Kennedy Catalogue:** Kennedy, Michael. *A Catalogue of the Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Kennedy Works:** Kennedy, Michael. *The Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams*. London: Clarendon Press, 1992.
- Lambert:** “The Conflict Between Nationalism and Form” in Lambert, Constant, *Music Ho! A Study of Music in Decline*. London: Faber and Faber, 1934.
- Manning:** Manning, David (ed.), *Vaughan Williams on Music*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Mitchell:** Mitchell, Jon Ceander. *Ralph Vaughan Williams' Wind Works*. Galesville: Meredith Music Publications, 2008.
- NMOE:** Vaughan Williams, Ralph, *National Music and Other Essays*. London: Oxford University Press, 1963.
- Palmer:** Palmer, Roy (ed.), *Bushes and Briars: Folk Songs Collected by Ralph Vaughan Williams*. Burnham-on-Sea: Llanerch, 1999. (2nd edition; originally published under the title *Folk Songs Collected by Ralph Vaughan Williams* in 1983.)
- Rapp:** Rapp, Willis M. *The Wind Band Masterworks of Holst, Vaughan Williams and Grainger*. Galesville: Meredith Music Publications, 2005.
- RVW:** Vaughan Williams, Ursula, *R.V.W.: A Biography of Ralph Vaughan Williams*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964.
- SMDT:** Sharp, Cecil J., and Macilwaine, Herbert C. (eds.), *Morris Dance Tunes* (Sets 1-10). London: Novello & Co. Ltd. (new edition), 1907-24.
- SOTW:** Baring-Gould, S., H. Fleetwood Sheppard, and F. W. Bussell (eds.), *Songs of the West: Folk Songs of Devon & Cornwall Collected from the Mouths of the People* (Methuen 1905 rev. ed.).

Vaughan Williams: *Serenade in A minor* (1898): addendum to the published score

Julian Rushton

My edition of Vaughan Williams's early *Serenade*, published by Oxford University Press in 2012, is derived from a single source, the autograph score now in Yale University Library. I had been led to believe that the MS score in the British Library (BL Add. MS 27572) was not an autograph. *Mea culpa*: of course I should have checked, for it is. I have since compared the sources, and can report with relief that the Yale score is unquestionably the better one: later, tidier, and incorporating revisions made on the BL score. Moreover, it was used for early performances, and contains as far as we can ascertain Vaughan Williams's final compositional decisions. Nevertheless the BL autograph deserves attention as a major element in the work's history, and a very few readings of the score published by OUP might have been different (though only two, I think, are likely to be audible in performance: see the Appendix.)

The BL score differs from the Yale one in having no separate title page. Inside the front flap is "R. Vaughan Williams / 5 Cowley St / Westminster", his address in the summer of 1898, when he wrote to Gustav Holst: "I have written a new coda and a new movement for my Serenade ...". The London MS confirms that the "new movement" was the third, the Intermezzo. It is "tipped in" rather than bound in with the rest of the MS; the eventual fourth movement is headed "III. Romance" and the fifth "IV Finale". The "Intermezzo" uses paper without the crest and stamp of Boosey & Hawkes found in all the other movements, suggesting that the composer obtained it from some other source, and presumably at a different time. The last page has no final signature or date.

A list of instruments is tipped into this score on a separate sheet. This clarifies where Michael Kennedy obtained the numbers he cites, which are not in the Yale MS.ⁱⁱ The list reads: "8 1st Violin / 8 Second Violin / 4 Viola / 4 Violoncello / 3 Double bass / 1 Flutes / 1 Oboes / 1 Clarinets / 1 Bassoons / 1 Horns / 1 Trumpets / 1 Tympani". This is not a list of orchestral forces, for the *Serenade* requires two of each wind instrument; single wind parts would have accommodated two players, sharing a desk (a common practice in the age before the photocopier.) Since such sharing is standard for string sections, the numbers imply eight first violin copies, and thus potentially up to sixteen first violins, with the other string sections to match. I suppose this list was an instruction to a copyist for the parts used in the rehearsal try-out at the Royal College of Music; the College could perhaps raise such a symphonic cohort of strings. The title-page of the Yale score, however, reads "Serenade for orchestra in A minor", with "small" inserted above the line: so the final title is "for small orchestra". This could have been politeness to the relatively small forces in Bournemouth that gave the first public performance, or

a practical step to encourage further performances; it could also represent the composer's eventual preference.

The first page of music is headed "Prelude", a title missing in the Yale MS. At the foot of the page is a note: "Withdrawn by the composer who intended to destroy the MS therefore, not for performance ever. Ursula Vaughan Williams / 7.11.60". A similar note appears in the score of the slightly later *Bucolic Suite*. In 1996, Mrs Vaughan Williams wrote to the British Library revoking this prohibition, and gave permission for publication under the auspices of what is now The Vaughan Williams Charitable Trust.

The BL autograph is a "composing score", whereas the Yale one is a fair copy, but it is perfectly legible except where original notations have been too vigorously deleted. Among the differences from the Yale score, some are simple omissions of detail present in the BL score. Hence some editorial interventions such as dotted slurs in the OUP edition could have appeared as authentic. Differences in the first two movements (Prelude and Scherzo) are minimal. With the "Intermezzo", the first- and second-time bar arrangement is no less ambiguous in this score (see the Preface to the OUP edition), but in the BL score the Trio is not cancelled, as it was in the Yale score. The "Romance" shows more signs of revision. An extra bar (between bars 23 and 24) is perhaps the result of copying error, but three bars were cancelled after bar 40, and four between bars 101 and 102. From bar 150 to the end the music is written on paper glued over the original, which is not discernible.

The Finale must have caused the composer most difficulty, as the score contains more revisions than any other movement, including more that are glued over the original. The revised coda (folios 66–71) was originally stuck on with pins, but is now detached so that the original coda is recoverable, despite being mostly crossed out in blue pencil (there is no sign of it in the Yale score). Vaughan Williams surely recognised that his original coda suffered from the inexperienced composer's tendency to try too hard. From bar 168, where the final version goes into A major, the music continued in the minor, after which there was a short reprise of the Prelude, lasting eight bars. There followed new material, an *Allegro molto* in A major: twenty-one bars in 2/2 metre. The following pages were cancelled in their entirety only after several glued on revisions. Six bars are in 3/2 metre, maintaining a rhythm established in the 2/2 passage; with a return to 2/2, the music becomes almost overtly Brahmsian, with crotchet triplets and the flat sixth (F natural) in the key of A major. A return to the first 2/2 *Allegro* for seven bars is followed by three bars of A major. The revised version sticks to the Finale's own material to reach a crisper and far more effective conclusion: an excellent example of the composer's developing power of self-criticism.

APPENDIX

Vaughan Williams Serenade in A minor (1898)

This list is divided into categories in descending order of significance for performance

Page	Bar	Instrument	Correct Reading
I. Prelude			
37	113	Tpt	The quaver should not be tied
125	171	FLI	e''' not c#'''

2. Emendations to the published score derived from collation with the BL score

Page	Bar	Instrument	Reading of the BL score
I. Prelude			
13	59	Timp.	<i>ff</i> not [<i>f</i>]
II. Scherzo			
20	14	Bsn, Timp., Vla	<i>p</i> not [<i>f</i>]
III. Intermezzo			
54	15	Cl.	Slur over notes 1–2, not 1–3
54	16	Hrn	Slur over the whole bar
V. Finale			
105	56	Hrn	<i>p</i> not [<i>pp</i>]
108	78	Fl.	accent on first note
111	95	Cl.	accent on c'''
111	97	Cl.	hairpin cresc.
115	117–8	Hrn, Tpt	slurs as flute
119	137	Fl., Ob., Cl.	hairpin cresc. on second beat
125	173	Hrn, Vlc., Cb.	hairpin dim.
125	174	Vlc./ Cb.	<i>p</i> / [<i>p</i>]

3. Readings in the BL score where the Yale reading is probably a deliberate revision

Page	Bar	Instrument	Reading of the BL score
IV. Romance			
70	19	Cl.	Additional dim. hairpin for <i>f</i> ''
73	35	Vln I	accents not tenutos
77	60	Bsn II	Hairpin dim. in addition to accent
77	60–61	Hrn	<> confined to bar 60
96	156	Hrn	3rd note e''' not f#'''
V. Finale			
112	98	Ob., Cl., Bsn, Hrn	<i>fz</i> not <i>f</i>

(Continued in next column)

3. (continued from previous column)

Page	Bar	Instrument	Reading of the BL score
114	108	Fl.	Slur ends at barline
109–112		Fl.	Slur from 109/i to 110/i and 110/ii–112
125	173	Vla	enter on a, not c#
125	174	Hrn	<i>p</i> not <i>mf</i>
125–6	175–7	Cl.	2 slurs per bar, as Vla
126	179–81	Fl., Ob., Bsn	2 slurs per bar as Vla 175–7

4. Places where editorial intervention in the OUP score is confirmed as authentic by the BL score, although omitted (presumably in error) from the Yale score

Page	Bar	Instrument	Reading of the BL score
II. Scherzo			
35–35	98, 102	Ob.	slurs
37	113	Vlc., Cb.	<i>p</i>
III. Intermezzo			
53	10	Strings	pizz.
72	28–9	Cl.	slurs
IV. Romance			
89	117	Cl.	l (not a 2)
V. Finale			
115	117–8	Vln	slurs
116	121	Timp.	<i>f</i>
117	127	Ob.	slur
125	171	Vla	<i>p</i>

5. Vaughan Williams also lightened the texture in a few places while working on the BL score, removing music as follows:

Page	Bar	Instrument	
16	71	Ob., Cl.	
19	6 foll.	Bsn	
102–3	34–41	Tpt''	

i Cited in Michael Kennedy, *The Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 400; Kennedy, *A Catalogue of the Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 7.

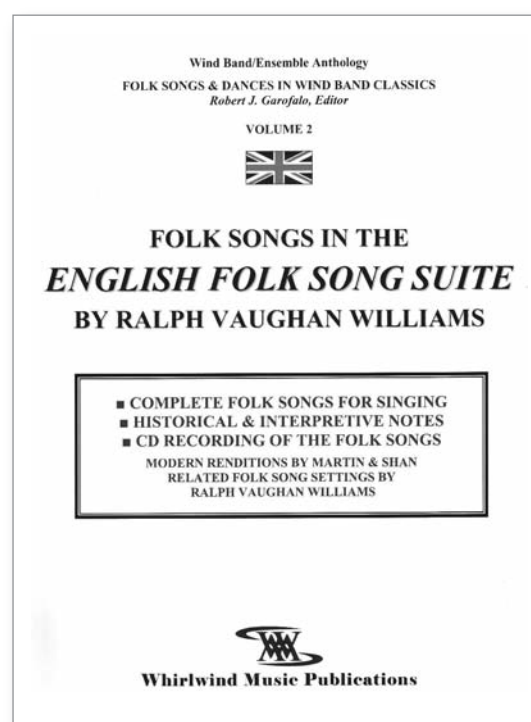
ii Loc. cit. Michael Kennedy, with engaging frankness, admitted to me that he could not remember where these numbers came from. 🐾

Folk Songs and music for wind band

It might seem an obvious statement, but writing for wind band and writing for symphony orchestra are two quite different disciplines. Both Ralph Vaughan Williams and Gustav Holst wrote music for wind band that was conceived for that medium from the outset. Gordon Jacob made an orchestral arrangement, at the composer's request, of Vaughan Williams's *English Folk Song Suite*, and very successful it is. But such arrangements rarely add anything of real significance, and on the contrary, frequently take away much of the impact of the original version.

The *Journal* has received an interesting publication from the United States. Entitled *Folk Songs in the English Folk Song Suite*, and published by Whirlwind Music Publications, it is the second of a five-volume anthology that also features works by Holst, Grainger and Darius Milhaud. The editor, Robert J. Garofalo explains: "This anthology is designed to provide conductors with the inspirational source music – folk songs and dances – used by composers in selected wind band/ensemble masterworks. Each volume in the series includes historical and interpretive notes, complete folk music scores, and a compact disc recording of the folk music." (One track of the compact disc is taken from the Albion Records disc featuring *Folk Songs of the Four Seasons*.) He goes on to outline how the volume might be used in rehearsal when the work is being prepared for performance. "Knowing the folk songs and dances used by composers in wind band classics can be tremendously useful for interpretation."

A full review of this publication will appear in the October *Journal*. 🐾



Ralph Vaughan Williams: *Hymn Tune Prelude* on “*Song 13*” by Orlando Gibbons

John France

Harriet Cohen (1895-1967) had a considerable interest in “early” music. Stephen Siek, in the CD liner notes for the recent retrospective of her surviving piano recordings, points out that her favourite *a cappella* work was William Byrd’s five-voice Mass. Elizabethan music appealed to her at a performance level too. She included a number of short pieces by Orlando Gibbons in her repertoire: “Ayre”, “Alman”, “Toy”, “Coranto” and “Mr Sanders his Delight.” These were taken from Margaret Glyn’s ground-breaking edition of that composer’s works, first published in 1922. Cohen’s recordings of these pieces display a “wistful and melancholic beauty.”

Amongst the many musical influences on Ralph Vaughan Williams, Tudor music was of huge importance. He chose a tune by Gibbons to develop into a beautifully worked-out prelude for solo piano which he dedicated to Harriet Cohen. This is surely one of the most moving pieces that he composed.

Historical Background

Harriet Cohen, writing to Arnold Bax on 29 November 1924, remarks that she had “fallen deeply in love with ‘uncle’ R.V.W. He came to my party. What a lamb! He likes me!!” (Fry 2008, 131). Vaughan Williams was soon to become an intimate friend. Ursula Vaughan Williams noted that Vaughan Williams “particularly admired” her playing. Donald Brook, in his *Masters of the Keyboard* reminds the reader that “just before the Second World War, Dr. R. Vaughan Williams and Sir Arnold Bax presented [Cohen] with a gold chain bearing leaf-shaped pendants, one for each of her more important achievements in the musical world.”

Vaughan Williams had already dedicated his Piano Concerto (1926/31) to Cohen, and some six years later was to make a transcription of “Ach, bleib’ bei uns, Herr Jesu Christ” (“Ah, stay with us, Lord Jesus Christ”) for the multi-composer *A Bach Book for Harriet Cohen* (1932). These were amongst the very few works for solo piano that the composer wrote.

In 1928, Vaughan Williams had offered two short piano pieces, but Ursula Vaughan Williams (1988, 181) quotes a letter to Cohen from around 1928/29: “One [of the two proposed pieces] is finished, but I think one alone wd. be no use to you – the other is only howling in the air and has not been harnessed yet. But if you like I will send the one to you – I think you will probably hate it – and you must be honest about it.”

The second Prelude failed to materialise. In a letter postmarked 30 January 1930, Vaughan Williams wrote, “Alas – the other prelude won’t boil – I’m so sorry – perhaps when I am in a calm mood later on & not scoring against time it will materialize. Yrs R.V.W.” (Cobbe 2008, 180)

Analysis

The most obvious place to begin any study of the *Hymn Tune Prelude on “Song 13” by Orlando Gibbons* is chapter XI in Harriet

Cohen’s book *Music’s Handmaid*, which is effectively a performance analysis of the work.

In a long introductory paragraph, Cohen suggests that the function of a “great composer is to take up and transform into his own personal idiom (or mode of musical speech) what had been communally experienced.” She considers that this idiom must be “a common possession” but “broad enough” to allow the composer to develop a “personal vocabulary.” Vaughan Williams’s idiom owes much to his “love and understanding” of Tudor and folk music. Cohen concludes by suggesting that this “universal musical language [is used] in a characteristic [and] personal way” and contains “the very essence of things in it.”

The *English Hymnal*, 1906, edited by Vaughan Williams and Percy Dearmer, included the tune “Song 13” by Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625). This was from his setting of the Fifth Cantic of *The Song of Solomon* as published in George Wither’s *The Hymns and Songs of the Church* (1623):

O, my love, how comely now,
And how beautiful art thou.
Thou of dove-like eyes a paire,
Shining hast within thine haire,
And thy locks like kidlings be,
Which from Gilead hill we see.

(Song 13: words as quoted in Ralph Vaughan Williams’s score)

The *Hymnal* used “Song 13” for two well-known hymns: No. 314 which is the communion hymn “Holy Jesus! God of Love” by T. Parnell (1679-1717), and No. 413 “Jesu, grant me this, I pray,” a seventeenth-century song translated by Sir H.W. Baker.

I do not intend to write a technical (Schenkerian or other) analysis of *Hymn Tune Prelude on “Song 13.”* However, a few words about the formal construction of the piece will be useful. The Prelude is scored in G major and is signed *Andante tranquillo* throughout. There are no accidentals in the entire work. After an eight-bar contrapuntal introduction the *cantus firmus* is introduced in the middle register of the piano. The tune is given in its entirety with no interludes. The “chorale prelude” concludes with ten bars of contrapuntal elaboration of the hymn tune.

The score was signed on the last page of the manuscript with “For Harriet Cohen but only if she likes it. If not, delete your name and return to me, I shan’t be huffy. R. Vaughan Williams.” The composer had also written to Cohen, “Here it is [.] If you don’t like it send it back. If you *do* like it I will come and claim my reward” [of one thousand kisses]. (Cohen 1969, 158f)

Harriet Cohen found the piece quite difficult to study (Cohen 1936, 150ff). It was not so much learning and playing the notes as

executing the phrasing and balance of the parts. Furthermore, Vaughan Williams had not written particularly sympathetically for her – there are some examples of part writing that goes in contrary motion to the interval of a tenth, which was beyond her stretch. She had a very small hand so that she had to rearrange some of the parts between hands which could largely be solved by taking the “top note with the [right hand]”. The introductory bars were considered to be “quite ardent” and “quite different in quality” to Gibbons’s chorale tune. She insists that this theme should not be “sung with such bell-like tones as in a Bach Chorale because the verse from the *Song of Songs* is, after all, a love poem.” She describes the contrapuntal working out as “serene and beautiful.”

One wonders if a little gentle criticism of “Uncle Ralph” was implied by her comment that the tune is “difficult to play contrapuntally, as the long notes of the tune have to be held on for different lengths of time from the long notes in the counterpoint.” She felt that this disparity of phrasing between the chorale and the counterpoint “can be extremely muddling.” However, I believe that it is this metrical complexity that adds considerable subtlety to the music, though at the expense of it lying well under the hands.

Harriet Cohen suggests that after the last note of the chorale (on the word “see”) the pianist keeps “the tone up so that the original composition of Vaughan Williams here to the end...is shown to be, as it is, a lovely continuation in mood and feeling of the original Hymn Tune.”

Performance and Reception

The work was tried out on Gustav Holst and Arnold Bax. Apparently, they teased her about the verse and the dedications, with Holst asking her to “Turn those dove-like eyes on us.” In spite of the technical difficulties, Cohen felt that the *Prelude* was “one of the most beautiful pieces composed in the contrapuntal style since William Byrd’s ‘A Fancie’ or the Fantasia by Orlando Gibbons.” It was during this learning process that she sent the composer a book on bees: possibly *The Life of the Bee* (1901) by Maurice Maeterlinck, which had been republished in 1929 by Eveleigh Nash & Grayson of London. This was to remind him of his summer hat!

Writing to Cohen on 1 December 1929, the composer wrote: “I know you’ll play it beautifully – no not too quick; & calm but with subconscious emotion – I sh^d love to hear you play it Ist – but my only day in London is Wed. at the R.C.M. busy morning to night. But I will come to the concert if I may: Yrs R.V.W.” (Cobbe 2008, 179)

While Michael Kennedy states that the first performance of the *Hymn Tune Prelude on ‘Song 13’ by Orlando Gibbons* was given by Harriet Cohen at the Wigmore Hall on 14 January 1930 (Kennedy 1998, 129), and this date has been followed by most other commentators, I have uncovered historical evidence to suggest that in fact it was not performed until the following month. I consulted the archivist at the Wigmore Hall who kindly sent me a list of works played at the 14 January recital:

Arnold Bax: Sonata No. 2 in G major (in one movement)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: Sonata in C major K330

Johannes Brahms: Ballade in D minor Op. 10; Intermezzo in B flat major Op. 76; Intermezzo in C sharp minor Op. 117; Rhapsody No. 2 in G minor Op. 79.

Maurice Ravel: *Alborada del Gracioso*

None of the notices for the 14 January concert suggests that the *Prelude* was played on that date or venue, and on the basis of contemporary reviews from the *Musical Mirror*, *The Observer* and *The Manchester Guardian* I believe that both are in need of revision.

The *Musical Mirror* (March, 1930) notes that “at her recital at the Aeolian Hall on February 15, Miss Harriet Cohen introduced a new pianoforte work by R. Vaughan Williams. Specially written for Miss Cohen... [who] very wisely played it twice, the second hearing adding to our appreciation.” The review goes on to suggest that “the line was faultless” but that “the composition was rather emotionless.”

The Observer (16 February 1930) also noted that the piece was first played on 15 February, after a performance of Arnold Bax’s Piano Quintet. The reviewer considers that “the tune gives secure anchorage for the circumambient part-writing that so sensitively encloses it.” It concludes by suggesting that it is “real two-hand writing, never going outside what they can reasonably be asked to do...It was made for her and fits.” This opinion is at variance with what Harriet Cohen wrote in her own analysis of the work.

Another review of this concert in *The Manchester Guardian* (17 February 1930) notes that “Miss Cohen...gave the first performance, or rather the first two performances, of a new piano piece by Dr. Vaughan Williams, a ‘Hymn-tune Prelude,’ written somewhat after the manner of Bach’s Chorale Preludes, but still more in the composer’s own distinctive G idiom.” The reviewer (E.B.) concludes by remarking that “Miss Cohen...wisely refrained from making it the excuse for any personal exhibition. She presented the music calmly, and one liked it better because she made no urgent plea on its behalf. Its cool, quasi-primitive beauty, in fact, captivated the ear at once, and would have done so without a second hearing.” Interestingly, Cohen stated that the first performance was at the Aeolian Hall and not the Wigmore Hall. (Cohen 1969, 159)

The *Prelude* was published by Oxford University Press in 1930. The reviewer of the score in *The Sackbut* (possibly Philip Heseltine) regarded a pianoforte solo by Vaughan Williams as an “all too rare event.” However, he was “grateful for small things.” He pointed out that the composer’s treatment is in four-parts and is diatonic. He suggested that “[there is] at first sight, a good deal of what I believe Ernest Newman calls ‘catch-as-catch-can counterpoint.’” However he concludes by suggesting that these contrapuntal “clashes set up a new standard of relative beauty.”

In 1930 the *Prelude* was transcribed for organ by E. Stanley Roper (1878-1953). Once again, *The Sackbut* (April, 1931) comments favourably: This “... [is a] first-rate...beautiful serene transcription for organ, which is, one feels, its right medium.” In the same year, an arrangement for strings by the composer Helen Glatz (1908-1996) was published by Oxford University Press. This was with the permission of the composer.

Conclusion

In *A Bundle of Time* Harriet Cohen wrote that she “did not begin to pay the ‘reward’ (of one thousand kisses) until some ten minutes before the recital in the artists’ room at the Aeolian Hall after I had played through his piece to his great satisfaction on a little upright piano.” Ursula Vaughan Williams described the composer’s “account keeping” as “...gaily meticulous” in claiming his reward. The forfeits were continued into America where composer and pianist’s visits coincided. 🐾

Vaughan Williams and Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*

Renee Stewart

Ralph Vaughan Williams conducted thirty-one performances of the *St. Matthew Passion* between 1923 and 1958. This was a great commitment for one composer to make to another and there is no doubt of his great devotion to the work and what amounted almost to an obsession that it should go on being performed.

The Surrey Performing Arts Library has a large and fragile full score, which he used together with a collection of orchestral parts. The score has markings and performance instructions in it by him and by others and also has, inserted, a manuscript copy of the continuo part, which he wrote for the piano for his performances with the Leith Hill Musical Festival. Looking at this score led me into spending many happy hours doing research into his performances of the work and the circumstances connected with them with a massive amount of interesting material to explore.

In his time as conductor of the Bach Choir, Vaughan Williams had conducted nine performances in London in the 1920s, but it was not until 1931 that he achieved his first performance with Leith Hill. This involved meticulous preparation over a period of two years to ensure that the large choir knew its notes (including setting certain parts of it for competition) and there were many rehearsals of those involved (not forgetting the orchestra) before the massed performance in the recently opened Dorking Halls on 24 March 1931. The next performance was in 1938 but it was not until 1942 that it became an annual festival event.

I was lucky enough both to hear one performance and to sing in others as a member of the choir. It was certainly an electrifying event with great drama in it, but also great sincerity. There were many practical issues to be considered, not least where it could be performed. The Dorking Halls provided the solution until the

Second World War, when they were requisitioned. It was thereafter decided to perform in St. Martin's Church Dorking, for which Vaughan Williams made a special abridged version (with professionally-copied orchestral parts) for string orchestra with piano and organ. The pitch of the organ was not at that time compatible with oboes and flutes. In 1947 it was planned to give one church performance (this time in St. Martin's, Epsom) and one with full orchestra in the Dorking Halls. In the event the Halls were not ready, so the second performance took place in the Central Hall, Redhill.

Another issue to consider was that of language. Vaughan Williams had no doubts about this at all – he felt that the language of performance should be that of the majority of people present – but the matter of cuts was more complicated. He did not favour the idea of having Part 1 in the morning and Part 2 in the afternoon, so cuts there had to be! Some choruses and solos were cut altogether and there were some shortenings made: in *da capo* arias, for instance, only the orchestra was to do the repeat. This was so skilfully done that the whole performance worked wonderfully well.

The biggest criticism made about this version of *St. Matthew* is about the use of piano for the continuo, but Vaughan Williams wrote persuasively on this matter and the impossibility to reproduce the circumstances with which Bach had to contend, even if it was necessarily a good thing. Personally, I can accept and enjoy Vaughan Williams's piano part, and I certainly think it should be preserved. As regards the research of detail, it is absolutely fascinating and I think worthwhile. It can also tend to be a little longwinded so I have cut a lot from this article. The 1958 recording is a wonderful source of information as well as a moving experience. ♪

The image shows a handwritten musical score for the 'O Blessed Jesus' chorus from the St. Matthew Passion. The score is written on aged, slightly torn paper. At the top, it is labeled 'No 3 "O BLESSED JESU"'. Below this, there are handwritten notes: 'Organ Rehearsal audience sing soprano' and 'Audience stand singing'. The score itself is for a choral part, with the title 'CHORAL (Chori 1.2.)' and a bracketed '3' above it. The lyrics are written in German and English. The German lyrics are: 'Herz lieb-ster Je - su, was hast du ver - bro - chen, dass man ein solch scharf'. The English lyrics are: 'f o bless-ed Je - su, how hast Thou of - fend - - That now on Thee such 5)'. The score is written for Soprano, Violino 1., Traversa 1.2., Hautbois 1.2., Alto, and Violino 2. There are various musical notations, including clefs, time signatures, and dynamic markings like 'f'.

Vaughan Williams's own score of the *St. Matthew Passion* held at the Dorking Performing Arts Library (courtesy of the Leith Hill Musical Festival)

The opening of Leith Hill Place

Gabrielle Gale



Work in progress at Leith Hill Place

It has been four years since Ralph Vaughan Williams's childhood home, Leith Hill Place, was vacated after over thirty years of tenancy by a boarding school, and its future has been a hot topic of discussion, both locally and nationally. The exterior of the building has fallen into disrepair, but there is now an exciting opportunity to breathe life back into the house and offer visitor access. Gifted to the National Trust by the composer in 1944, it was a Wedgwood family home – Vaughan Williams's mother was a member of the famous pottery family – and Charles Darwin was a relation and frequent visitor.

This will be the first step on a journey to secure the future of this wonderful building and to tell the stories of the well-known historical

figures associated with it. Ralph Vaughan Williams will obviously be an important part of that story. There is strong feeling from many that this house is the obvious focus for lovers of Vaughan Williams's music, an idea given national coverage recently in an article in *The Times* by Marcus Binney. Elgar and Britten both have a "house" – where is Vaughan Williams's? However, the Trust is mindful of the danger of making the house a Vaughan Williams shrine, an idea that the man himself would probably have abhorred.

As Visitor Operations Manager for the National Trust I have been hard at work over the last few months and Leith Hill Place will open to the public on 26 July. There will be a welcoming, drop-in space for visitors to sit and relax, enjoy the glorious views and engage in feedback on how they would like to see the house used in the future. There will be art and craft and musical activities, and refreshments available. Guided tours for small groups up into the attic floor will enable visitors to access the vast majority of the building and see for themselves its current state, away from the main spaces, which will be refreshed, if not completely renovated, for opening. It is also hoped to stage a few small-scale concerts. It will be a destination for visitors curious about the history of the house and a welcome rest for walkers in the vicinity.

The summer and autumn opening programme at Leith Hill Place offers the chance to see a house in transition. It is not yet a finished National Trust visitor experience, but rather, the occasion to see this important house behind the scenes at a crucial stage in shaping its future. Make sure you don't miss the opportunity to visit and see for yourself.

There is a lot to do before opening, so watch out for further updates at www.nationaltrust.org.uk/leithhill.

Leith Hill Place will be open every Friday, Saturday, Sunday & Monday, 11am to 5pm, from 26 July to 4 November 2013. 🐦

Music You Might Like

Simon Coombs

Amongst those composers whose names begin with C – there are 388 currently recorded by Naxos – there are a considerable number who are French. My own collection lists a total of forty-two names, from which a short list of ten emerges with the usual pain at having to omit much beautiful and striking music.

From the Baroque era comes the master of the harpsichord, François Couperin, whose *Les Barricades Mystérieuses* is a gem waiting to be discovered. Other French non-entrants are Chabrier, Chausson and André Caplet, who wrote several worthy Prix de Rome entries and skilfully orchestrated many of Debussy's piano pieces. Among others who "miss the cut" are the Italians, Casella and Castelnuovo-Tedesco, and the English, Cliffe, Coles and Cowen. The top ten features three British, three French and three American composers, and one Pole, with whom we begin!

One could hardly omit Chopin in his centenary year, but choosing works to highlight is not so easy. Let me therefore bring to members' attention a double-disc from EMI (50999) which includes the ballets *Les Sylphides* and "A Month in the Country", drawn from orchestrations of some of Chopin's best known works. My own personal favourite, the Mazurka in D major, is among them.

Next the greatest of all British composers of light music, Eric Coates. *By the Sleepy Lagoon* and the *Dam Busters March* are in everyone's collection, but Dutton Epoch CDLX 7198 includes the beautiful *Bird Songs at Eventide* and other rarities.



Eric Coates

The first French composer in the list is Gustave Charpentier, whose opera *Louise* contains the famous aria "Depuis le jour". Amongst his orchestral works is a suite, *Impressions d'Italie*, which is well worth exploring. The only modern recording is from Glossa (GCD 922211) with three other Prix de Rome entries.

From the USA comes George Whitefield Chadwick, a composer of much attractive though not necessarily always memorable music. One work which stands out is his *Symphonic Sketches*, which is coupled with his Symphony No 2 on Chandos 9334. Two of those sketches, "Jubilee" and "Noël", are well worth a listen.

At six in the chart is Marie-Joseph Canteloube, whose *Chants d'Auvergne* are his only well-known works, based on folk songs from the eponymous area of France from which he hailed. "La Delaissado" is a particular delight, especially as sung by Victoria de Los Angeles on EMI 7243 5 66978. His *Poème* for violin and orchestra, on Hyperion CDH 55396, comes with an interesting collection of French rarities for the same combination. Philippe Graffin, the soloist, has also recorded Canteloube's *Dans la Montagne* for Hyperion.

Samuel Coleridge Taylor, another composer known almost entirely for a single work, comes next. *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast* is a wonderful piece, for singers as well as audiences, but again it is Hyperion who have allowed us a broader perspective of this fascinating man's music, with the Violin Concerto on CDA 67420 and chamber music on CDA 67590.

The second American in the list is Aaron Copland, who ranks with Samuel Barber as two of the giants of the US music scene (wait until we reach H and I). Try the first movement of the Clarinet Concerto, *Appalachian Spring* and the *Old American Songs*, especially "At the river" and "Simple Gifts". The latter, a Shaker song first used by Copland in *Appalachian Spring* is also to be heard on Judy Collins's 1970 album, "Whales and Nightingales"!

The top three come from the more obscure reaches of classical music. Doreen Carwithen was the wife of William Alwyn, but was a composer herself. Chandos have done justice to her orchestral output on Chandos 9524 – the *Suffolk Suite* will reward members who care to try it.

I make no apology for returning to a composer already brought to members' attention by Rikky Rooksby in the *Journal* of October 2011. Thomas Canning wrote his *Fantasy on a Hymn by Justin Morgan* in a style very much redolent of that of Vaughan Williams. It is a beautiful piece and is to be found on a Telarc disc (CD80503) together with several other similar works; the disc is entitled "American Adagios".

Which leaves the final French composer, and once again I have chosen a composer whose music has never been heard at the Proms. Jean Cras was a friend of the much better known Henri Duparc. He was a naval officer and therefore something of an amateur composer, but his music is well worth investigation. His opera *Polyphème* is perhaps his best known work, and is available on the Timpani label, but a double CD of his orchestral music from the same company (2C2088) gives the best picture of his achievement. Unfortunately, it is currently not available in the UK, but you can find its contents on YouTube. The four works are *Journal de bord*, *Ames d'enfants*, *Légende* for cello and orchestra and the Piano Concerto.

I am pleased that a number of members and readers have expressed appreciation of my desire to share my own musical discoveries. I hope that the silent majority are also finding some interest in these articles. If the Editor allows, I shall bring you more gems from the Ds in the next *Journal*. 🐦

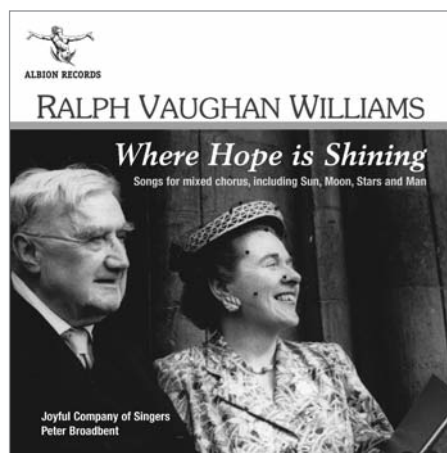
A Century On

Simon Coombs

In Michael Kennedy's *Catalogue of the Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams*, there are thirteen entries for the year 1913. Of these, the major one is the *London Symphony* – it was completed towards the end of the year, and received its first performance in March 1914. I shall write about it in the next edition of the *Journal*.

Vaughan Williams spent much of 1913 writing incidental music for the Shakespeare season at Stratford-upon-Avon. None of this Shakespeare music has been recorded as yet, but I hope to be able to return to the subject at a later date. The music he wrote for Maeterlinck's *The Death of Tintagiles*, however, was recorded in 1998 by Richard Hickox and the London Symphony Orchestra, and issued on the CD which was primarily devoted to *A Cotswold Romance*. There is a Prelude, and six more short pieces follow, the whole lasting just under fifteen minutes (CHAN 9646). The work was performed in June 1913, and was also used in a radio broadcast of the play in 1975.

Another work from 1913 is to be found on the Albion Records release "Where Hope is Shining". This is "Mannin Veen" ("Dear Mona"), a setting of a traditional melody from the Isle of Man. I should like to think that every reader of the *Journal* is also a collector of Albion CDs, but for those who have not yet heard it, this one is a delightful set of songs for mixed chorus, performed by the Joyful Company of Singers under Peter Broadbent and is highly recommendable (ALBCD006).



Finally, mention should be made of the *Five English Folk Songs* for unaccompanied mixed chorus. These are "The Dark-eyed Sailor", "The Springtime of the Year", "Just as the Tide was Flowing", "The Lover's Ghost" and "Wassail Song". Vaughan Williams made several arrangements of these songs over the years, but these were first performed in 1913, probably at festivals. They were recorded, again by Chandos, in 1996, with the Finzi Singers under Paul Spicer, as part of a programme of choral works by Gustav Holst and Vaughan Williams (CHAN 9425). The CD enables an interesting comparison of the styles of the two composers and is well worth exploring. ♪



STYLISH BINDERS AVAILABLE

As members of the Ralph Vaughan Williams Society we are justly proud of our Journal. Specially commissioned for the composer's 50th anniversary year, our handsome binders are custom made for the Society in black with gold lettering on the spine. Each one holds twelve issues (four years' worth) with easy-to-use elasticated cords.
Price: £12.50 each, incl. p&p.

Please send your order to:

Binder Offer, The RVW Society, c/o 24 Birdcroft Road, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, AL8 6EQ, U.K.

Cheques should be made payable to:

The Ralph Vaughan Williams Society.

Letters

A “HYMNATHON” AT BURBAGE

I have mentioned the excellent choir of St Catherine’s, Burbage previously in connection with their occasional performances of Vaughan Williams works at the Sunday Eucharist. The choir faced a stern challenge at 7 pm on Friday 12 April when they commenced a 24-hour “hymnathon”. The intention was to raise money for the choir’s funds by inviting sponsorship of hymns, with a minimum of £3 per hymn.

The choir uses the *New English Hymnal* (1986), which omits several Vaughan Williams tunes included in the original *English Hymnal*. Here was an opportunity to introduce some tunes the choir may not know. So I sponsored three (and provided copies of the music) from my tattered *Songs of Praise*, which draws extensively on the *English Hymnal*. I sponsored *Marathon* (SP 302), which seemed appropriate, *Salva Festa Dies* (SP 390), and *Famous Men* (SP 432). I should add that I paid over the odds to persuade the choirmaster, Simon Westmancoat, to “give them a go”.

The exercise began with *NEH* 1, the choir looking very neat in cassocks and surplices. These were quite rapidly shed as the evening wore on. The Advent and Christmas hymns seemed most out of place just after Easter. I have to confess that I didn’t stay all night. (One person stayed all twenty-four hours!) The choir, organists and pianist of course operated in relays.

The ones I had sponsored were performed on the following day, by a somewhat reduced choir, which gave a stirring rendition of *Salva Festa Dies*. One chorister, at least, was familiar with this as an Easter hymn. It wasn’t until Saturday afternoon that a reduced and rather drained-looking choir made an attempt on *Famous Men*. Learning that there had been no time for rehearsal I felt somewhat ashamed at having asked them to sing this through-composed canticle. It was a bit of a struggle for those who hadn’t heard it before, and I hope they weren’t put off a very nice piece.

Shortly after this came *Marathon*. This started life as a march from *The Wasps*, and as the words are intended for missionaries bound overseas, they are not entirely appropriate these days. Furthermore, its title seemed well fitted to the occasion, but nine verses were rubbing salt into the wounds. Again I felt a bit ashamed.

During my four visits I was there long enough to hear several other Vaughan Williams items, including *Kingsfold* (tune chosen in preference to Tallis’s *Third Mode Melody*), *Monks Gate*, and *York*, not by Vaughan Williams but one of his favourites, used in both *The Pilgrim’s Progress* and *Hugh the Drover*. But the organist skipped over *Magda*, and told me afterwards that this was because it hadn’t been sponsored, which doesn’t explain how many other lesser known tunes got performed.

Most of the choir appeared again on Sunday morning for a baptism service, but it didn’t include my daughter (soprano) who had sung for too long and had to spend the morning in bed. But my grandson Benjamin (boy treble, age 11) was there, fully recovered. He had

spent Friday night sleeping, or attempting to sleep, in the church vestry. By Saturday afternoon he was absolutely drained.

I am pleased to report that members of the choir are still speaking to me after inflicting unfamiliar tunes upon them.

The “hymnathon”, with accompanying bric a brac and cake sale, made over £1600.

Michael J Gainsford

Burbage, Leicestershire, UK

TO VIBRATE, OR NOT

Miles Croally’s interesting comments in his concert review (Feb. 2013) concerning Sir Roger Norrington’s ideas about, and use of vibrato in Vaughan Williams’s music reminded me of some other comments on this subject. In the Ninth Symphony, at the beginning of the second movement, the flugelhorn part has the indication *lontano senza vibrato*. Regarding this, Vaughan Williams wrote in a letter, “The Flugel man showed me at rehearsal that unless I allowed a minimum of vibrato, the tone would sound hard, rather like a bad horn.” (Ursula Vaughan Williams, *R.V.W. ...*, p.391) The other instance concerned with vibrato is in the *String Quartet No. 2 in A minor* (1944). Frank Howes tells us that in the slow movement (Romance), “the strings are directed to play *senza vibrato*, an instruction in due time cancelled by ‘cantabile’.” (*The Music of Ralph Vaughan Williams*, p. 221) The *senza vibrato* section sounds like a chest of viols in my recording.

Based on these two instances, I would suspect that Vaughan Williams, while obviously aware of the virtues and vices of the various degrees of vibrato from absence to excess, would likely favour a vibrato of moderate amplitude to be taken as a norm. Furthermore, biographical information about Vaughan Williams shows that his opinions were not rigidly fixed. He was keen to ask questions and learn from others. He most likely would have liked to discuss this issue with Sir Roger!

John Barr

Bridgewater, VA, USA

CRIBBING FROM LVB

I should be interested to know if anybody has investigated the influence of Beethoven on Vaughan Williams. Although he was a composer whose music Vaughan Williams did not really like, as he makes clear in what is nevertheless a perceptive analysis of the Ninth Symphony, I seem to detect several examples of what he would have called “cribbing” from his predecessor. Apart from the frequently noted parallel of the link between scherzo and finale in Beethoven’s Fifth and Vaughan Williams’s Fourth (and there are other discernible links between the two symphonies), surely the *Missa Solemnis* has influenced both the *Sea Symphony* (the unaccompanied choral ending of the Beethoven’s Gloria on

that of Vaughan Williams's Scherzo) and *Dona Nobis Pacem* (the anguished solos of the Agnus Dei on the soprano's repeated interjections, and – admittedly less distinctively – the use of trumpet calls and drumbeats.) Then, to me at least, the way the melody of “Nation shall not lift up sword against nation” in the last movement of the same work works its way up through the strings is strongly reminiscent of the way Beethoven's “Ode to Joy” introduces itself. Perhaps the similarity of the sentiments expressed by the words prompted an unconscious echo?

Charles Paterson

Asfordby, Leicestershire, UK

A SEA SYMPHONY

I have taken interest in recent Journal articles on *A Sea Symphony*, and having sung in a performance a couple of years ago, I would like to add my own (amateur) thoughts. Whilst I thought I knew the work quite well, it still turned up facts which were new to me.

I am sure it is well known that not long after the first performance, Vaughan Williams made an alteration to the opening orchestral entry. Originally, the choral word “sea” (“Behold the sea itself”) was obscured by the orchestral entry, so he moved the orchestral *tutti* to the next beat in the bar. I knew that the “Sine Nomine” theme was there, sung by the soprano soloist “token of all brave captains”, but what I had not realised is that it is then taken up immediately by the chorus in inversion. At the text “emblem of man elate above death” Vaughan Williams builds to a climax in which the sopranos have a rising line that firstly goes to a top A, on the repeat, to a B, and must go to a C to complete the phrase, but Vaughan Williams, with commendable sensitivity, drops them to a G, and lets the violins carry the line.

The second movement is very atmospheric, the “plodding bass” very evident.

The third movement Scherzo is both testing and exhilarating. I note the composer's suggestion that the final word “following”, in which the choir continues after the orchestra's last chord, is a “crib” from the end of the Gloria of Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, in which the choir's final “Gloria” follows the orchestral finish.

Possibly the most famous crib, however, is the quote from Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* – “Thou, thou art calling me” – as the wonderful final movement commences. It is not clear to me whether this was intentional or accidental; we know that Vaughan Williams had studied Elgar's manuscript. All he changes is the cadence, to allow the phrase to continue in the orchestra. There is a lovely moment on page 91 of the vocal score, at “after the noble invention”, in which the first altos and first basses (of which I am one) stay on the A, but the chord around us rises. It sounds inconsequential, but I found it a joy! The baritone/soprano section, brings us to the wonderful fortissimo climax of “O Thou transcendent”. Just before this great moment arrives, a note at the bottom of the page informs us that a cut may be made here. This seems a strange thing for Vaughan Williams to countenance, like omitting “Praise to the Holiest” from a performance of *Gerontius*! Perhaps there is an academic out there who can enlighten me. The final section, beginning “Away O soul”, is perhaps the trickiest part of the piece to get right because of the rhythm. It builds to its final climax on “steer for the deep waters only”, after which the piece

becomes more and more quiet, until it is barely audible, an idea he used several times, notably at the end of *Dona Nobis Pacem* and the *Fantasia on Christmas Carols*. The emotion at the end cannot be released until the audience applauds, and the conductor must delay that for as long as possible.

I do hope that fellow member Nigel Blore (*Journal*, issue 56) has found some joy in this work. I would draw his attention to a phrase in Michael Kennedy's *Works*: “It passes the test of all great music; one finds more in it, not less, as the years pass.” For me, singing the piece was a fulfilling experience, and a great highlight in my choral life.

Francis Harrison

Stockton on Tees, UK

PILGRIM THOUGHTS

On the evening of the last performance of *The Pilgrim's Progress* at the Coliseum, there was a most pleasant gathering of members of the Society both before the opera and in the interval. I spoke to the pianist, Penelope Thwaites, and mentioned that this was the fifth different version of the work I had heard. She very kindly asked me to recall my memories and said she looked forward to reading them in the *Journal*.

The Pilgrim's Progress is the work which moves me most deeply in all music. Between two performances at ENO, I went to Terry Barfoot's Vaughan Williams weekend in the New Forest which he presented with help from Em Marshall-Luck. He dealt at length with *The Pilgrim's Progress* and emphasised the extraordinary level of musical inspiration in a composition which had taken Vaughan Williams so long to complete.

In 1972, I went twice to Charterhouse School to hear John Noble, after having acquired his now legendary performance with Sir Adrian Boult which Terry used in his talk. My former A-Level student, Andrew Greenan, wrote to me recently and recalls John Noble, with whom he worked several times, as a “fine and generous colleague”. Andrew sang Gurnemanz to John Noble's Klingsor. It is hard to imagine a role more different from Pilgrim! John Noble once helped Andrew by undertaking the enormous part of Hans Sachs in Act 3 of *Meistersinger* at three days notice. I'm sure readers would like to know Andrew's opinion of John Noble, paraphrasing Churchill on Attlee: “A kind and modest man who had nothing to be modest about.” Memories fade after forty years, but I had the impression of a man who did not feel in any way compromised by singing in a simple but moving and effective school production. I can still see him on a platform with his burden on his back.

Ten years later, I went, again twice, to hear the opera at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester. The whole venture was truly amazing and the college had enough talent to fill all the roles expertly. I am struck by the number of singers who have made great careers. The surprising thing is that, unless I have missed it, Richard Whitehouse hasn't made as famous a name for himself as several others. His singing of Pilgrim was so mature and impressive for a young man. We saw Brian Redhead at the college. He told Today listeners more than once what a marvellous experience he had enjoyed. This was for me the ideal staging with a most erotic Vanity Fair and a true sense of journey. There was no sense of penny-pinching in a student production.

An advantage of the refurbishment of Covent Garden was that the company went to Symphony Hall, Birmingham, with a Ring cycle and *The Pilgrim's Progress*. The opera was semi-staged, but with the input of Joseph Ward, who had directed at the RNCM. Gerald Finley sang Pilgrim and his glorious voice was recorded under Richard Hickox.

In 2008, very shortly before his untimely death, and having performed all the Vaughan Williams symphonies at the Royal Festival Hall, Richard Hickox conducted *Pilgrim* again, this time at Sadler's Wells. Once more he had a very experienced Vaughan Williams singer in Roderick Williams, who gave a beautifully sensitive and intelligent performance. The action took place in front of the Philharmonia on the stage and was tellingly intimate.

Not long before he heard the siren call of the BBC, I wrote to Tony Hall to ask when Covent Garden would be putting on *The Pilgrim's Progress*. I had no idea that ENO were going to do so. All our members must have shared my excitement and incredulity. At the pre-performance talk on 9 November, conductor Martyn Brabbins confessed that the opera always moved him to tears but he never knew at which point of the work this would be. It was clear that he had put body and soul into making this rare opportunity a success and inspiring the musicians.

It seems rather churlish but I have to admit that I was baffled at times by what was happening on stage, even if *Vanity Fair* and the scene with the By-Ends came off very well. At the end it seemed that the action was in direct contradiction to the text and the music.

Let's hope that ENO can sell the umbrella and the electric chair and give the bank of lights back to a Premier League club. The heat could be felt quite distinctly back in the circle. It was noticeable how much fuller the Coliseum was for the final performance. Vaughan Williams did not want a concert performance but I am sure many members would return if Brabbins and his wonderful artists ever repeated the masterpiece. ENO have already performed a gripping *Riders to the Sea*, which was a sell-out, and a well-attended *Sir John in Love*, but *Pilgrim* is a very special challenge.

Another of my favourite operas is Janáček's *From the House of the Dead*. ENO is clearly in financial difficulties but it could produce this cheaply now as the Soviet-style costumes and stark, gaunt prison scenery are already there. It wouldn't cost the eye-watering million pounds that Steven Connock told us *Pilgrim* had cost. It was such an amazing evening but I am sure I am not alone in feeling that there were opportunities missed. Regrettably, they will probably not come back in a hurry.

Richard Hyland

Thatcham, Berkshire, UK

MORE...

Although I did not attend the recent live performances of *The Pilgrim's Progress* I hope I may be permitted to add a few comments to the reviews of the production, including those in the *February Journal*.

I may be wrong in my assumption, but my impression is that Vaughan Williams (and Ursula) would have been horrified.

I can understand why certain producers, often on ego-trips, feel it necessary to devise controversial "realisations" in an attempt to revitalise certain hackneyed (or at least frequently performed) operas, but *The Pilgrim's Progress* is rarely performed, and the work and its composer deserve something better than this.

One wonders if Yoshi Oida even read the book and absorbed its spiritual message. Heaven prevent his ever being let loose on *Job*.

I thoroughly enjoyed the semi-staged version some years ago, but having read about the November production I am glad I stayed at home and listened to it on the radio insulated from the seeming horrors on the stage.

Michael J Gainsford

Burbage, Leicestershire, UK

MUSIC YOU MIGHT LIKE

I was interested to read Simon Coombs's article on the subject of music you might like in the *February Journal*. In particular I was very pleased to see the inclusion of the composer Joly Braga Santos. Since I first began listening to his symphonies, concertos and other works about five years ago I have been astonished that they are never performed in Britain and are very rarely mentioned. The first four symphonies are monumental in stature, filled with impressive, sweeping themes and hair-raising climaxes. His Concerto for Strings in D, on the other hand, is a deeply felt, highly emotive piece, the second movement of which was played at his funeral. This is undoubtedly one of the most moving pieces for string orchestra I have ever heard. Why isn't it played here?

Along with Braga Santos can be added the name of Freitas Branco; another very worthy composer whose name is also very little known. His symphonies are more classical and restrained than those of Braga Santos – the influence of César Franck being very notable in 1 and 2. Some of his other works come under the heading of "truly amazing" in my books. His symphonic poem *Vathek* is a microcosm of twentieth century orchestral music with a breathtaking mixture of styles. Conversely, *Artificial Paradises* (1910), out-Debussy's Debussy (if you see what I mean) and has an incredible central climax that makes *La Mer* seem little more than a muddy puddle.

Why are such composers so little known? Well, one reason may be that in Braga Santos's case he changed direction mid-stream. In the early sixties his style changed abruptly. Swept away by the prevalent tide of modernism, his music changed from rich and romantic to spiky and dissonant. Other composers, like the New Zealander, Lilburn, did the same and seemed to suffer for it. Few listeners appreciate both styles with equal enthusiasm it seems, so about half the listeners like one part of the output and not the other. Vaughan Williams, as we know, did not change tack and has definitely fared better because of it.

De Freitas Branco seems to have suffered because his music is too much influenced by others such as Franck, Debussy and Ravel. But if you can outdo such composers at their own game is that not a good thing? Answers on a post card please.

Rob Furneaux

Yelverton, Devon, UK

GLORIOUS JOHN

If this bit of utter trivia has been noted before, then please disregard it! It concerns George Borrow's *Lavengro*, on Ursula's authority "Ralph's favourite novel." In Chapter 43, we meet a character known only as Glorious John. Here is the paragraph in question:

"I had often heard of one Glorious John, who lived at the western end of town; on consulting Taggart, he told me that it was possible that Glorious John would publish my ballads and Ab Gwilym, that is, said he, taking a pinch of snuff, provided you can see him; so I went to the house where Glorious John resided, and a glorious house it was, but I could not see Glorious John—I called a dozen times, but I never could see Glorious John. Twenty years after, by the greatest chance in the world, I saw Glorious John, and sure enough Glorious John published my books, but they were different books from the first: I never offered my ballads or Ab Gwilym to Glorious John. Glorious John was no snuff-taker. He asked me to dinner, and treated me with superb Rhenish wine. Glorious John is now gone to his rest, but I—what was I going to say?—the world will never forget Glorious John."

Of course it begs the question: could Vaughan Williams have recalled this passage when he presented Sir John Barbirolli with the autograph full score of his Symphony No. 8, inscribed with the words "For glorious John with love and admiration from Ralph"? We do know, again from Ursula, that he was reading *Lavengro* as late as 1951. Although Ursula suggests that the reference is to Sir Walter Scott's well-known sobriquet for John Dryden, it would seem reasonable to speculate, given the proximity of his reading of the novel with the composition of the Eighth Symphony, that he had Borrow's character in mind.

Alan Gillmor

Ottawa, Canada

A LARK AND A BLESSING

I am writing this letter, not as a concert review, but rather about encountering the music of Ralph Vaughan Williams in the most unlikely of places.

Firstly, did anyone catch the Radio 4 production of *1984*. Our hero Winston had crept off for an unbridled session with a girl from the Anti-Sex League. Just as things were hotting up, the door bell rang. While I was at the street door I am sure I heard strains of *The Lark Ascending*. Ralph Vaughan Williams to a sex scene! Was I mistaken?

The next unexpected encounter was at the Jesus Centre in Northampton. Each Jesus Centre has a drop-in, aimed primarily at supporting the disadvantaged and homeless or vulnerable. Jesus Centres offer mentoring to mums and tots, from maths to money-management, from healing groups to haircuts. The day centre supports people who are homeless or marginalised and offers showers, laundry, clothing, cheap food, and fortnightly drop-in sessions for ex-offenders. And it was here that I stumbled upon "Music from the Heart". This is a relaxed gathering of friendly people, of all ages, who get together to celebrate musical themes on DVD. My visit to Northampton coincided with their tribute to Vaughan Williams, and a showing of *Job* conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. What an absolute delight to see this greatest of conductors again. In his latter years one can only say his style epitomised "less is more", with that long baton tweaked from the wrist, rather like an extension of his arm, his left hand caressing the orchestra, his feet planted firmly on the ground. He rarely looked at the score.

And the players rarely looked at Sir Adrian, as if they were well drilled, confident and trusting. Those musicians with their mutton chops, the top pocket handkerchiefs... it was all as I remember the seventies. If filming techniques have moved on, so what? Located around a tea bar, tables and chairs and good company made this group a remarkable find, and I will be returning to join them again to see a documentary on Anne-Sophie Mutter, and to see music from the ghettos of Kinshasa and a performance of Beethoven's Choral Symphony by the symphony orchestra of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Such is the variety of their programme! At one point a client of the centre came around and blessed us one by one before settling down for a kip, but it was all very good natured. They are developing a website for non-regulars. There are all kinds of grand musical societies, but I doubt if I shall ever find a more friendly and down to earth group than this.

Robert Rush

London

YOU HAD TO BE THERE

In February's *Journal* Michael Gainsford apologises for his less than rapturous review of Andrew Manze's Prom concert, and signs off with the hope that his review does not prompt vituperative correspondence. Hopefully then, I am replying without being excessively vituperative. I too saw the BBC broadcast, but with the difference that I had also attended the concert. I wholeheartedly agree with his view that the broadcast was a disappointment. However, this was not because of Manze's interpretation, nor was it because the concept of three symphonies played in quick succession was overly ambitious. It was a disappointment because the broadcast in no way reflected the intense atmosphere that Manze generated, nor did it convey the majesty and power of Vaughan Williams's symphonies. Manze declared his intentions right from the outset with a No 4 that took everyone's breath away. In that respect his approach was not unlike the composer's own recording of his Fourth Symphony, in which he took scant regard of his own timings.

Certainly, I went to the concert wondering how successfully Manze would dovetail these three very different symphonies. The gasps of "Wow!" at the end of the concert were testament to how successful he was, and the applause was deafening, with many people standing. What is clearly illustrated here is how our experience of a concert is controlled by a producer who tells us who to watch and who to listen to. Television was in no way a substitute for actually being in the Albert Hall.

Some years ago I was at a concert of the Fifth Symphony. I could tell that a woman who was sitting next to me was gradually being overcome with emotion. As we arrived towards the end of the Passacaglia she could no longer control her feelings and began quietly sobbing. This was the experience of *live* music. No television producer, however gifted, can possibly replicate the true live experience, because, warts and all, there is absolutely no substitute.

Finally, I can say that the Epilogue of the Sixth Symphony was faultless. If there is one ending that is guaranteed to trigger fits of audience coughing it is undoubtedly that one. Perhaps everyone was in good health that evening, but I just think that they were awestruck.

Tadeusz Kasa

Surrey

Concert Reviews

MYSTICAL SONGS IN SHERINGHAM

On 16 March the Sheringham & Cromer Choral Society gave a performance at St Peter's Church in Sheringham of *Five Mystical Songs*. It seemed a fitting place to give this performance as just a few minutes walk away is Martincross House where Vaughan Williams lived in 1919. The Society website informs me that he revised the *London Symphony* whilst living there; other sources claim that he wrote his *Sea Symphony* there. Which is correct? I expect someone more knowledgeable will put us straight. The house is no more than a short walk from the seafront, so it would have been admirable place to draw inspiration.

The Sheringham & Cromer Choral Society was founded in 1933 under the late Norman Cutting. Today it has a membership of around ninety singers. The Musical Director is Nathan Waring who is also Director of Music at Gresham's School, Holt. Assistant Musical Director and Accompanist is Lawrence Tao, who also teaches at Gresham's.

The concert opened with the *Five Mystical Songs* with Jamie Wright, baritone and Laurence Tao at the piano. The piano opening to "Easter" was bold, full of purpose and the choir were confident, if a little lacking in their diction. The concluding chorus was sung quietly and thoughtfully, and this was, overall, an accurate and pleasing opening. In "I got me flowers", the baritone solo was clear with moving melodic lines and in verse 3 the choir's humming tone gave support and enhancement to the melody. The conclusion was strong and resolute with the soloist and choir warming to their task. The accompaniment in "Love bade me welcome" was flowing and pleasing to the ear. The soloist started quietly and developed as the music slowed to a fuller tone. The conversation that followed tended to sound more akin to a monologue! The concluding chorus plainsong "O Sacrum Convivium", whilst sung with passion, was perhaps slightly too lilting, not sung without expression as the score indicates. The soloist gave a fine performance of "The Call" that was thoroughly enjoyed by the audience, and this was followed by "Antiphon", a triumphant hymn of praise. The accompaniment was lively, bright and gave one the sense of pealing bells, the chorus entry pleasing on the ear and sung with eager enthusiasm.

The Vaughan Williams was followed by a performance of *Thema und Variationen*, Op 13, by Franz Strauss. It was played by Lynne Roberts, horn and Lawrence Tao, piano. After the interval we had the Requiem by Carl Jenkins.

It is very easy to cast a critical ear over any performance but we have to remember that it is amateurs who are performing for the sheer love of it. I know only too well as my wife performs with this choir, so by the time the performance arrives I am conversant with every detail of the alto part. Vaughan Williams was always quick to encourage and support amateur groups. Living in North Norfolk we value our choral societies for their effort and commitment as

we have so little live music. Vaughan Williams premiered *Five Tudor Portraits* in St Andrew's Hall, Norwich, as did Sir Edward Elgar with his *Sea Pictures*. What a glorious musical heritage!

Congratulations should go to Nathan Waring for his hard work and dedication in preparing the choir for this work and to Lawrence Tao for his accompaniments throughout the performance and many hours of rehearsals.

Clive Elgar

RVW AT STRATFORD

On 16, 17 and 18 March the boys of King Edward VI School Stratford upon Avon – Shakespeare's school – presented performances of *Henry V* on the centenary of a performance by "King Edward's Boys" in 1913. A couple of years after this performance most of the cast went off to fight in the Great War. Seven of them, including two brothers, failed to return.

The 2013 production was accompanied by the incidental music composed by Vaughan Williams in 1913 for the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre. Most of this music was recently discovered by the school in the Memorial Theatre library, and there appears to be considerably more than that listed in Michael Kennedy's *Catalogue*.

Because the play was oversubscribed a separate performance of the music alone, with spoken dialogue to put it into context, was given on 20 March. I was lucky enough to attend this historic concert in the school's Levi Fox hall, incidentally on the 600th anniversary of Henry V's accession.

The concert was given by a small orchestra of twenty-three, plus a speaker and a small choral group. The audience numbered about two hundred, with a fair sprinkling of Society members. There were no spare seats.



The 1913 production of *Henry V* performed by King Edward VI School pupils

The concert began with four of the items Vaughan Williams had composed for *Richard II*, including an arrangement of “Green-sleeves”. This is not the usually heard one from *Sir John in Love*, or the *Fantasia*. This was followed by a choral rendition of three Vaughan Williams hymns. The hymns were *Down Ampney*, *Monks Gate*, and a third which I recognised from Holst’s 1912 setting of Psalm 86. This, I found later, was *Mon Dieu, prête-moi l’oreille*. In the *English Hymnal* the composer is given as L Bourgeois (1510-61) but the Acknowledgements list it under Vaughan Williams.

The first half concluded with a spirited rendering of the *Agincourt Carol*, accompanied by a hurdy-gurdy, played by the Musical Director.

The whole of the second half was devoted to the *Henry V* music, interspersed with readings from the play. I cannot praise too highly the speaker, Jeremy Franklin, who had taken the part of Henry V in the play.

I am unable to review all the items of the music played. There were twenty of these, including seven trumpet fanfares, all different, superbly played by Sam Bridges, who also has a fine voice and featured in some of the choral and vocal items.

Much of the music appeared to me to be original. Some, but not all by any means includes quotations of songs contemporary with the play, including a French folk song whose name eludes me, the inevitable *Agincourt Song*, *The Gallant Arethusa* – rather incongruously! – *L’homme armé*, and the march by William Byrd used by Walton in his film music. In fact, I was struck by the similarity of much of this music to that by Walton. Perhaps some of the similarities arose from the work of the conductor and arranger, Andrew Henderson, who composed several bars to fill in the bits missing from the original manuscript. The newly composed passages were not identified. The pre-battle music accompanied by the lower strings sounded very Waltonian. But the similarities go beyond that. Could it be that Walton had attended the 1913 production? This is most unlikely, he would have been only eleven years old, and at Christ’s Church Cathedral School in Oxford at the time. Or had he got his hands on the manuscripts? Again unlikely and probably just a case of great minds thinking alike.

This was a most enjoyable and indeed musically significant concert. The orchestra was not perfect. It was somewhat light on violins, and their intonation at times seemed to me to be somewhat awry. The lower strings were better, as were the brass and woodwind.

The school and its Director of Music, Andrew Henderson, should be congratulated on their enterprise in unearthing this large chunk of relatively early Vaughan Williams and presenting it in this way. I understand that the performance and rehearsals were recorded with a view to issuing a CD of the event. If so I would recommend it to Society members. The enterprise and enthusiasm of all concerned deserves our support and encouragement.

Michael Gainsford

THE SEA AT NEWCASTLE

On 23 March a wonderful feast of early Vaughan Williams was laid on in the Newcastle Civic Centre by the Newcastle Choral Society,

under its Musical Director Mark Anyan, together with the Orchestra North East, and soloists Lisa Swayne, soprano, and Dawid Kimberg, bass-baritone. As a dutiful father and lover of Vaughan Williams I had to travel across the Irish Sea to support a choir whose second tenors include my son! And travel was a theme of the two works which were appropriately paired in this concert, *Songs of Travel* (1904), in the version orchestrated by Vaughan Williams and Roy Douglas, and *A Sea Symphony* (1903-9). A life’s, or a soul’s, journey “into the unknown” may be described as a *leitmotif* in a number of Vaughan Williams’s earlier and later compositions. (*The Pilgrim’s Progress* is an example of the latter.) In the two works of this concert the composer had been inspired to set words by R. L. Stevenson (*Songs of Travel*) and Walt Whitman (*Sea Symphony*).

The original male soloist had to cancel because of laryngitis, but what a fine last-minute replacement South African-born Dawid Kimberg turned out to be! He has a rich, dark chocolate voice and was able, with the help of excellent diction, to convey the character of each of the *Songs of Travel*, as well as the range and variety of the whole cycle. Thus there was, for example, strength and power in abundance in *The Vagabond’s* celebration of freedom, whilst the following song, *Let Beauty Awake*, stood out all the more in its graceful lyricism as conveyed by Kimberg’s delivery. One of the most beautiful songs is *Whither must I wander*, and how effectively the soloist presented its contrasting moods of melancholy and the hope associated with spring in his shaping and colouring of the wonderful, distinctive melody. The audience could well sympathise with the hope offered by the singer on such a bitterly cold evening in Newcastle! Soloist and orchestra parted company slightly at the *poco rit.* in the lovely *Bright is the Ring of Words*, but this was a passing moment in a fine interpretation, the semi-professional orchestra proving to be a sympathetic accompanist.

Dawid Kimberg was also a star performer in the *Sea Symphony*. Here he was ably supported by soprano soloist Lisa Swayne in some fine duet singing, particularly in the fourth movement. She was also suitably strong and true at “Flaunt out, O sea”, and gentle and sustained at “But do you reserve especially for yourself” in her first movement exchanges with the chorus. And she was beautifully controlled in her contribution to the lovely concluding section, “O my brave soul, o farther sail”. Conductor Mark Anyan paced the work admirably, with perhaps the one exception in the third movement, where the contrast between the *Allegro brillante* of the main section and the *largamente* tune – “Where the great vessel sailing” – was a little extreme, with the latter too slow to my ears.

The choir of a hundred or so singers was somewhat underpowered and struggled to make itself heard when the heavy brass held sway. But by and large the choristers coped heroically with some very tricky passages, especially with the frequently changing time signatures, tempi and rhythm in the fourth movement. At “Away O Soul”, the reluctance of the sopranos to enter caused uncertainty in the other lines and the performance became momentarily ragged. But there was much good choral singing, allowing the power and beauty of Vaughan Williams’s early symphonic masterpiece to emerge in all its glory. It completed a most enjoyable evening, a concert to gladden and warm the heart and bolster us against the freezing night air as we left the Civic Centre.

Where else, in recent times, has such a feast of Vaughan Williams’s music been on offer? Full marks to the initiative and commitment

of the Newcastle Choral Society. What's more, the programme notes contained some of the most informative and well written observations on Vaughan Williams that I have encountered in a programme, a bargain for a pound!

Tony Williams

RVW IN TOKYO

This spring, Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra (TMSO), one of the leading professional orchestras among more than thirty in Japan, held two consecutive subscription concerts featuring the Vaughan Williams symphonies, so far rarely performed here. For this ambitious project, James Judd was invited from Britain as guest conductor again, following his first appearance in 2010. (On that occasion he performed two Elgar symphonies, to warm applause from the audience.)

The programmes were as follows:

3 APRIL, SUNTORY HALL (2,006 seats)

Elgar: *Serenade* in E minor

Beethoven: Piano Concerto No. 5 in E flat major, "Emperor" (with Vadym Kholodenko, piano)

Vaughan Williams: Symphony No. 5 in D

8 APRIL, TOKYO BUNKA KAIKAN (2,303 seats)

Elgar: *Cockaigne*

Beethoven: Piano Concerto No. 4 in G major, (with Francesco Piemontesi, piano)

Vaughan Williams: Symphony No. 4 in F minor

To begin with, I am afraid that Vaughan Williams remains unrecognized in Japan. As far as the situation surrounding his music is concerned, nothing has changed here substantially since my report to the *Journal* in July 2008. Above all, apart from Nos 1 and 2, his great symphonies remain almost as neglected as ever. There are eight major orchestras of "Premiere League" status in Tokyo including TMSO, but looking over the performance history of their subscription concerts during these few years, I couldn't find any positive signal at all. If my memory is correct, the latest case was the Symphony No. 5 in 2006 by NHK Symphony Orchestra (Japanese counterpart of BBC Symphony Orchestra) conducted by Sir Roger Norrington.

Under these circumstances, therefore, the Judd/TMSO's initiative can be said to be quite challenging and ambitious, and I am very pleased to report that it resulted in success.

Despite the limited rehearsal time available, Judd/TMSO succeeded in creating really outstanding performances of these two symphonies, clearly characterising their contrasting nature. Judd led the orchestra with fully confident bird's-eye perspective throughout, and TMSO kept responding to his direction very aptly all the way in a sincere, dedicated manner. It is worth a special mention that, in such a short period of time, Judd could penetrate his vision so well to the orchestra which was thus far hardly experienced in performing these works. This is because, I think, Judd could successfully attain at once the mutual reliance and respect with his orchestra.

TMSO has for a long time been working with Eliahu Inbal, currently Principal Conductor, focusing mainly on Austro-

German repertoire. It therefore seemed easier for them to adapt themselves to No. 4 rather than No. 5, due to its quasi-Teutonic structure and sound. In fact, at the fierce opening or the explosive climax of No. 4 they fully developed their inherent power and mastery before us. In case of No. 5, the intrinsic nature of the work was also reproduced very well. To be honest, however, some more experience might be needed for them in order to thoroughly represent a sort of ethereal atmosphere that characterises not only this unique symphony but also many other Vaughan Williams masterpieces.

The performances on both nights were greeted with warm and enthusiastic applause from an audience mainly consisting of the subscribers of TMSO. Those who heard these symphonies for the first time at this occasion must be quite astounded to see with their own eyes the real image of this "extraordinarily ordinary man" with enormous, inscrutable diversities, whom they had only previously known as the composer of the "*Greensleeves*" *Fantasia*.

I hope they will continue this kind of project on a regular basis from now on, giving positive encouragement to other orchestras in Japan.

Shigeo Nakano

LEITH HILL

I was lucky enough to be able to attend the final two evenings of the Leith Hill Musical Festival at the Dorking Halls on 12 and 13 April. The Festival includes daytime competitions between local choirs who, in the evening, combine to perform a concert, part of each concert being devoted to the presentation of the trophies for that day's competitions. Not only do the choirs have to compete to a high standard in their competition songs but they also have to rehearse demanding pieces for the concert. The festival wears its connection with Vaughan Williams as former conductor modestly and quietly, but the connection is very real, as you can discover when, for example, having a coffee in the foyer you get talking to someone who has personal memories of the composer.

The Friday evening concert was very British, with a collection of pieces all written for coronations, including Walton's *Crown Imperial* (George VI, 1937), Parry's *I Was Glad* (Edward VII, 1902), Vaughan Williams's *Festival Te Deum* (George VI, 1937) and Elgar's *Coronation Ode* (Edward VII, 1902). The latter included the original version of *Land of Hope and Glory*.

The presentation of prizes on Friday evening was carried out by Hugh Cobbe, editor of the recent collection of Vaughan Williams's letters. In a short speech he mentioned some letters which related to the Festival. One of these was particularly poignant, namely, the one from Vaughan Williams to Elgar in February 1934, describing how much he was looking forward to conducting *The Dream of Gerontius* in Dorking. Elgar was himself on his deathbed when he received this letter and died three days later.

Vaughan Williams's *Festival Te Deum* was quite unknown to me before this concert. Is it rarely performed because it is perceived as being specific to coronations? Its words are that of a prayer, giving thanks to God and asking for blessing and mercy. It is therefore not limited in context to coronations. It is an uplifting

piece and I look forward to hearing it again on CD, and perhaps one day again in concert.

At the end of the Friday concert the choir joined with the audience to sing *Jerusalem*. Brian Kay, conductor, his manner with the audience friendly and reassuring, prepared us for this challenge with the exhortation, “*Crown Imperial, I Was Glad, Coronation Ode* – if we don’t get a stonking *Jerusalem* now, we never will!”

The competition songs were a delight, each day’s selections being a mix from Elizabethan madrigals to more modern works. The sound from the combined choirs was crisp and clear, every word audible. On Saturday there was an imaginative arrangement of Vaughan Williams’ *Linden Lea*, using a female descant in verse two, a shimmering sound which evoked birds singing in branches.

Shortly after this on the Saturday evening we came to what was for me the highlight of the two concerts, Morten Lauridsen’s ethereal *Lux Aeterna*, one of my current favourites but which I had never heard live. (I recommend a CD by Polyphony and the Britten Sinfonia, conducted by Stephen Layton, with the title *Lux Aeterna*, on the Hyperion label, CDA67449.) The crescendo to “cum sanctis tuis” in the fifth movement was a magical moment of live music, the swirling sound borne aloft into the concert hall and truly feeling like a living thing. Walking out of the auditorium I overheard a voice saying “That was beautiful.” Someone had heard this music for the first time and been moved by it. It is moments like this that make all the efforts of the performers worthwhile.

After the interval on Saturday, Mozart’s *Coronation Mass* in C was performed. I must confess to being rather ignorant about Mozart’s masses. And it always seems a little incongruous to me to hear a mass in a concert hall, rather than a church. Vocally the highlight for me was soprano Robyn Allegra Parton, with her rendition of the *Agnus Dei*, a deeply felt, and moving performance.

Thank you to the choirs who sang on the two evenings, namely Dorking, Epsom, Horsley and Leatherhead on Friday, and Bookham, Capel, Holmbury St. Mary and Oxshott on Saturday. This festival always delivers something special, with its quiet charm and modest buzz of excitement. And yes, it was a stonking *Jerusalem*.

Robert Shave

NO LOVE LOST?

Poor Benjamin Britten, 100 this year and more often berated than supported in these pages. I can understand that *some* members of this Society, devoted as they are to one composer, might balk at admiring the other. We know that there was no (musical) love lost between the two men, though we shouldn’t forget how Vaughan Williams admonished the members of the orchestra for their poor behaviour during the preparations for Britten’s song cycle *Our Hunting Fathers*. As a profound and lifelong admirer of Britten’s music I was happy to be present at a rare performance of another early work; one, moreover, about which the composer himself clearly had doubts, to the point that he withdrew it from circulation. (It was resurrected only after Britten’s death.) *Young Apollo*, for piano and string orchestra, composed soon after his arrival in the United States in 1939, was the first work in a lovely concert given by the Philharmonia Orchestra at the Royal Festival



Lise de la Salle

Hall in London on 9 May. The young French pianist Lise de la Salle was the excellent soloist, and I can only salute her courage in learning and presenting this short but challenging work. The piano was placed within the orchestra for the Britten, but manhandled back in front for Mozart’s “*Jeunehomme*” concerto, K271. This was a delightful performance of a work that might seem lightweight but which probes quite deeply too, especially in the slow movement. It was many years since I had last heard it, but I was very happy to remake its acquaintance, even if I found the stop/start nature of the finale – which I had frankly forgotten – rather irritating. No faulting de la Salle’s performance, though, nor the expert yet discreet accompaniment afforded by the Philharmonia and Sir Andrew.

The main work in what was something of a cockeyed programme was the *London Symphony*. I wonder how many times Sir Andrew has conducted this work. He had the score in front of him, licking his thumb with every turn of the page, though he obviously didn’t much need it. The opening of this wonderful work was marvellously mysterious, a real achievement in concert, particularly in such a sterile environment as the Festival Hall. Comparing the main body of the first movement to well-loved recorded performances – Barbirolli, Previn – I sometimes found Sir Andrew’s tempo a bit on the steady side, leading to a certain lack of swagger. But then, after a while, I stopped comparing, so convincing was the playing, and just listened in total enjoyment to the work unfolding before me. The ending, too, was highly atmospheric and very touching, with a goodly silence before the audience burst into applause. (The cretinous “Bravo Shouter” had stayed at home that evening, thank goodness!) In between, there was a most serene and pensive slow movement, with magnificent solos from the cor anglais, and from the principal viola player, who looked both surprised and delighted to receive her well-deserved bouquet at the end. To judge from Sir Andrew’s beaming smile he thoroughly enjoyed the whole concert, and the orchestra, too, were very visible in their appreciation of both soloist and conductor. There were a worrying number of empty seats, yet I hear that the forthcoming Proms performance of the *Sea Symphony* sold out completely on the first day of booking. Strange.

William Hedley

A RIGHT ROYAL OCCASION IN LEICESTER

On 11 May the Leicester Symphony Orchestra and Leicester Philharmonic Choir presented a concert to celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. The event

was held at Leicester's De Montfort Hall, with financial support from the Elgar Society. The conductor was John Andrews.

The LSO is a full-size amateur orchestra, founded in 1922 by Malcolm Sargent. Its concerts always attract a good attendance. The standard is usually high, and the orchestra has undertaken many foreign tours. The LPC is even older. Founded in 1886, it is also of a high standard, and in March next year will be performing in *The Dream of Gerontius* with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra under Hilary Davan Wetton at the Royal Albert Hall.

This was an evening of high patriotic fervour which, unfortunately, found the orchestra, especially the violins, in patchy form in some of the items.

The concert began with Britten's rather splendid arrangement of the National Anthem. Two ladies in front of me were undecided whether this was part of the concert proper, and clearly were itching to stand. Nobody followed suit. Then followed three movements from Handel's *Music for the Royal Fireworks*. On the heels of this came the main work of the evening, Elgar's *Coronation Ode* of 1901. If one can accept the somewhat dated Edwardian pomp this is an impressive work. I wonder if I was the only one who noted the irony in the words "Britain, ask of thyself, and see that thy sons be strong", written at the time when a high proportion of army recruits for the Boer War (and for the later Great War) failed to reach the required fitness level due to malnutrition. Sadly the performance was somewhat let down by three of the four soloists. The fourth, Chris Hill (baritone) was the exception.

After the interval two Vaughan Williams works followed Handel's *Zadok the Priest*. I had never heard Vaughan Williams's arrangement of "The Old Hundredth" live, and a most stirring piece it is in the concert hall. The splendid tune and words of one of our greatest hymns are complemented by the brilliant brass and percussion. The performance was excellent. The performance of *Fantasia on "Greensleeves"* that followed was unfortunately listless and flabby from all except the flautist. The piece needs a first-rate string section, and in this case the violins were sadly off form.

The concert concluded with two Parry works sandwiching two by Walton. *I was glad* was given a spirited rendering by the choir, complete with *Vivat Reginas*, which strictly speaking should only be sung when the monarch is present. (I have to admit that our church choir has on occasion been guilty of this heinous act of lese-majesty!)

Along with most of his works, Walton's *Coronation Te Deum* must be difficult to bring off because of its rhythmic complexity, but the choir and orchestra managed it. The orchestra was even better in *Orb and Sceptre*, which followed, especially in the main tune – one of Walton's so-called "God is an Englishman" slow marches.

How else to finish than with *Jerusalem*? The introduction is rather tricky, and it took the conductor a couple of bars to get it together.

Despite the occasional flaws, this was a most enjoyable evening, the large audience dispersing into a starlit evening no doubt glowing with satisfaction at being inhabitants of "this scepter'd isle".

Michael Gainsford

THANK YOU, SIR ROGER, IN BERLIN AGAIN

On 12 May the Deutsches Symphonie Orchester under Sir Roger Norrington gave the second of its Berlin concerts at the Philharmonie to feature all nine symphonies of Vaughan Williams. On this occasion the *Sea Symphony* was performed and it shared the programme with Max Bruch's *Scottish Fantasy* for violin and orchestra. That these two works appeared together was, as the concert programme indicated, due to the personal connection between the two composers. Vaughan Williams studied composition with Bruch in Berlin at the time of his lengthy stay-cum-honeymoon there in 1897. And of course the choice of this particular work by Bruch contributed to the British/Scottish theme of the evening.

The *Scottish Fantasy* was performed beautifully by the young German soloist Carolin Widmann, and most notable amongst the many fine features of the accompaniment was the magical *pianissimo* playing that Norrington drew from the orchestra. I was not very familiar with the work but, with its prominent part for harp, the sweetness and Celtic flavour of the music, as well as its deft and colourful orchestration, I was reminded of Stanford's adaptations of Irish tunes in his *Irish Rhapsodies*.

But of course my friend Richard Adams and I had travelled to Berlin principally to hear the *Sea Symphony*, and we were not disappointed. In fact the performance was a triumph! Where to begin? Roger Norrington directed the work masterfully. I was impressed how a conductor who was seated was able to make great sweeps of his baton in shaping the music and keeping the vast forces on course. This was no ageing and frail maestro – eyes closed – like Klemperer or Karajan, but an alert and energetic figure good-humouredly gaining the respect and unstinting support of his musicians. Norrington's tempi were nearly always on the brisk side. This approach to my mind is best suited to holding the expansive work together, with the direction and goal of the music always in view no matter how beautiful the individual episodes along the way. And his pacing and building of the climactic moments were exemplary, so that the listener never had the sense of overexposure to onslaughts of volume. The overall sound, multi-layered, was glorious. Not even the choral symphonies of Mahler can have rung out more fervently and compellingly in the Philharmonie!

I have commented before on the splendours of the DSO in performing Vaughan Williams's music, and these were demonstrated once more: the rich, full tone of the strings and woodwind, the security of the horns on the upper left of the platform, and the power of the heavy brass on the far right. All instrumentalists played their heart out and yet were beautifully balanced in Norrington's direction. The lack of string vibrato was scarcely noticeable to my ear except in exposed passages, which did cause a momentary shock but did not detract from my enjoyment. Indeed, Clemens Haustein, in his enthusiastic review for the *Berliner Zeitung*, suggests that Norrington's "Vibrato-Verbot" ("vibrato ban") helped to prevent any over-egging of the musical splendour!

There was a "dream team" of soloists. Simon Keenlyside was strong – able to ride over the orchestral waves – and distinctively rich-toned. Scottish soprano Lisa Milne, standing in for the indisposed Rebecca Evans, was a joy to behold as well as to hear. She too had the power to cut through the orchestral textures. Her last movement extended duet with Keenlyside, "O we can wait no longer", constituted one of the most thrilling and moving sections in the performance, and her face was frequently lit by a



Lisa Milne

radiant smile as she listened to the many noble and richly melodic passages.

Perhaps the most awe-inspiring impression was made by the choir, the seventy-five or so professional singers of the Rundfunkchor Berlin. Normally one hears performances of this piece by fine amateur choral societies, but never have I heard such power and tone from choral tenors in this work, and this strength as well as security of pitch was evident in all the choral lines. Their English diction too was exemplary. The choral singing frequently sent shivers down the spine! The moments which have stuck in my memory in this respect include the top As of the sopranos and tenors in the repetition of “Behold the sea” in the opening section, and the thrilling interchange of choral voices for “Away O soul” in the last movement, followed, in great contrast, by a grandiose, shattering unison “Sail forth”. Finally there was the hushed, yet intensively voiced “Farther, farther sail” that brought the performance to a memorable close.

I have attended quite a few concerts of British music in Berlin, but I have never experienced such an ovation, with many standing. It was so prolonged and intense, with conductor applauding orchestra, choir and soloists and they applauding him, that a tiring Roger Norrington eventually left the platform with a final sea captain’s salute to the audience! So now we look forward to the next instalment in the DSO’s journey with Norrington, the *Pastoral Symphony*, to be performed in December.

Tony Williams

THREE SEASONS IN LIVERPOOL

Vaughan Williams’s cantata *Folk Songs of The Four Seasons* was performed on 19 May in the Philharmonic Hall, Liverpool, by the Liverpool Philharmonic Youth Choir, the Training Choir and the Youth Orchestra, under the direction of Dane Lam. The work was commissioned by the National Federation of Women’s Institutes and performed at their first singing festival, with about 3000 voices, at the Royal Albert Hall in London in 1950. It consists of four main sections representing the four seasons, prefaced by a short Prologue. Although a substantial full-length work scored for a medium-sized orchestra, the work is not often performed. This, I suggest, is because it was written for women’s voices rather than a mixed choir, and because of the inclusion of carols in the “Winter” section which, by strong association with Christmas, probably discourages performances during the rest of the year.

Adapting the work for children’s voices and, as here, omitting “Winter”, will hopefully give the work a new lease of life, and reducing its duration to half an hour makes it more manageable for youngsters to learn. As Vaughan Williams frequently made arrangements and allowed adaptations of his own music, it would be nice to think that he would have approved.

Their performance was of a very high standard and thoroughly enjoyable. The Youth Choir, trained by Simon Emery, sang with conviction, energy and good strong tone. They were joined in some of the more rousing numbers by the younger singers of the Training Choir. The Youth Choir tackled even the most difficult unaccompanied passages with conviction. The purity of tone and freshness of the younger voices suited the work very well, and was a refreshing alternative to the sound that more mature voices achieve. The Youth



Dane Lam

Orchestra accompanied with both vigour and sensitivity, bringing out the colour and excitement in the louder sections and playing confidently in the quieter and solo passages. Full credit must go to the remarkable young Australian conductor, Dane Lam, who was able to bring out the very best from the performers. As the core singers of the youth choir only numbered twenty-four, the hall’s professional sound system was used to balance the singers with the orchestra.

The work was part of an ambitious programme that also included Mussorgsky’s *Night on the Bare Mountain* and Tchaikovsky’s *Symphony No. 5*. Although in both these works the orchestral sound unfortunately suffered from the lack of a full complement of strings, again we enjoyed some very competent playing from the orchestra and some interesting, original interpretation by the conductor.

John Whittaker

Spotted in Down Ampney. Photographer please contact the Editor.



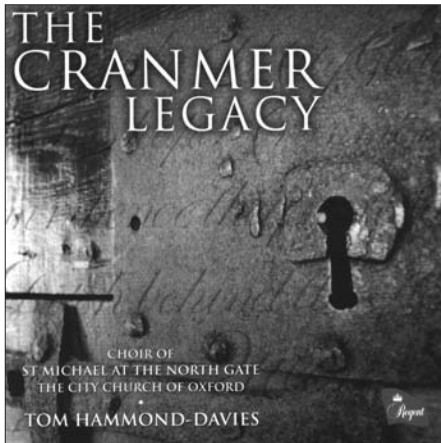
CD Reviews

Vaughan Williams: Service in D minor, “Christ’s Hospital”

Sacred choral works by John Sanders, Paul Spicer and Henry Walford Davies

Benjamin Bloor, organ; Choir of St Michael at the North Gate, Oxford/Tom Hammond-Davies

REGENT REGCD 389



Here is a lovely disc that all lovers of Vaughan Williams’s choral music will enjoy and that will be an essential purchase for Vaughan Williams completists. The title of the disc, “The Cranmer Legacy”, refers to the theme that unites the programme, the *Book of Common Prayer*, used in most of the services at the church of St Michael at the North Gate in Oxford. This CD celebrates the 350th anniversary of the appearance of the revised version in 1662.

The chief attraction for Society members here is the first recording of the “Service in D minor” that Vaughan Williams composed following a visit to Christ’s Hospital School in 1938. The Director of Music there was C. S. Lang, and a remarkable aspect of his work, and one which impressed Vaughan Williams, was the congregational singing in the school chapel. All the boys were trained and expected to sing, not only in hymns and responses, but also in much more elaborate and extended musical works which Lang put to liturgical use. (Paul Spicer’s excellent insert note cites Handel’s *Messiah*. The idea of the whole school singing along in extracts from that work is a wondrous notion!) Following his visit, Vaughan Williams quickly set to work composing the Service recorded here, or rather, Services, a Morning Service, a Communion Service and an Evening Service. Not a minute has gone by in the opening Te Deum before the treatment of the word “Holy” reveals the work to be unmistakably that of Ralph Vaughan Williams, and this is confirmed minutes later by the setting of the words “Make them to be numbered with the Saints: in glory everlasting.” Other wonderful moments include the Amens that close the Creed – any boys open-minded enough to submit to the music will have sung their hearts out to these – as well as the opening of the following Sanctus, though here, as well as in quite a few passages elsewhere, one wonders to what extent the congregation was able to master Vaughan Williams’s music. Echoes of other works are sometimes present – the finale of the Fifth Symphony in the organ part of the Jubilate Deo, for example – but

for the most part the music, though modest in its aims and scope, is quite individual and fully worthy of the master. The responses to the Ten Commandments, read here by The Very Revd Bob Wilkes, are only slightly varied, and once you have heard them once you’re not likely to get much more out of them. But they do conjure up the image of the boys pondering over such notions as coveting the neighbour’s wife, not to mention his ox and his ass. More seriously, for this listener, the settings of the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis come very close in quality to some of the composer’s finest work.

Paul Spicer’s name will be well known to many members, perhaps most familiar as the conductor of a fine series of recordings on the Chandos label with the Finzi Singers. He is also President of Finzi Friends, though his other claim to fame is that he and I were in the same class at the Royal College of Music in the 1970s. (Curiously, this important fact never features in his printed biographies.) His short anthem *Let not your heart be troubled*, to a text from St John, is deceptively complex in its musical language, yet very accessible and consolatory in tone. It will surely appeal strongly to Vaughan Williams enthusiasts, and is a fine addition to the sacred choral music repertoire.

John Sanders was organist of Gloucester Cathedral for more than twenty-five years. *The Firmament* presents some fairly adventurous harmony within a typically English cathedral tonal framework, but there is rather more drama in there than one generally encounters in an Evening Prayer anthem. It has apparently been recorded before, but it was new to me and is a very impressive piece indeed, with a lovely treble solo beautifully taken in this performance by soprano Louise Wayman.

Walford Davies’s *A Short Requiem* was also new to me. Paul Spicer explains that the form of the work seems to have influenced Howells in the composition of his own Requiem. The work creates a powerful atmosphere, but much of it is very simple homophonic writing and one wonders just how many times one is likely to want to return to it. The opening is very attractive, and the close is most affecting, ending with a short phrase from the solo soprano. Otherwise I found the hymn “No more to sigh. No more to weep” the most attractive part of the work.

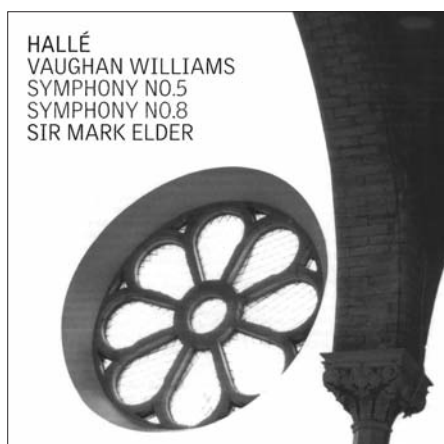
With such a programme the disc would be a mandatory purchase, especially for Vaughan Williams enthusiasts, even if the performances were only adequate. In fact, the performances are outstanding throughout. The choir is a pleasure to listen to on disc, and must add immeasurably to the experience of those services at which it sings. I’d like to salute some lovely solo singing from Zoë Brown in Vaughan Williams’s Benedictus and the Walford Davies, and the Benjamin Bloor’s organ playing is of the highest quality throughout. Tom Hammond-Davies is clearly a first-rate choir trainer, but there is more to it than that, and he certainly has the measure of all the music on this disc, pacing it to perfection and ensuring that every important part can be heard. I said at the beginning of this review that this is a lovely disc, but it is also a most unusual and important one. I recommend it without reservation.

William Hedley

Vaughan Williams: Symphony No. 5; Symphony No. 8

Hallé Orchestra/Sir Mark Elder

HALLÉ HLL 7533



Could this recording be the second of an emerging symphony cycle by the Hallé under the direction of Sir Mark Elder? After hearing this CD and the excellent *London Symphony* that preceded it, I certainly hope so. In a recent radio interview, Elder mentioned that the *Pastoral Symphony* had already been recorded, so the prospect of all nine seems a possibility now.

Here we have two very different symphonies, curiously both originally named as simply Symphony in D, with the composer later changing the key of No. 8 to D minor. The Fifth is largely a live recording from a 2011 concert at the Bridgewater Hall, Manchester, with some material patched from a rehearsal; no matter, the end result is seamless and with no audience intrusion that I could hear. The warm acoustic is slightly recessed, but if you turn the volume up it really glows. The symphony has a natural forward momentum and Elder's unhurried approach is ideal for the unfolding of this radiant and numinous music. Possibly to my ear there could be a greater tension at the climax of the third movement, for this is the emotional centre of the symphony and when resolved we know we have crossed to the other side. There is superb playing from the orchestra in all departments and at the ethereal ending there is that wonderful sense of homecoming and peace that make this one of the greatest of twentieth-century symphonies.

The Eighth is a studio recording made in 2012. The sound, by contrast, is brighter and more forward, which suits this often exuberant work. In Elder's interpretation this is no "little eighth": his is a symphonic approach rather than a showpiece concerto for orchestra. The Hallé plays magnificently and this is one of the finest recordings of the work I have heard. The first movement's arresting opening from timpani and percussion followed by rising fourths from a solo trumpet herald a superb set of "variations in search of a theme". The spiky scherzo shows off the orchestra's woodwind section to great effect. The slow movement, for strings alone, demonstrates the dynamic range of this recording; the descending cellos after the opening theme are wonderfully captured. There are superb solos from the orchestra's leader and principal cellist. This movement is undoubtedly one of the composer's greatest achievements, often described as looking back to *The Lark Ascending* and *Tallis Fantasia*, but in this

performance I am reminded also of a much later string work, the *Concerto Grosso* of 1950. The finale is a *tour de force*, percussion and timpani returning from the first movement are exciting but are not allowed to drown out the rest of the orchestra. This is Vaughan Williams at his least contemplative; the ending is one of loud, cheerful optimism captured gloriously in this recording.

Michael Kennedy's liner notes are as ever, detailed but uncomplicated with some fresh insights and a pleasure to read. This is an excellent CD that I highly recommend to members.

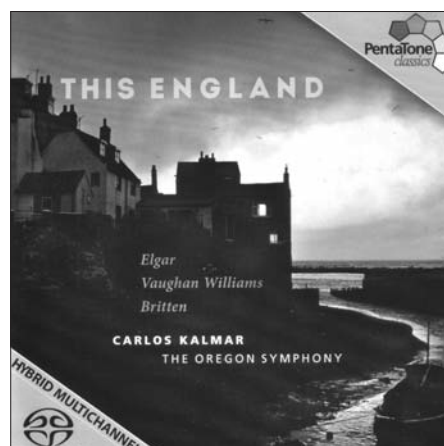
Robin Barber

Vaughan Williams: Symphony No. 5

Elgar: *Cockaigne (In London Town)*; Britten: Four Sea Interludes and Passacaglia from *Peter Grimes*

Oregon Symphony Orchestra/Carlos Kalmar

PENTATONE CLASSICS PTC5186-471



Writing in issue 53 of the *Journal*, Robin Barber was enthusiastic about an earlier Vaughan Williams release where the Fourth Symphony was coupled with pieces by Ives, Britten and John Adams under the collective title "Music for a Time of War". Here, on a disc entitled "This England", the same performers now give us the Fifth Symphony.

The programme gets off to a splendid start with a cracking performance of *Cockaigne*, and one that reminds us just how much of the score is meant to be played quietly. It is perhaps just a little cool, certainly a straighter reading than you get from a Boult or a Barbirolli, but no less affecting for all that. It is magnificently played: I heard many details of scoring for the first time and I'm willing to bet you will too. One of the reasons for this is the extraordinarily analytic recording – this is an SACD that I heard in ordinary stereo – that leaves nothing hidden in the middle of the texture. The *Peter Grimes* interludes are also superbly done. The "Passacaglia" is placed just before the "Storm", which is a veritable cataclysm here. These are all live performances, and the microphones pick up a few coughs and wheezes from the audience that had been quite inconspicuous in the Elgar, but there is no applause from them after the tempestuous ending, which is slightly unnerving *because we know they are there*. This is a brilliant and highly atmospheric

performance, then, but profound admirer of Britten's music that I am, I none the less feel that these pieces don't really work as a concert suite, and are far better left alone, as interludes between the scenes of a magnificent opera.

The first movement of the Fifth unfolds with a calm inevitability that is very attractive, though not without a fair amount of intervention from the conductor, who holds back expressively at several key points. This sounds more spontaneous to my ears than do similar effects under certain other conductors, except for the climax of the movement – which Vaughan Williams marks *Tutta forza* – where Kalmar takes a little liberty with the pulse that might well pall after a time. He whips up a veritable storm in the central passage, however, and the grim coda is properly affecting. The Scherzo is superb, with feather-light strings and a very winning way with those rather disorientating misplaced accents. The Romanza, too, is very fine, particularly successful at evoking that very special mood that words will always be inadequate to describe. Current thinking holds that the timpani should begin to play one bar sooner than is marked in my score. This “error” has been corrected in the new OUP edition of the score, and the corrected version is followed here. There is no doubt that, viewed on the page, it looks more logical, but I am not convinced. It's a marginal point, but those wishing to investigate further will find no difficulty in doing so, as all recorded performances before Vernon Handley's celebrated 1986 version follow the old, mistaken, manner, including those conducted by the composer, who was surely well placed to know when the timpani should play. But back to Kalmar. The opening tempo of the finale is quite quick, underlining its relaxed, smiling nature. There is more violence than usual in the build-up to the return of the opening music. The final pages are very slow, but beautifully sustained, bringing this glorious, adorable work to a serene and satisfying close.

Each of us has our favourite recorded performances of this symphony, and my own – Haitink and Norrington – are rather individual and probably not recommendable as single choices. I couldn't quite recommend this one as a single choice either, but it is a very fine performance indeed and most moving. Members are encouraged to investigate it without delay, especially if the rest of the programme appeals.

William Hedley

Peggy Glanville-Hicks: *Sappho*

Deborah Polaski (soprano) *Sappho*; Martin Homrich (tenor) Phaon; Scott MacAllister (tenor) Pittakos; Roman Trekel (baritone) Diomedes; Wolfgang Koch (bass-baritone) Minos; John Tomlinson (bass) Kreon; Jacquelyn Wagner (soprano) Chloe/Priestess; Bettina Jensen (soprano) Joy; Maria Markina (mezzo) Doris; Laurence Meikle (baritone) Alexandrian; Coro e Orquestra Gulbenkian/Jennifer Condon.

TOCCATA CLASSICS TOCC0154-55 (two CDs)

When Australian-born Peggy Glanville-Hicks died in 1990, the New York Times listed her opera *Sappho* (1963) as one of her three “best-known scores”. It was a poignant error. Although *Sappho* was arguably the climax of her composing career, in fact it had never been performed – and it remained unperformed, except for the final monologue, until this recording. The opera



had been commissioned by the San Francisco Opera, through a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, for Maria Callas; but General Director Kurt Adler – who had praised the libretto for “the most beautiful use of the English language of any operatic text I have come across” – turned it down as soon as he saw the piano score. That is perhaps not surprising, since *Sappho* was a radical work that went against expectations, inhabiting a world so far from the mainstreams of the time that it must have been hard to find points of orientation against which to hear it.

When I call it radical, I don't mean to suggest that it participated in what we might paradoxically call the established avant-garde temperament of the 1960s. Although the work has nothing in common with such conservative contemporaries as Barber's *Antony and Cleopatra*, it doesn't have much in common with such iconic shockers of the time as Berio's *Sinfonia* or Penderecki's *St Luke Passion* either. *Sappho* savours elusiveness at a time when direct provocation and excess were highly prized. To the extent that it's radical, it's because it follows its own path, with an idiom that has some of its roots in non-Western practices. In this melding of multiple traditions, it has something in common with the music of such outsiders as Lou Harrison; but even those connections are loose, and *Sappho* has a faux-archaic flavour largely its own.

What does it sound like? The music is not quite ritualistic in the sense that, say, Stravinsky's *Oedipus* is ritualistic: *Sappho*'s music is rhythmically more fluid and harmonically far less stony. Still, *Sappho* creates a mood of temporal displacement, in part through its modal inflections, in part through the patience with which it makes its points, in part through its sensitively glowing (but distinctly unflashy) orchestration. (In her contribution to the excellent programme booklet, the conductor Jennifer Condon suggests that the inadequacy of the piano score is “largely the reason for so many years of neglect” – and there's little doubt that, stripped of its colours, the music would lose much of its power.) The score is far in spirit from the early classics of American minimalism (say, early Reich), but it does exhibit a similar distrust of traditional romantic procedures, producing effects that can seem superficially static.

The spare textures contribute greatly to the music's special flavour as well. Glanville-Hicks is ready to draw back the orchestra at emotionally heightened moments, sometimes silencing it entirely, more often distilling the accompaniments to gentle brush-strokes that shade the temperament of the moment.

Rarely does the orchestra compete with the singers (although when it does, as Condon suggests, Wagnerian singers are no disadvantage); and even in purely orchestral passages (for instance, the opening to the second scene), the music can be reduced to a unison or a single line over a sustained backdrop. All in all, it wouldn't be unfair to use the word "reserved" as a shorthand to describe the overriding aesthetic here. While *Sappho* is a big work, with some large-scale climaxes, the opera doesn't strive to overwhelm: even at its most outgoing, its aims are subtler and more inward. Characteristic of its outlook is the choral welcome for the victorious General Pittakos that opens Scene 4. Such a moment might have brought forth brash spectacle from Verdi; in Glanville-Hicks's hands, the passage exhibits something more troubling, more shadowy, more eerily threatening.

For all its detailed verbal felicity (not necessarily a virtue in an operatic text), the libretto, based on a play by Lawrence Durrell, similarly runs against the grain. On the surface, it appears at first to have all the trappings of grand opera: adultery, murder, incest, betrayal, suicide. Most of those standard elements, however, are treated in a slightly oblique fashion. It's not simply that there's more attention to psychological reactions than to the events themselves. More important, even those reactions are, for the most part, oddly muted. There's little anger or bitterness or ranting here; compassion takes over where we might expect confrontation. The characters are all, in their different ways, aware of ageing; and regret and disenchantment trump such emotions as eros and vengeance as the driving forces of the action. In sum, if you're looking for a heightened return to the classical world in the manner of *Elektra* or even Tippett's *King Priam*, you might find *Sappho* on the diffident side. If, however, you're willing to let the music work its hypnotic powers on you, you'll find yourself caught.

This premiere is an act of commitment by the 30-year-old conductor, who has been working since 2001 to bring this work to the world, and who is responsible for deciphering the manuscript of the full score to make this performance possible. Her dedication is palpable from first note to last and she's fortunate to have been able to secure a solid orchestra and to convince a first-rate set of world-class singers to participate – and even to do so without compensation. Pride of place goes to Deborah Polaski, who moves from Brünnhilde and Elektra to this very different role, one that still, in moments, calls on Herculean

strength, but that depends far more heavily on a sinuous quiet and intimacy. Polaski may not have the focused power she had in her glory years, but her performance here is captivating in its musical nuance and verbal awareness, and her final monologue will leave you haunted.

John Tomlinson, of course, has similar Wagnerian credentials – and he is similarly persuasive, eloquently tracing the emotional eddies of Sappho's husband Kreon, "a man who is tormented" by his past. He sings his big Act 3 confession with the same kind of depth and tenderness he brings to "Wotan's Farewell". Yet another distinguished Wagnerian, the dark-toned Wolfgang Koch, gives a textually attentive performance as Sappho's tutor Minos; and Roman Trekel is superb as the "poet and witty drunkard" Diomedes, singing with an astonishing range of colour and artfully navigating from the nearly burlesque comedy of the first act to the despair of the third, where, dying from self-administered poison, he comes to terms with his desires for his son's wife.

The less familiar singers are expert, too. Martin Homrich glows as Phaon, a poet whose turn to the simple life serves as a kind of siren call to Sappho (his duet with Sappho at the end of the first act is unbearably poignant). Scott MacAllister is just as good in the more heroic role of Phaon's twin brother Pittakos, a general (and former lover of Sappho's) who is just beginning to recognize the emptiness of his military victories. The entire cast boasts excellent enunciation, especially important in an opera that relies so heavily on textual detail. The orchestra coaxes out the music's understated effects expertly (listen, for instance, to the wailing of the strings beginning a minute or so into Scene 5 or to the keening solo winds throughout).

All in all, a major contribution to the catalogue, served up with Toccata's usual high-quality presentation values; the engineering is solid, too. Strongly recommended to any opera lover with a sense of adventure.

Peter J. Rabinowitz

This review first appeared in the March 2013 edition of International Record Review and is reproduced here with their kind permission.

I N T E R N A T I O N A L RECORD REVIEW

FOR THE SERIOUS CLASSICAL COLLECTOR

We will be pleased to supply a free sample copy of our monthly magazine to members of
The Ralph Vaughan Williams Society

We can be contacted at:

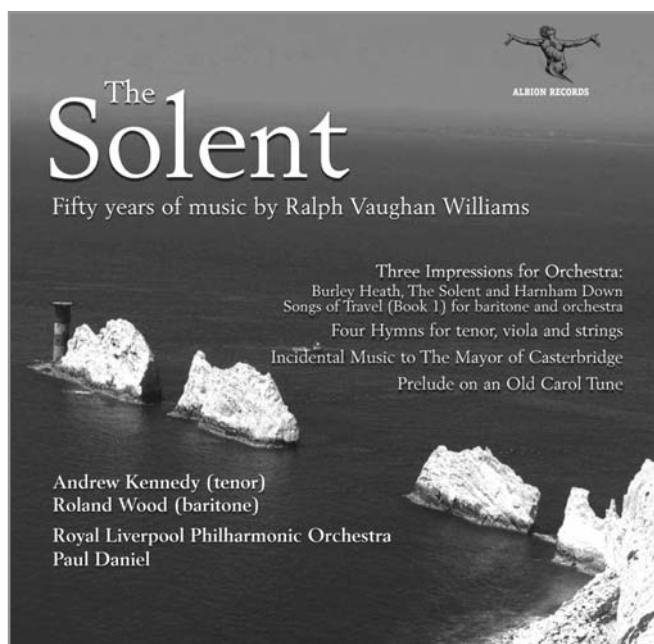
9 Spring Bridge Mews, Ealing, London W5 2AB

Tel: 020 8567 9244 Fax: 020 8840 5447 Email: barry.irving@recordreview.co.uk

www.recordreview.co.uk

The Solent

Fifty years of music by Ralph Vaughan Williams
An exciting new release from Albion Records



This CD is due for release on 2 September 2013. It will also be available to download online from: www.albionrecords.org

For further information please contact:

Mark Hammett, 27, Landsdowne Way, Bexhill-on-Sea,
East Sussex, TN40 2UJ.
email: albionmrh@btinternet.com

THREE IMPRESSIONS FOR ORCHESTRA (world premiere recording)

- 1 Burley Heath (completed by James Francis Brown)
- 2 The Solent
- 3 Harnham Down

SONGS OF TRAVEL (BOOK 1)

arranged for baritone and orchestra by the composer*

- 4 The Vagabond
- 5 The Roadside Fire
- 6 Bright is the Ring of Words

FOUR HYMNS FOR TENOR, VIOLA OBLIGATO AND STRINGS**

- 7 Lord! Come away ~ Maestoso
- 8 Who is this fair one? ~ Andante moderato
- 9 Come Love, come Lord ~ Lento
- 10 Evening Hymn (O Gladsome Light) ~ Andante commoto

11 WEYHILL FAIR SONG*

INCIDENTAL MUSIC TO THE MAYOR OF CASTERBRIDGE

(world premiere recording)

- 12 Casterbridge
- 13 Intermezzo
- 14 Weyhill Fair

15 PRELUDE ON AN OLD CAROL TUNE

* **Roland Wood** (baritone)

** **Andrew Kennedy** (tenor)

** **Nicholas Bootiman** (viola)

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra (leader **Thelma Handy**)
Paul Daniel

ALBION MUSIC

BOOKS

Let Beauty Awake: Elgar, Vaughan Williams
and Literature (ed. Julian Rushton) £20.00 + £3.80

The Complete Poems + Fall of Leaf
(Ursula Vaughan Williams) £25.00 + £3.80

There was a time – a Pictorial Collection £25.00 + £3.50

Paradise Remembered
(Ursula Vaughan Williams) £25.00 + £2.50

Vaughan Williams in Perspective
(ed. Lewis Foreman) £25.00 + £3.30

Ralph's People: The Ingrave Secret
(Frank Dineen) £20.00 + £1.70

Available from:

John Francis, (Treasurer), The Ralph Vaughan Williams Society,
North House, 198, High Street, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 1BE.
email: john@lffuk.com

Cheques for books to be made payable to *Albion Music Ltd.*

See us at: www.albionmusic.com

ALBION RECORDS

CDs

The Sky Shall Be Our Roof £10.00 + £1.80

Kissing Her Hair £10.00 + £1.80

Music in the Heart £10.00 + £1.80

Where Hope is Shining £10.00 + £1.80

Folk Songs of the Four Seasons £10.00 + £1.80

Symphony No. 6 for two pianos, + Ireland £10.00 + £1.80

The Garden of Proserpine £10.00 + £1.80

On Christmas Day £10.00 + £1.80

Archive Recordings of
Ralph Vaughan Williams £10.00 + £1.80

The Sons of the Morning £10.00 + £1.80

The Solent – Fifty Years of Music by
Ralph Vaughan Williams £10.00 + £1.80

**COMING
SOON!**

Available from:

Mark Hammett, 27, Landsdowne Way, Bexhill-on-Sea,
East Sussex, TN40 2UJ.
email: albionmrh@btinternet.com

Cheques for CDs to be made payable to *Albion Records Ltd.*

Also available as downloads at www.albionrecords.org

From the Chairman

I write this in the slightly dazed aftermath of the seventh English Music Festival, another successful event full of the most glorious music-making, with the chance to hear old favourites live as well as to discover new music. Audience numbers were up even on last year's healthy figures, and Vaughan Williams, as ever, featured prominently, with a performance of the wonderful *Five Mystical Songs* – Hilary Davan Wetton conducting the City of London Sinfonia – and two world premiere performances. These latter – of *The Solent* and the gorgeous *Serenade in A minor* – opened the Festival, with Martin Yates conducting the BBC Concert Orchestra. We were delighted to have Michael Kennedy with us, along with several other eminent musicologists and a large contingent from the Ralph Vaughan Williams Society. The concert also featured the world premiere performance of the original version of Walford Davies's Second Symphony, and I was fascinated by how the music divided opinions, with many people strongly favouring either the Vaughan Williams works or the Walford Davies symphony. The concert was recorded for broadcast, so you will be able to catch it on BBC Radio 3 on Monday 24 June at 2pm. Do tune in if you can: I'd be interested to gauge further opinions of these works, and see if any Vaughan Williams lovers are equally enthralled by the Walford Davies!

The main – and very positive – news from the Society's point of view is that the wheels are again in motion at Leith Hill Place, and this time they seem to be turning swiftly and determinedly in the guise of Gabrielle Gale, the new Visitor Operations Manager. Gabrielle's impressive ideas and visions revolve around opening the house to visitors and giving them a fun and accessible yet educative experience that will include an introduction to Vaughan Williams and an explanation of his links with the house. We are assured that the house will be opening to visitors this summer, and that the Vaughan Williams areas will be developed further over time. Other plans include areas in the building associated with Darwin and the Wedgwoods, as well light refreshments. You will have read about the plans in greater detail earlier in this issue, but I would like to exhort you all to support this move by the National Trust and to visit the house when it opens. The Society trustees will continue to liaise closely with the National Trust and will, of course, keep you informed of developments and opportunities to become involved in this immensely exciting project.

I look forward to seeing you at this year's AGM, or earlier, perhaps at Leith Hill Place, or even at the EMF's Autumn Cotswold Festival, which will again focus heavily on Vaughan Williams.

Em Marshall-Luck



Joyce and Michael Kennedy with Hugh Cobbe at the premieres of Vaughan Williams's *The Solent* and *Serenade in A minor* at this year's English Music Festival in Dochester in Thames

RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS SOCIETY

PRESIDENT

Michael Kennedy C.B.E.

VICE-PRESIDENTS

Stephen Connock M.B.E.

Roy Douglas

CHAIRMAN

Em Marshall-Luck M.A. (Oxon), M.C.I.J.

The Red House,
Lanchards Lane,
Shillingstone,
Dorset, DT11 0QU.
Tel. 07808 473889

em.marshall@btinternet.com

VICE-CHAIRMAN

(for general correspondence)

Simon Coombs

simonandlaura2004@yahoo.co.uk

TREASURER

John Francis

Lindeyer Francis Ferguson,
North House, 198 High Street,
Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 1BE.

john@lffuk.com

MEMBERSHIP OFFICER

(for membership and subscription enquiries)

Mark Hammett

27 Landsdowne Way,
Bexhill-on-Sea,
East Sussex, TN40 2UJ.

albionmrh@btinternet.com

INFORMATION OFFICER

(for information relating to Vaughan Williams and his music)

Robin Wells

robin@robinwells.org

PUBLICITY OFFICER

Karen Fletcher

archerypromos@btinternet.com

WEB & JOURNAL DESIGN

Tadeusz Kasa

rvwinformation@hotmail.com

JOURNAL EDITOR

William Hedley

68, rue Mauléon,
11400 Castelnaudary,
France.

Tel. 00 33 468 60 02 08

rvwsocjournal@orange.fr